



Equally Well

Take action to improve physical health outcomes for New Zealanders with a mental illness and/or addiction

People with a serious mental illness and/or addiction experience significantly worse physical health than the general population and we can do something about this. This is what the research tells us...



The facts

New Zealanders with a serious mental illness and/or addiction have:

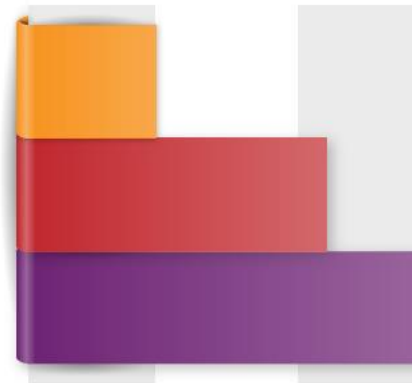


Life expectancy reduced by up to 25 years. The most common causes of death being cancer and cardiovascular diseases

General population

People with a mental illness

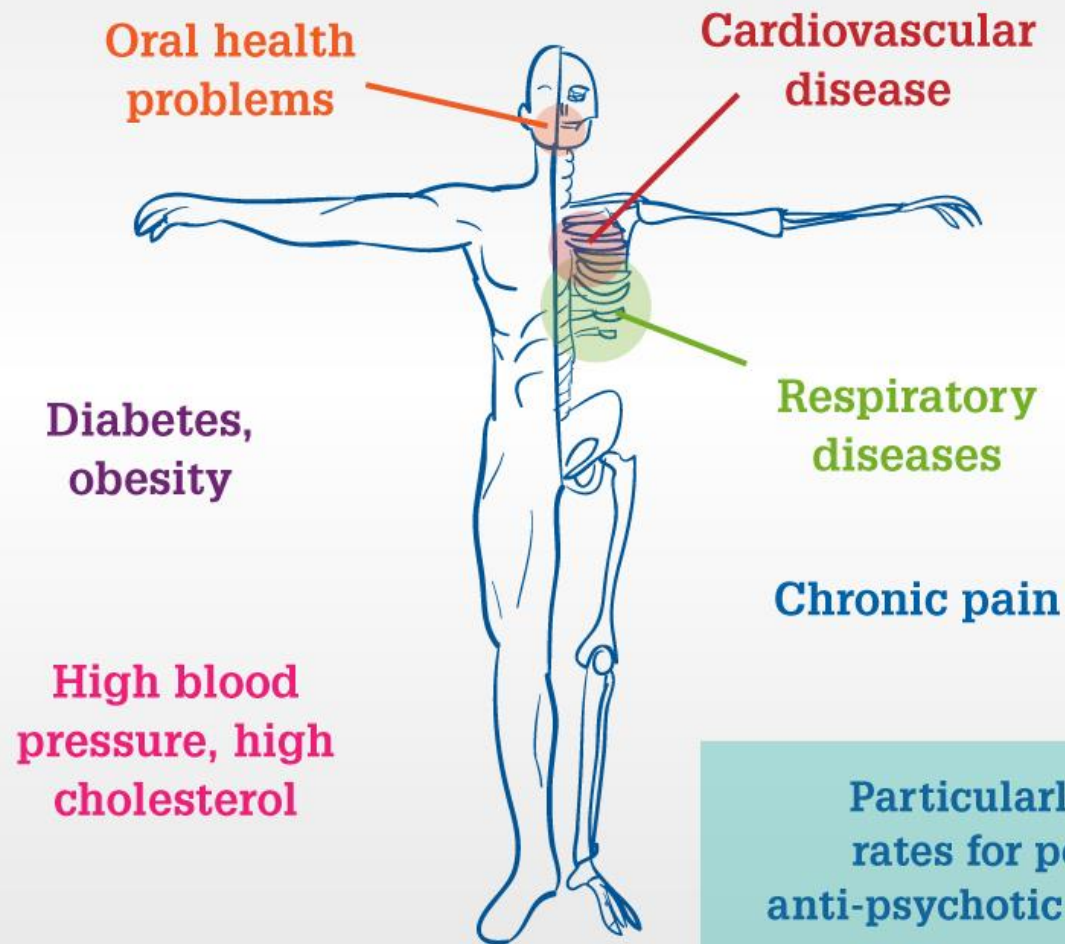
People with a psychotic disorder



More than twice the mortality rate of the general population, three times for people with a psychotic disorder^{1,2,3}

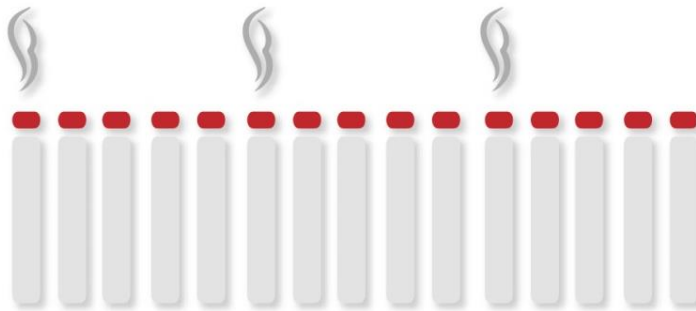
- 1 Includes people with a primary diagnosis of substance use.
- 2 Mortality rate is a measure of the number of deaths in a population, scaled to the size of that population, within a unit of time.
- 3 Cunningham et al, 2014

Higher rates of physical health conditions





General population

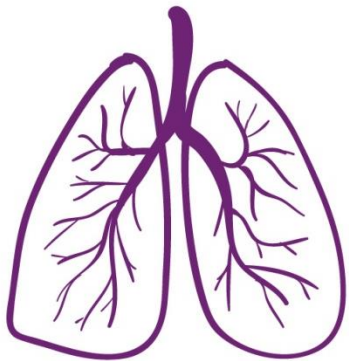


People with a mental illness

**Smoking rates 2-3 times
higher than general population**



Similar rates of cancer, but worse outcomes – indicating disparity in access to and quality of health care treatment



European & Asian



Maori



People with a mental illness who are Maori have higher rates of chronic pain, respiratory conditions and higher BMIs than their European and Asian peers

Alcohol causally linked to over 60 medical conditions

Gastrointestinal diseases

Range of cancers

Cardiovascular disease



Chronic cannabis use

impaired respiratory function

lung damage

cardiovascular disease

respiratory cancers

bronchitis

reproductive disorders



Methamphetamine addiction

Oral health diseases

Heart disease

Cerebrovascular complications

Increased risk of transmission of blood-borne viruses



The drivers



Health systems

Separation of mental health and physical health care



Workforce issues

Practitioner training needs, better assessment and referral processes, stigma and discrimination.

Socio-economic status

Contributing factor but alone cannot account for disparities in health status



Exposure to risk factors

Higher levels of smoking, obesity. Lower levels of exercise, lower health literacy



Medication

Side effects of psychotropic medication



The solutions

Acknowledge the greater health needs

Monitor health outcomes on a population basis

Better integration of mental and physical health care systems

Routine screening

Improve access to health care and quality of treatment

Provide information for the health workforce

Better access to nutrition and exercise programmes

For more information on this programme of work contact Helen Lockett on Helen.lockett@wisegroup.co.nz or 027 558 4658.

Helen is leading the project on behalf of Platform and Te Pou.