

Speech notes – 10-year EHI celebration – 11 March 2020

Tēnā koutou katoa

Deborah Woodley, Professor Emeritus David Briggs, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

it is my great pleasure to celebrate with you the 10th anniversary of the Environmental Health Indicators programme – a significant milestone for the College of Health, the Centre for Public Health Research and the University.

Today marks a day of celebration of how far we have come in our capability building and forward thinking with the greatest accomplishments still lying ahead of us. Today allows us to recognise the journey we have been on but also gives us an opportunity to set new goals for the future.

Thank you all for coming to share in our celebrations. It means a great deal to us that you are here. Many of you have been a big part of our journey and your support has enabled us to develop for the better.

The College of Health's Environmental Health Indicators programme, or short EHI, led by Professor Barry Borman and primarily funded by the Ministry of Health, has been a success story right from the start.

The EHI programme is an example, that here at Massey University, we are not simply defined by what we do, but by how we do it. We are committed to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the founding document of our nation, and its principles through our practice. We are inspired by our name Te Kunenga Ki Pūrehuroa, which translates as from inception to infinity – the idea that once you start on a journey of knowledge there is no limit to what you may achieve. The gathering and interpreting of big data in diverse contexts are more important than ever. We need to look beyond our immediate surroundings to develop and promulgate solutions to address and solve the big health challenges facing our nations and the world.

As you are aware, the EHI team is a research and consultancy group located at the Centre of Public Health Research on Massey University Wellington campus. The group specialise in environmental health information investigating links between New Zealand's environment and the health of the human population and animals.

Over the last decade, the team has done a tremendous job creating a national hub for environmental health indicators. The focus of the programme is making information useful, accessible and relevant for a wide range of users: government departments, district health boards, public health units and local councils. This includes but is not limited to monitoring existing and

developing new indicators, overseeing the Hazardous Substances Surveillance System that monitors injuries, disease and deaths related to hazardous substances exposure and includes GP notifications of hazardous substances diseases and injuries. Analysis from the programme is used as important evidence for policy development and decision making in health-related sectors improving and shaping the health future of New Zealand, of our communities.

At this moment of celebration, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone whose dedication and efforts have contributed to the development of Environmental Health Indicators programme. I would like to acknowledge the Ministry of Health who plays a vital role in the success of the EHI. Without your trust, support and funding, we couldn't have continued investigating links between New Zealand's environment and the health of Kiwis. Thank you.

Now, I have the pleasure to introduce you to Professor Emeritus David Briggs, Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at Imperial College London, who will be joining us via video recording.

Ngā mihi. Noho ora mai.