



New Zealanders for
HEALTH RESEARCH
Ngā Tāngata o Aotearoa mō
te Rangahau Hauora

Ka Whakarauoratia te Hunga e te Rangahau Hauora! Health Research Saves Lives!

Newsletter of New Zealanders for
Health Research (NZHR)
December 2021; No. 48

*“New Zealand’s peak body representing
the entire health and medical research
pipeline”*

Greetings, tēnā koutou and Meri Kirihimete from Chief Executive Chris Higgins



In this last issue of our newsletter for 2021 the NZHR team wishes to thank our members and stakeholders for your support and contributions during this year. We experienced a number of headwinds in 2021 and being aware of the appreciation of influencers and key people who had our back was an important source of motivation and encouragement to hang in there and keep on going. We extend very best wishes for Christmas and the festive season to you all and look forward to continuing to engage in 2022.

To round off the year we’ve got quick updates covering:

- NZHR’s submission to the Pae Ora Legislation Committee
- NZHR’s engagement with the health research sector and the RSI Green Paper
- Our continuing efforts to see an increase in government health research investment in the 2022 Budget



Health Research and Pae Ora (Healthy Futures) Legislation

The [Pae Ora \(Healthy Futures\) Bill](#), sponsored by Health Minister Andrew Little (pictured), has passed its first reading and has been referred to the specially created Pae Ora Legislation Committee [Pae Ora Legislation - New Zealand Parliament \(www.parliament.nz\)](#) for further consideration.

As noted in our November newsletter the Bill defines the health system as comprising, among other agencies, the Health Research Council, including the activities it funds, and goes on to state that developing the required New Zealand Health Plan (to provide a 3-year costed plan for the delivery of publicly-funded services) must take into account the role of the Health Research Council within the health system.

Although this is an excellent start it is only the beginning. Much of what the reformed health system will look like will be embedded in “strategic, accountability, and monitoring” documents such as the Government Policy Statement on Health, national health strategies for Hauora Māori, Pacific Health and Disability Health, the New Zealand Health Plan, locality plans, the New Zealand Health Charter, and a Code of Consumer Participation. With the partial exception of the New Zealand Health Plan there’s no specific requirements for any of the documents to promote or be informed by the results of health research, and none of them are required to be subject to general public consultation.

In response NZHR has submitted that the legislation should include requirements for:

- all components of the reformed health system to adopt an overt evidence base to their functions and strategies;
- a health research and innovation strategy covering all aspects of health research and innovation together with all sources of funding and investment;

A key plank of our submission is that “health research saves” lives, particularly the lives of the 7000 per year, including 1500 Māori, who die prematurely because the research which would identify effective interventions and innovations has either not been invested in and/or been done.

The next step will be to present our submission orally and in person to the Pae Ora Legislation Committee when it meets in Auckland - most likely on 26th January.

Thanks to all NZHR members and others who contributed to the submission, which can be viewed on our website [here](#).

Te Ara Paerangi Future Pathways Green Paper



As noted in our last newsletter we have indicated to MBIE that we intend to actively and fully engage with the Te Ara Paerangi - [Future Pathways Green Paper](#) consultation process and play our part in ensuring best possible outcomes for health research.

As a first step there’s an open invitation to **SAVE THE DATE** of the afternoon of **Wednesday 23rd February** 2022 when NZHR will be hosting an on-line workshop to gather stakeholder input to inform a submission on behalf of the health research sector, before the 2nd March closing date. More to come.

One of our starting points will be observations from Te Pūrongo Rangahau Pūtaiao Me Te Auahatanga, [The Research, Science and Innovation Report](#) 2021, which indicates that government investment in health R&D has remained static, start-up investment in pharmaceuticals, biotechnology & life sciences has fallen, relative

quality of health and medical research has fallen, data to measure the impact of health and other research, science and innovation activities on organisations and people is limited, and the number of crown research institute and university Māori and Pasifika health and medical scientists domestically has remained largely static. We will also see if cues can be taken from health research organisations' submissions on MBIE's original draft RSI strategy, available [here](#).

