

The Opportunities Party

Summary: This policy has a different approach to mental health and addictions. This is the first policy to suggest that funding should operate differently so that communities get the mental health and addictions support they want and need. It does not offer much for non-youth.

Mental health

- A universal basic income of \$200 per week to everyone aged 18-23 is a good policy for improving young people's opportunities to thrive.
- This policy shows that the party understands that there are wider social determinants of health and wellbeing and acknowledges the role of poverty/deprivation.
- This policy is the only one to suggest that alternative funding channels should be explored to the current model of continued channelling of funding through the Ministries and DHBs. Funding is instead channelled through Local Authorities.

Addictions continued...

- Introducing minimum pricing for alcohol is recommended as the best lever to achieve social change in drinking behaviour.
- It is unclear why the \$300 million revenue from alcohol price increases would only be targeted at youth mental health support and drug and alcohol treatment. There is high need across all demographics and this seems contradictory to allowing communities to shape services based on need.

Addictions

- Changing the legal age for alcohol purchase to 20 years could be a good strategy. However there are some 'reality checks' associated with this idea (see red box).
- The principles for drug law reform have a strong harm reduction focus.



Reality checks...

- Changing the drinking age may not reduce as much harm as intended. The largest group of hazardous users currently is aged 18-24 years old.
- There is no specific focus on Maori who should be a priority population in this area.

A take home point from our experts...

There is actually a lot of evidence about what works in mental health, but it's not an easy one thing. We think some more research is needed to understand the combinations of things that lead to quality support. A great start identifying the housing first model and youth one stop shops.