



PROF.
SHANTHI
AMERATUNGA



Friday 18 September,
9:00am – 9:30am

A paediatrician and public health physician by training, Shanthi is a Professor of Public Health at the University of Auckland and Senior Researcher at Counties Manukau Health (Population Health Directorate and Kidz First Hospital). Her internationally recognized research focuses on transport and health, injury prevention, trauma care and disability. Her work is motivated by the challenging gaps between the rhetoric and reality of community wellbeing from an equity perspective. As she sees it, this has much to do with who is at the table and who is out of sight and out of mind. She has published widely and serves on multiple national and international advisory boards. She and her work with national and international collaborators have been recognised with the Te Manāia Leadership Award for Injury Prevention and the Prince Michael International Road Safety Award.

Closing the Gap: Active travel for older and disabled people

Shanthi leads the Inclusive Streetscapes project, working with a highly skilled multi-disciplinary team of researchers, practitioners and community partners. This is a community-based participatory research project funded by the Health Research Council of New Zealand and involved go-along qualitative interviews with 62 older and/or disabled people in Auckland's multi-ethnic communities, in-depth key informant interviews and a web survey of a broad range of transport professionals. The project has generated critical insights on how people are enabled or disabled in their aspirations for active travel. Drawing on the project's key findings, this presentation highlights the transformative changes required to enable older people and disabled people to live the lives they value. The findings have implications for transport planning, urban design and policies, and most importantly, approaches to community consultation.