



## CALL TO ACTION

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### **Transforming Māori outcomes through regulating cannabis**

**Regulating cannabis should be about achieving equity and justice.**

**In Aotearoa, that means ensuring that regulations are designed with and by Māori, under a Te Tiriti o Waitangi framework, and that they work to promote the mana motuhake of hapū and iwi Māori.**

This statement draws on the expertise of more than 50 Māori leaders, in a call to action to ensure that Māori outcomes are improved if cannabis is legalised after the 2020 referendum.

Substance use issues and the criminalisation of Māori for drug use have been a result of colonisation – there were no substance use issues in te ao Māori in precolonial times. These colonially imposed problems undermined hauora Māori, mana tangata and mana motuhake.

Māori are more likely to suffer harm from cannabis use, less likely to be able to access health treatment, and are far more likely to be convicted than other groups.

The Government's proposed cannabis framework acknowledges that Māori are disproportionately harmed by prohibition and emphasises the need to protect Māori rights and interests should cannabis become legal. So far though, the Crown has not provided detail on how it intends to meet these obligations to Māori. This call to action sets out a clear direction for the Crown.

**Achieving better health, social justice and economic outcomes for Māori communities through the regulation of cannabis must be explicitly stated as a top priority for the Government.**

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#### **Our call to action on cannabis regulation:**

- Regulation must be about righting the wrongs of the past, and empowering and supporting the people who have suffered disproportionate harms. This could include an apology and acknowledgement of wrongs, alongside concrete pathways for redress, such as wiping previous cannabis-related convictions.
- Whānau, hapū and iwi Māori must be meaningfully engaged at each point in the development of the regulations, through negotiation, and in a process of co-design. A kaupapa Māori agency with broad mandate should be recognised to lead on behalf of Māori.
- The regulatory model must be designed to promote mana motuhake, mana tangata and hauora Māori across the areas of health, justice, and economic development.

- The model should not be able to be hijacked by profit motives. This means keeping at least part of the supply chain non-profit. Regulations should be completely watertight at putting public health, and kaupapa Māori, interests above industry interests.

### **The principles underpinning this are:**

- The paramount importance of Māori leadership and indigenous knowledge in achieving just and equitable outcomes for Māori.
- The recognition of mana motuhake, mana tangata and hauora Māori in transforming outcomes for Māori.
- The accountability of the Crown to Māori: Recognition of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Māori text) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

### **Specific examples of how to achieve this are:**

- Radical redesign of the health system is needed to achieve the improvements required to improve hauora Māori. A percentage of funding for treatment, education and harm reduction should be ear-marked for kaupapa Māori services.
- The legal system should uphold mana tangata and not criminalise anyone for breaches of regulations around use of cannabis or cannabis utensils, home production or cultivation. Any penalties should be civil or administrative only and should not lead to de-facto criminalisation (ie through unpaid civil fines).
- The regulatory model should recognise that the potential economic benefits of legalisation are linked with mana motuhake for Māori. A production and distribution model should be selected that would favour Māori communities who might want to participate in the legal market, and smaller-scale, regional and rural operations.

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### **Leaders who have signed on to the call to action:**

Dr Clive Aspin Public health researcher, human rights activist	Mark Lawrence Medical specialist, academic
Toni Atariki Artist	Dr Keri Lawson-Te Aho Activist, academic
Maria Baker CEO, Te Rau Ora	Helen Leahy Pouārahi/ Chief Executive Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu
Turaukawa Bartlett Kaiwhakahononga, Māori Hauora Workforce Development	Leilani Maraku Manukura
Aimee Bartlett Kaiwhakahononga, Māori Hauora Workforce Development	Donna Matahaere-Atariki Director

John Bracken AOD Counsellor	Lisa McNab Kaimahi Māori
Kerri Butler Ihomatua Kaiwhakahaere	Moe Milne Kaumatua
Dr Vanessa Caldwell Clinical Executive	Renee Muru-Barnard Primary Health Care Manager
Dr Teah Carlson Academic	Laura O'Connell Rapira Director, ActionStation
Matekitawhiti Chase Māori Services Manager, Pou Arahi Roopu Awhina	Tracey Potiki Kaimahi
Tamara Christie Communications and Marketing Officer	Tuari Potiki Chair, New Zealand Drug Foundation
Kelsey Curtis Registered Nurse	Khylee Quince Associate Professor
Whariki Gardiner Manawa Pou	Puawai Rangiua Activist, educator, healer
Sharna-Lee Haimona Kaimanaaki	Waireti Roestenburg Lecturer, protector
Hineroa Hakiaha Nurse Lead Māori	Tina Russell Mental Health Professional
Selah Hart CEO, Hāpai Te Hauora	Eugene Ryder Social Change Agent
Dr Matire Harwood Kaupapa Māori GP, academic	Rose Selwyn Primary Health Social Worker
Wendy Hayward-Morey Whānau Ora Kaiarahi	Devon Seymour Ngā Pou Mana Tangata Whenua Allied Health
Rose Heta-Minhinnick Peer	Trevor Simpson Deputy Executive Director
Ngatai Huata Mātauranga Māori Cultural Social Academic & Activist	Paora Stanley CEO, Ngāi Te Rangi Settlements Trust
Dr Reena Kainamu Academic, activist, health practitioner	Phyllis Tangitu GM Māori Health
Martin Kaipō Chief Executive Officer	Mel Tuliau Hauora Manager
Ken Kerehoma Cultural Advisor	Anne Waapu Kaupapa Māori Researcher

Dr Jacquie Kidd Associate Professor	Katrina Wahanui Clinical Leader
Carole Koha Pou Kaihautu	Roxanne Waru Kaiwhakahaere, Ngā Pou Mana Tangata Whenua Allied Health
Tawhiti Kunaiti Principal Cultural Leader	Julia Whaipooti Justice Advocate