# **Equity and Health – Topic Paper Summary**

## Summary

Health equity means everyone in Moreland has access to the health services they need for a healthy life. A person’s background, their community, where they live, the food they eat, and the support they receive all impact their health.

Some people have better access to health services than other people. A person’s circumstances can impact their health and life expectancy. Including gender, race, education, housing, and job security. If a person faces many types of disadvantage, they might have poorer health.

It is possible to improve community health outcomes. To do this, people need to have access to the right services for them, including access to food, affordable housing and the ability to feel safe and be physically active

## Key Issues

* **Affordable housing and homelessness:** affordable housing and better responses to people who are homeless in Moreland.
* **Access to nutritious food:** access to healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food.
* **Social cohesion, diversity and inclusion:** celebrating Moreland’s diversity. Ensuring people from all backgrounds are welcomed, feel that they belong, and can be involved in the community.
* **Aboriginal partnerships:** promoting reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous people. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are recognised as the traditional custodians of the land, whose dispossession is addressed through respectful partnerships.
* **Community safety:** creating a safe community for people to work, live and travel in Moreland.
* **Physical health:** supporting communities to be physically healthy by participating in active recreation, social sport and organised sport.
* **Aged care:** supporting Moreland’s older residents.

## What are some opportunities?

Opportunities in this space might include:

* Plan and invest in affordable housing.
* Strengthen advocacy by building effective partnerships across the local government sector, not for profit sector, and community sector.
* Support more employment opportunities by working to break down barriers to employment and working across sectors and industries to create more jobs.
* Rebuild community participation and social opportunities for those facing unemployment by harnessing the strong sense of neighbourliness and volunteerism created during Covid-10 towards service delivery.
* Support Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people to pursue self-determination.
* Become ‘Treaty ready’ by supporting the First Nations treaty negotiation process and offering opportunities when asked.
* Engage with Resident Associations to directly reach communities who may perceive safety as an issue in their area.
* Increase opportunities for social connection through active recreation, social and organised sport to reduce isolation and loneliness.
* Work with sports clubs and organisations to ensure their ongoing viability and have flexible approaches to sport participation to engage residents who are less active.

## What Are Some Challenges?

Challenges in this space might include:

* Partnering effectively with other sectors.
* Addressing the growing social and economic inequalities in our community, which may have been worsened due to Covid-19. This is linked to lower levels of food security as well as nutrition-related health problems.
* Covid-19 has also limited the opportunity to undertake community engagement in a meaningful way, particularly with older residents who are not currently accessing services.
* Balancing long-term planning for food security with responding to community’s immediate food relief needs. The effects of climate change may also pose a risk to food supply in general.
* Growing social and economic inequalities between individuals and communities, which can create tensions and weaken social cohesion at both national and local levels.
* People foregoing participating in community life in favour of meeting essential needs (food, rent, bills) with increased financial strain on many already vulnerable communities.
* The State Government has not included Local Government in the process of creating the First People’s Assembly and has not yet provided any guidance on how this might affect Local Governments.
* Addressing participation barriers to ensure residents from priority communities can participate in and benefit from organised sport and recreational opportunities.