



**HOMES MUST BE PROPERLY HEATED SAYS PHA  
Media Release Wednesday 2 May**

The Public Health Association is supporting calls by the Asthma and Respiratory Foundation for incentives to be put in place for the proper heating and insulation of houses.

Director Dr Gay Keating was responding to a study carried out by the University of Otago's Wellington-based He Kainga Oranga/Housing and Health Research Programme. Study findings included that installing more effective and less polluting heaters in the homes of children with asthma improved the health of the children.

"The reality is people who live in cold, damp houses get sick. And the real problem is the high costs of adequate housing and heating, when many families are on a low income. High housing costs restrict the ability of families to spend on other necessary items such as heating or food.

"Research shows we spend about 75 percent of our time in our homes, so it's no surprise there is mounting evidence of the link between poor housing and poor health – physical and mental."

She said that all landlords, including Housing NZ, should provide adequate insulation and heating in their rental properties.

"As is the case with the Healthy Housing Programme – which is an initiative between Housing NZ and District Health Boards – the government needs to

direct dedicated resources, staff and funding to the issue, together with minimum building standards that require proper insulation.

“There should also be incentives and subsidies for the installation of effective heating, and the sooner the better. In the meantime, people in substandard housing are facing another cold, wheezy winter.”

**For further information:**

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***The Public Health Association of New Zealand is a non-party political voluntary association, which provides a major forum for the exchange of information and stimulation of debate about public health in New Zealand.***