

4.4 Health determinants

“Active ageing is the process of optimising opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age”

World Health Organisation 2002¹¹

The state of one’s physical and mental health is a result of the interactions between multiple factors. The term ‘determinants of health’ is used for those factors that have either a positive or negative influence on health at the individual or population level.³

The aim of this section is to answer the following questions:

- Are the factors that determine good health for older Queenslanders changing for the better?
- Is it the same for everyone?
- Where and for whom are these factors changing?

Health determinants can be broadly divided into ‘upstream’ determinants (education, employment, income, living and working conditions), ‘midstream’ (health behaviours and psychosocial factors) and ‘downstream’ (physiological and biological factors).³ In this section, the upstream determinants are addressed in sections on environmental factors, socioeconomic factors, and midstream determinants in sections on community capacity and health behaviours. Environmental, socioeconomic and community capacity dimensions impact on physical and mental health within the spheres of societal or community, household and individual determinants of health.

As this report focuses on modifiable determinants of health, the person-related factors dimension of the *National Health Performance Framework* is not included. All determinants of health indicators are reported in the domain where there is the greatest opportunity for health gains. Thus, physiological or biological factors that may be partially addressed through behaviour change have been included in the health behaviour dimension.

Actions to address these health needs are described in section 4.5.