



# Briefing to the Incoming Government

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Social  
Service  
Providers

Te Pai  
Ora o  
Aotearoa



## We can collectively achieve change.

### As a social sector leader & bridge builder,

#### Te Pai Ora SSPA:

- advises government from a sector-perspective on key social sector issues
- is a bridge-builder between community-based social services and government
- is a go-to source of information about social services and the issues facing children, families and whānau
- strengthens workforce capability and practice through learning and development offerings



#### Our calls to action:

##### Increased funding and investment

- We invite a discussion on sustainable funding and investment in the sector to ensure ongoing community-based services can fully support their communities
- A united approach across government and implement models such as Social Sector Commissioning

##### A sustainable and thriving workforce

- A social sector workforce plan, to address current issues, grow the workforce and future-proof sector capacity and capability
- Complete the extension of the social work pay equity settlement with urgency
- Pay equity for all other social service workers – progress the social service workers claim to settlement
- Investment in kaimahi hauora initiatives to bolster the workforce and support kaimahi retention

##### A revitalised role for community-based social services to enable thriving children, families and whānau

- A children, rangatahi, families and whānau centred approach
- Increased devolution of social services to community-based providers
- Better data collection and evidence to track progress for community-based government initiatives



# About Social Service Providers Te Pai Ora o Aotearoa

Te Pai Ora SSPA is a membership-based national organisation, comprising of over 200 community-based social service organisations from around Aotearoa New Zealand, in both rural and urban locations.

## Our Vision

Aotearoa New Zealand's community-based social services are sustainable, making a positive impact every day in our communities, supporting children, rangatahi and whānau to thrive now and into the future.

**230** member organisations across the motu

**22** years as a collective membership of community-based social services

## Our Purpose

As a membership-based organisation of community-based social services, we represent our members nationally by championing them, the issues that matter to them, the people they work alongside, and our collective sector.

## Our Values

**Hononga ki waenga**  
Relationship-centred



We hold relationships central to what we do & how we work.

**Whakamana**  
Empowering



We empower & enable each other - within & beyond SSPA.

**Whanake Growth & Development**



We are committed to continuous growth & development.

**Māia**  
Courage



We act with courage & vision, informed by the past while focusing on the present & future.

**Auaha**  
Innovative



We are creative & innovative in our approaches & thinking.

## Our Mission

Strengthening Aotearoa New Zealand's social sector through advocacy and engagement, learning and development, relationships and sector leadership.

## How we do it

We listen, innovate, and rally with our members, advocating for them and positive outcomes for the children, rangatahi, families and whānau who they work alongside every day. We acknowledge Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand, and are committed to whānau Māori outcomes that are equitable and fulfil Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

## Our members are changemakers in their communities and hapori

Our member organisations are diverse, including both region-specific and national social service providers, kaupapa Māori, Iwi social service organisations and Pacific providers. Our Full Members are funded by government to deliver social services in our communities. Our members deliver a wide range of services, including sexual violence, family violence, budgeting, mental health, education, health and services to older people.



## Our funding

Te Pai Ora SSPA's primary funders are Oranga Tamariki and the Ministry of Social Development through a 3-year integrated outcome funding agreement. This strong and high-trust working relationship with government supports us to improve community-based support for services.

We also receive funds from membership fees and income from our conference, training programmes and other projects. In 2023 we again had membership growth, showing we are seen as a strong, credible voice for the community-based social services sector.

## Our history and identity

Te Pai Ora SSPA was built by our members, brought together in their support for children, rangatahi, families and whānau; today we continue that collective tradition.

Our name reflects our whakapapa, the essence of our mahi and the aspirations we hold for the people of our country. Our rerenga kōrero, Te Pai Ora o Aotearoa, was gifted to us by Ngāti Toa Rangatira, meaning 'to improve the wellbeing of all in Aotearoa'. Our tohu represents new potential, growth and unfurling development amongst the families, whānau and hāpori Te Pai Ora SSPA members work with and in.



## Who we are

### Team

- **Belinda Himiona, Ngāti Apa and Ngāti Hauiti, Kaiwhakahaere Matua | Chief Executive Officer**
- Fiona Bawden, Policy & Information
- Clare Docherty, Learning & Development
- Sarah Fullarton-Boyce, Communications
- Rachel Grant, Office Co-ordinator
- Brenda Pilott, Pay Equity Lead

### National Executive

We practice a Te Tiriti o Waitangi-based model of governance, with equitable tangata whenua and tauwi representation, and tangata whenua and tauwi Co-Chairs.