MBIE has already run a number of consultation workshops, most of which have now been and gone. However NZHR is participating in a webinar on 26th January for people who work in businesses, local government, NGOs, or other organisations that interact with the Research, Science and Innovation system but do not receive substantial portions of their funding from central government for research, science and innovation activities. Register [here](#).

MBIE hopes to gain understanding through peer discussion of issues and lived experiences of people who interact with the system that will help them to address underlying problems - especially in relation to applied research, research impact, commercialisation and knowledge transfer - through their policy development processes.

Increasing investment in health research



Again, as mentioned in our last newsletter, over the last couple of years NZHR has attempted to secure increased government investment in health research through the Budget Policy Statement formal submission processes. However in both years it was our experience that by that time key budget decisions had already been made and that opportunities to influence any outcomes were at best limited.

This year we attempted to get in earlier by writing directly to MBIE with a [case](#) recommending that MBIE:

1. allocates an additional \$26m of specific and exclusive new health research investment in the 2022/23 budget, with an emphasis on mental health research
2. commits in the 2022/23 budget to a three year investment trajectory comprising further year on year increases in specific and exclusive new health research funding of an additional \$30.4m in 2023/24, a further additional \$35.6m in 2024/25, and a further \$41.7 again in 2025/26.
3. strongly recommends to government formal adoption of a ten-year 2.4% of government healthcare costs health research investment trajectory, representing increases of 17.1% per year

In respect of point 3 we note the government's aspirational goal for New Zealand's R&D expenditure to be 2.0% of GDP by 2027. We have said to MBIE that increasing government health research investment to 2.4% of health care costs over the next ten years equates to just 1.44% by 2027. In this context NZHR's third recommendation appears to be very modest.

MBIE's responses to these overtures have been inconclusive and we were advised that because the government's finances are coming under increasing pressure from the costs of responding to Covid 19 the Minister of Finance is not viewing favourably proposals requiring new or additional expenditure. NZHR has therefore argued

directly to Finance Minister Grant Robertson (pictured) for what we believe is a special case for increased health research investment.

In our [letter](#) we say that this matters because the country stands to forgo not only the approximately 3:1 economic returns from greater investment, but also opportunities to save New Zealanders' lives - particularly the lives of the 7000 per year, including 1500 Māori, who die prematurely because the research which would identify effective interventions and innovations has neither been invested in nor been done.

Support the NZHR cause



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Join or encourage other organisations to join NZHR's alliance to be part of lifting New Zealand's investment in health and medical research and to advocate for:

- increased government investment in health research
- embedding health research as an essential component of the health system, creating clear pathways for results to impact on New Zealanders' health outcomes
- an environment which encourages the opportunity for industry organisations' health and medical research initiatives to flourish and grow
- a well informed society which highly values health and medical research

Membership benefits



In addition to enhanced organisational profile through publicly supporting a great cause and a brighter future for kiwis through increased investment in health and medical research, NZHR membership benefits include:

Lobbying and advocacy

- Peak body lobbying support for your organization's pan-sector issues
- Opportunity to benefit from increased investment in health research
- Opportunity to contribute to and have brand acknowledgement on NZHR advocacy and lobbying position papers

NZHR Influence

- Contribute to NZHR strategic and work plans
- Participation in NZHR governance including Board representation and general meeting voting rights

NZHR Kantar annual public opinion polls

- Request poll questions
- Customised poll data
- Free attendance at presentation events

NZHR communications

- Enhanced members only versions of newsletters and publications
- Contributions to newsletter and website content
- Newsletter, publication and website advertising, profiling and branding

- NZHR promotional collateral branding

Workshops and conferences

- Complementary registrations
- Speaker nominations
- Collateral and activity/event branding
- Prior access to delegate lists

Membership is open to any organisation with an interest in health or medical research and its outcomes. Potential new members can email Chris Higgins, ceo@nz4healthresearch.org.nz for more information and a membership application form. Logos of current members and supporters are displayed below.

We hope you appreciate reading our newsletters, and we welcome any suggestions both for topics to cover and for improving how we do things. Feedback can be given to us by clicking [here](#)

Visit our website www.nz4healthresearch.org.nz to find out more about what we do and like and follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#)

Ngā mihi, stay well and until next time

Chris Higgins
Chief Executive

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