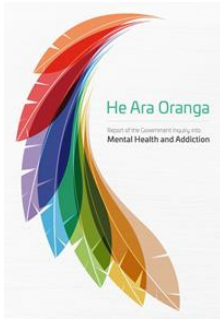


# Platform Key Election Messages

## 1. Communities have the answers, trust them and let's make it happen

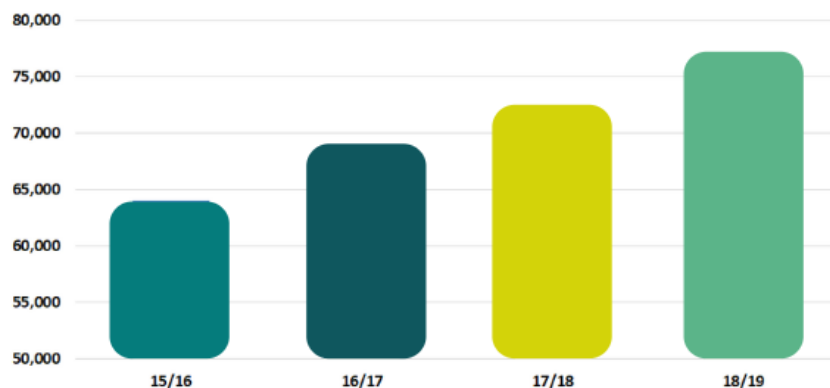


Recent major reports clearly state that significant changes for mental health and addiction wellbeing need to happen in the community not in hospital. Now is the time to trust the community sector to deliver.

During the COVID-19 lockdown, the community mental health and addiction sector was there for New Zealanders. Organisations rapidly went into action providing contact, connection and supporting people to use technology. People were housed, food was organised, visits were made, medical appointments were kept, and shopping was done. Reassurance was given. Post COVID-19, this continues to be how organisations support people in the community.

Every year, the number of people seen by the community mental health and addiction sector increases. With more resource we could do more to help people sooner and keep them out of hospital. We are nimble and can develop new ways of working quickly.

Number of people receiving Mental Health & Addiction treatment from NGOs



**We need a government that will trust what it's heard from people and put this into action.**

## **2. The community sector workforce is critical and valued**

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Over 4,000 people are employed by community mental health and addiction organisations all over New Zealand. This critical workforce reflects the diversity of New Zealand. They do a wide range of work and come from many different backgrounds.

The community workforce includes support workers, peer workers, nurses, social workers, and other health professionals.

Almost 40% of the mental health and addiction workforce is in the community, yet they are paid less than people doing equivalent roles within government.

We need to be able to pay these skilled workers equally no matter who they work for. Government needs to pay community organisations a fair price for the work they do and not less than their own staff.

**We need a government that will address this injustice.**

## **3. A system where no one is excluded**

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He Ara Oranga stated clearly that the people with the most needs are often the most excluded. People who live with mental health and addiction issues often experience discrimination, unemployment, inadequate housing and live with other health or disability issues.

He Ara Oranga also highlighted that mental health and addiction support to people across New Zealand is inconsistent, including the way community services are funded. Why for example should some Māori organisations continue to be paid less than non-Māori for providing the same services?

We want New Zealand to be a positive place for *all* people with mental health and addiction issues to live and work.

**We need a government that will work with the community sector to continue implementing the recommendations made in He Ara Oranga.**