

The CHESSE Principles for Healthy Environments: An holistic and strategic game-plan for inter-sectoral policy and action

Susan Thompson¹ and Peter McCue²

¹ Head, Planning and Urban Development Program, Faculty of the Built Environment, University of NSW

² Manager, NSW Premier's Council for Active Living (PCAL)

Abstract

There is a rapidly growing body of evidence which demonstrates that the built environment is one of a range of important variables that influences people's physical activity levels, social interaction and consequent health. The creation of supportive environments for physical activity and social connectivity provides urban planners and health professionals with the opportunity to be proactive in helping to address the wellbeing of local communities

In this paper we present our CHESSE principles for healthy environments. This is a comprehensive schema which enables professionals to work inter-sectorally and collaborative to strategically devise policy and subsequent actions for wellbeing. Simply stated as different 'environments' which underpin the achievement of healthy people, places and planet, CHESSE encompasses the following:

- Connected Environments
- Healthy Eating Environments
- Safe Environments
- Sustainable Environments.

'Connected environments' is arguably the most important principle as it relates to the environments that need to be designed and connected for health, *as well as* the interdisciplinary environments *in* which urban planners and health professionals work. Both need to be *connected* in different ways in order to achieve healthy eating, safe and sustainable environments supportive of community and individual wellbeing.

The paper also provides an overview of key resources for implementing CHESSE, with particular emphasis on PCAL. As well, some of the challenges currently facing the achievement of healthy environments are canvassed. The paper concludes with a wealth of practical and implementable suggestions for taking the CHESSE principles forward immediately and in the longer term.

THE FULL PAPER CAN BE DOWNLOADED FROM THE PCAL WEB SITE

<http://www.pcal.nsw.gov.au/>