- **Zoe Witika-Hawke - Co-Chair, Ngāti Hako, Ngāti Paoa, Kaiwhakahaere Matua CEO of E Tipu E Rea Whānau Services**
- **Victoria Newcombe – Co-Chair, GM Social Services for Presbyterian Support Upper South Island**
- Tuhi Leef – Treasurer, Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Whātua, GM for Pillars Ka Pou Whakahou
- Marihi Langford - Ngāti Kuri, CEO of Tuhiata Mahi Ora Trust
- Judy Matai'a - Head of Housing and Pasefika Development at Visionwest Waka Whakakitenga
- Claire Ramsay - CEO of the Otago Youth Wellness Trust



# Our Mahi and Impact

## Policy and Advocacy

We advocate for system-level changes that support the aspirations and outcomes of children, rangatahi, families and whānau, strengthening our community-based social services. We draw on sector experiences and insights to advocate effectively and inform our engagement with government.

Te Pai Ora SSPA performs this role through:

- Submissions to parliamentary select committees. Recent examples are the Oranga Tamariki Amendment Bill, and the Social Workers Registration Legislation Amendment Bill
- Representing members' views to government ministers. One example is our policy paper Cyclone & flooding response & recovery shared with government agencies and Ministers
- Engaging with government on policy, planning, service design and systems level reviews
- Providing a community-based social service sector voice on committees and consultation bodies, and speaking out publicly on matters of widespread concern

## Listening, communicating with and informing the sector

Our members consistently tell us they particularly value the role we play in curating key information, helping them to keep up-to-date with key developments and mahi.

- We produce a weekly e-pānui Te Whakahou, providing curated social sector information
- In 2023 we launched our refreshed website to meet the needs of our members' with sector information and engagement
- We had growth in 2023 in both our Facebook and LinkedIn engagement through increased value-add and audience tailored content such as our Te Reo Māori kupu series
- Kia Mauri Ora – Social Service Excellence in Aotearoa is a magazine produced twice a year

## Learning and Development

Te Pai Ora SSPA provides a range of Learning & Development opportunities. Our L&D offers give kaimahi the opportunity to strengthen collective workforce capability, share experience and mātauranga with fellow kaimahi, and enhance kaimahi hauora.

Offers include:

- Workshops such as Being Trauma-informed in Practice with Dr Nicola Atwood and Do the labels we use for certain populations create exclusion? with Dr Debbie Hager
- Kai & Kōrero: Learning over lunch series, offering members the opportunity to learn about kaupapa from across the community-based social service sector
- The delivery of Kaharawa's tikanga Māori-based KAHA (Koha, Aha, Hōhā, Aroha)

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**Last year Te Pai Ora  
SSPA delivered**

**8** development  
programmes

to **329** attendees

from **109** organisations

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## Sector leadership

### Whakamanawa, the annual National Social Services Conference

Te Pai Ora SSPA hosts Whakamanawa, the annual National Social Services Conference for all those working across the social sector to hui together, be inspired, share learning and keep up-to-date with everything happening in our sector.

- Each year 200+ delegates attend from throughout community-based social services, the government social sector and connected spaces
- Whakamanawa 2024 is being held 16 & 17 September 2024 in Ōtautahi. Keynote speakers in the past include the Minister of Finance, Minister for Children and the Minister for Social Development

### Kaimahi Hauora

Community-based social service providers have faced three years of endurance work through the COVID response, natural disasters and the impact from cost of living pressures, continuing to working tirelessly alongside their communities.

Recognising these demands, Te Pai Ora SSPA has developed a strong focus on supporting the wellbeing of the social service workforce. This led to the establishment of the Kaimahi Hauora Programme launched with the support of Foundation North, Rātā Foundation, Trust Waikato and the Centre for Social Impact. Through this programme, we curated practical resources for leaders and kaimahi to support their practices framed through Te Whare Tapa Whā and the Five Ways to Wellbeing.



### Pay Equity

In August 2019, two pay equity claims were lodged, one relating to people in social work roles, and the other for a broader range of social service workers. Te Pai Ora SSPA has successfully led pay equity work in the social services sector, with a successful settlement of the social work claim and extension. We are the sector representative for the employers in the social service workers claim.



# Calls to Action

Over this next term of government we see several opportunities to come together to collectively achieve change.

## Increased funding and investment

We call for funding that covers the full cost of delivery of quality social services and is CPI adjusted. Investment by government needs to be at a level that reflects the need in communities. Social service providers are facing sustained demand and significant wide-ranging issues presenting in communities. In short, the sector is spread too thinly to meet demand for services due to deepening inequities and increasing complexities being experienced in communities and hapori.



