The Health Needs Assessment of Asian people living in the Auckland Region has just been released

The Health Needs Assessment of Asian people living in the Auckland Region was written by Dr Suneela Mehta, and commissioned by the Northern DHB Support Agency (NDSA). The work was carried out on behalf of the Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy Migrant Health Action Plan, which represents Waitemata, Auckland and Counties Manukau DHBs.

It is the most comprehensive report to date examining the health status and health service use of Chinese, Indian and Other Asian communities in the Auckland region. The report includes analyses of health issues that have not previously been addressed in detail for Asian communities in Auckland, such as mental health, health of older people, family violence, patient safety and disability.

Asian communities currently make up around 22% of the Auckland population, and are projected to increase more than 60% by 2026. Asian people in New Zealand are frequently stereotyped as being healthy. Indeed, local and international research indicates that first generation migrants tend to have temporarily better health status than locally-born citizens.

Crucially, the report indicates that, for the first time, mortality rates from cardiovascular disease among Auckland Indians have risen above the rates noted among the majority of the Auckland population. Diabetes continues to be a common issue among Indians in Auckland, but is also increasing among Other Asian communities and older Chinese people in the Auckland region.

Healthy lifestyle practices, such as following a healthy diet, exercising regularly and being smoke-free, were highlighted by health service providers interviewed for the report as important factors in preventing further deterioration in chronic disease rates among Asian communities in Auckland. The report also found that low rates of enrolment with Primary Health Organisations, particularly among Chinese people, were an ongoing issue.

These analyses make a substantial contribution towards understanding the distinct health needs of Asian sub-groups and provide an invaluable resource for current and future planning of health services for Asian populations in Auckland.

The report is available at the following URLs: