

# United Future

Summary: This policy has a good health-centred harm reduction approach to drug policy. The mental health policy has good intentions for addressing existing issues and understands that workforce development and increased funding are necessary. However, there is a focus on youth mental health only.

## Mental health

- Increasing the number of community-based mental health workers, increasing resources for mental health professionals and improving workforce development are very much needed.
- Making funding available for youth-focussed counselling is important.
- Providing funding for research to address mental health issues will be beneficial.
- Working toward reducing stresses on young people by making education free and improving housing affordability is good.

- While a focus on young people is important in this area, there is a question around where the initiatives are for other age groups also experiencing high need.



## Reality checks...

- There is no specific focus on Maori who should be a priority population in this area.
- There is a lack of detail about how the workforce will be developed and the funding will be increased (and directed) to achieve these goals.

## Addictions

- The principles for drug law reform have a strong harm reduction and health-centred focus. These policies are largely consistent with the New Zealand Drug Foundation's proposed drug law reform.
- The creation and maintenance of sufficient drug and alcohol services is needed.
- Moving Class C drugs to the Psychoactive Substances Act 2013 rather than creating new legislation is a positive move.

## A take home point from our experts...

It seems that a lot of thought has gone into addictions policy here, but that the mental health policy is very lacking in detail. This is interesting given the high incidents of these issues being present together in people's lives.