

The Maori Party

Summary: it is vitally important that kaupapa Maori services are expanded. However, this doesn't feel like a cohesive approach to addressing the lack of appropriate services for Maori.

Mental health

- There is clear intention to improve the availability of services for kaupapa Maori such as residential centres, community-based programmes, resourcing whanau to develop their own solutions to suicide, implementing the Turamarama Declaration, expanding the rangatahi suicide prevention strategy.
- Commitment to investment in developing the Whanau Ora model is positive to explore how best to achieve positive outcomes for Maori.

- While lowering the threshold to access appropriate support for individuals experiencing distress sounds good in theory, without increased funding, resources, training incentives etc it is hard to know how this will be implemented.



Reality checks...

- School based health youth mental health workers and counsellors would still be referring young people to existing services that are under strain.

Addictions

- There is good evidence to show that adapting and expanding specialist courts such as the Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Courts and the New Beginnings and Special Circumstances Courts currently being trialled is a good initiative.
- There are specific policies for alcohol and tobacco in addition to other drug policies.

- While obliterating synthetic cannabis and other psychoactive substances from communities is a good goal, there is no clear direction for how this will be achieved.



Reality checks...

- Focussing on increasing the numbers of beds and prison addiction services is unlikely to achieve the outcomes sought for Maori. More focus and investment should be put into prevention and early intervention.

A take home point from our experts...

The reason thresholds for access are currently in place is that there are just not enough services to go around. More investment in an appropriate range of services and workforce groups is necessary to be able to work with more people in a variety of settings.