

# Pae Ora (Healthy Futures)(Improving Mental Health) Amendment Bill

## March 2024



New Zealand Council Of  
Christian Social Services

### Tirohanga Whānui | Overview

The New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services (NZCCSS) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on this Mental Health Amendment to the Pae Ora Act. We support the kaupapa to make Mental Health a specific priority of the Minister, but encourage this and other health strategies to be based on evidence-based and people-first practice.

### Taunakitanga | Recommendations

We raise the following points and recommendations for consideration:

#### **Item One – We tautoko the development of a Mental Health Strategy**

We strongly support the inclusion of Mental Health as an area that deserves and requires its own health strategy. We tautoko this move towards ensuring that Mental Health is seen as an area of public concern and support. The people-first approach of a Mental Health strategy is heartening.

#### **Item Two – Ensure that the strategy is evidence-based and people-centred**

We suggest the inclusion that the Mental Health strategy, and that other strategies under this Act, are evidence-based and people-first in their development. We tautoko the requirements under the existing Section 47 to ensure that the Minister must be cognisant of existing strategies, but we encourage the inclusion of strategies across government in this. We particularly recommend the Mana Taiohi and Te Whariki strategies as exemplars of evidence-based, holistic and principle-based strategies that can be drawn from in the development of this and other health strategies.

**Recommendation Proposal 2:** We suggest ensuring that a wide sample of holistic, people-first and evidence-based strategies are used in the development of the Health Strategy

#### **Item Three – Consider the other sectors that require a specific strategy, especially Aged Care**

We strongly recommend that this is used to begin a discussion about the other parts of the sector that require their own Health Strategy. Our strongest recommendation is for the development of an Aged Care Health Strategy. Just as Mental Health across the country is severe enough to warrant a specific strategy, Aged Care in Aotearoa is at the brink of collapse. The specific consideration that a Health Strategy brings could help to turn the tide on Aged Care.

**Recommendation Proposal 3:** We suggest the development of an Aged Care health strategy.

### Ko wai tātou | Who we are

NZCCSS has six foundation members; the Anglican Care Network, Baptist Churches of New Zealand, Catholic Social Services, Presbyterian Support and the Methodist and Salvation Army Churches.

Through this membership, NZCCSS represents over 230 organisations providing a range of social support services across Aotearoa. We believe in working to achieve a just and compassionate society for all, through our commitment to our faith and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Further details on NZCCSS can be found on our website [www.nzccss.org.nz](http://www.nzccss.org.nz).

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