We ask for a collaborative high-trust funding model that enables choice for communities seeking services and support. In particular, Māori are over-represented in the care and protection system. This requires equitable funding that builds the capacity and capability of Iwi and kaupapa Māori social services.

We see synergies between Social Investment and an established model - Social Sector Commissioning, which seeks to reduce bureaucracy and inefficiency and work with community providers to establish sustainable service models.

Social Sector Commissioning could aid efficiency and effectiveness in the funding and delivery of social services under the Social Investment approach.

### Our calls to action:

- We invite a discussion on sustainable funding and investment in the sector to ensure ongoing community-based services can fully support their communities
- A united approach across government and implement models such as Social Sector Commissioning

## A sustainable and thriving workforce

### Workforce

We are seeking investment and support for effective workforce planning, and the building of a resilient and highly skilled workforce to meet the ongoing needs of our changing population demographics. Government social sector agencies need to work together on this, in partnership with the community and voluntary sector.



The sector needs to be able to recruit and retain a capable and experienced workforce, to respond to the needs of the communities with which they work. Investment is needed for ongoing professional development of kaimahi and leaders of social service organisations.

There is a need for an overarching strategy for both the regulated and unregulated workforce. The sector wants to take ownership of its workforce strategy and be an active partner in workforce planning and development. Workforce development is a complex and challenging issue but with the support of the government we can create a more effective social sector serving the needs of children, rangatahi, families and whānau.

#### Our call to action:

- [A social sector workforce plan, to address current issues, grow the workforce and future-proof sector capacity and capability](#)

## Pay Equity

Kaimahi across occupations in the community-based social sector have been underpaid and undervalued for the essential work they do. Te Pai Ora SSPA has played the lead role in securing pay equity for community-based social work roles, as the sector representative for the five employers in the social workers claim and a pivotal cross-sector role in the implementation of the extension of the settlement to all those in social work roles employed by community providers. Te Pai Ora SSPA is the representative for the employers in the social service workers claim.

The Pay Equity extension implementation is ongoing. Urgent work is needed to correct issues in two areas. A number of providers have not had professional development included in contracts and others did not have their data received by funders. Failure to resolve these issues will have serious implications for these providers and services to hapori. Looking ahead to 1 July 2024 we need to ensure payment schedules are ready well in time for providers to continue social worker payments under new contracts.

Alongside this, we now turn towards deepening our mahi on pay equity in our role as sector representative in the social service workers pay equity claim. This is a larger and more complex claim than the social workers claim. It encompasses a much wider range of roles, more funders, and more providers. Under the current system, it will be a lengthy and expensive claim to investigate.

This means a settlement is needed as soon as possible. Any streamlining of the processes involved will assist, together with assurance from government of funding in-principle to allow the parties to the claim to proceed.

We are seeking the government's support to enable this claim to progress. A pay equity settlement is a significant building block for the sustainability of government's partner agencies in the delivery of key services to families and whānau.

#### Our calls to action:

- [Complete the extension of the social work pay equity settlement with urgency](#)
- [Pay equity for all other social service workers – progress the social service workers claim to settlement](#)





## Kaimahi Hauora – intentional practices nurturing the workforce



At a sector level, there is much more we can do to take care of our workers. We must not underestimate the impact that changes such as the provision of wellbeing days, flexible working arrangements, four day weeks or nine day fortnights, kai boxes and other wellbeing supports can make.

But to enable these, government must also come to the table to support kaimahi hauora, so that kaimahi across our community and voluntary sector are able to keep all sides of their Te Whare Tapa Whā strong, while helping others too.

### Our call to action:

- Investment in kaimahi hauora initiatives to bolster the workforce and support kaimahi retention

## A revitalised role for community-based social services to enable thriving children, families and whānau

More broadly, right now is the perfect time to re-consider how the community-based social sector can complement government to provide greater support for children and whānau. Over recent years, there have been countless reviews, academic studies, Waitangi Tribunal findings, NGO research and current inquiries such as the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care which all point to an urgent need to revitalise the social service system and the role of the community sector within it. We encourage a conversation to find the right balance between community-led social service approaches and government in the devolution of funding, resourcing and decision-making power for services in communities.

### Our calls to action:

- A children, rangatahi, families and whānau centred approach
- Increased devolution of social services to community-based providers
- Better data collection and evidence to track progress for community-based government initiatives

## How to find us

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Our tari is located in ACE House, Thorndon, Te Whanganui-a-tara.

Our website is [www.sspa.org.nz](http://www.sspa.org.nz) and our social channels are [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

