

Standing Up for Social Services Kaimahi Hauora

Social Service Providers

Te Pai Ora o Aotearoa



Our Calls to Action to all political parties, 2023

At Social Service Providers Te Pai Ora o Aotearoa, our vision is for Aotearoa New Zealand's community-based social services to be sustainable, making a positive impact every day in our communities, supporting children, rangatahi and whānau to thrive now and into the future.

The past few years have been tough for everyone, including for our community-based social services and the dedicated, professional kaimahi (workers) who walk alongside whānau and hapori every day.

They've told us there needs to be a stronger focus on supporting their wellbeing as workers, so they can continue to do their essential mahi, and remain strong and well while doing this work. Through the social services kaimahi hauora initiatives we've delivered over the past few years at Social Service Providers Te Pai Ora o Aotearoa, we've also seen first-hand the difference that a focus on worker wellbeing can make.

That's why we're standing up for social services kaimahi hauora, for all community-based social services workers.

We're calling on all parties to stand up for social services kaimahi hauora and commit to:

Investing in social services kaimahi hauora initiatives.

This will help to bolster the workforce & support kaimahi retention; send a message to kaimahi that they are valued, & that the mahi they do alongside whānau is essential & important.

Exercising a practical commitment to social services kaimahi hauora in all social service commissioning & contracting arrangements, & through pay equity for all social service workers.

This will signal the importance focusing on kaimahi hauora to all community-based social service organisations by making it a focus of commissioning discussions, enabling organisations to be funded to support the wellbeing of their kaimahi through contracts that invest in this. All social service workers should be paid equitably & fairly for the work they do, every day.

Co-developing with the community-based & government social sector a Social Services Workforce Plan that includes a core focus on social services kaimahi hauora.

This will support a collective, planned approach to issues like kaimahi retention, cultural safety, growing the workforce, responding to demographic shifts & workforce capability.



Learn more & read real stories from community-based social services kaimahi at [sspa.org.nz](https://www.sspa.org.nz)



Here's what community-based social services kaimahi have told us...

98% of those who responded to our poll at Whakamanawa 2023 - The National Social Services Conference (in May 2023) said they wanted to see **more investment in social services kaimahi hauora, so they in turn can keep supporting the whānau and hapori who they work with.**

In their own words community-based social services kaimahi around the motu have shared their whakaaro with us about what will make a difference when it comes to social services kaimahi hauora. Here's some of what they have to say:

"Our employers need to be supported to put a focus on our wellbeing as workers. We need access to resources to support workforce wellbeing, and specific ongoing training and development."

"We need investment into our social services so that we can actually be investing in things that help our workers to be well in their work, and that support them to navigate the challenges inherent in the work."

"Can we have access to a social sector Employee Assistance Programme? All government workers get EAP. We need it too, and it should include rongoā options."

"We need more flexible working arrangements that enable us to do the mahi and keep strong. We should be trialing the 4-day work week, and have 5 weeks annual leave in any organisation."

"Funding for support to access things like gym membership, rongoa, massages, breathing classes, things that would practically help out."

"Our social services workplaces need to have intentional practices that replenish their workforce, separate from professional development."

"Having more opportunities to connect with each other across our social services would be good, through connection we can grow innovation and be supported in our work too."

"We need more focus on leadership support and development, and training to help staff manage anxiety and stress. And address bullying in the sector."

"Government funders factoring paid stress leave/wellbeing leave and paid mental health days into contracting arrangements... would make a difference."

"Kaimahi need realistic caseloads, and time and space to find out what works for their own hauora."

"A commitment to traditional hauora practices or mirimiri, pure, etc. These are not just 'nice things. These are essentials to kaimahi hauora."

"Longer term, better funded contracts, which enable longer term certainty for our teams - building strong, capable workforces on 12 month contracts is a nonsense."

"I would like to see government show commitment to Te Aorerekura, the National Strategy to Eliminate Family Violence and Sexual Violence Shift 3: towards skilled, culturally competent and sustainable workforces. I would like to see more financial resources for staff to access training to respond safely to whānau and tamariki who have experienced Family harm."

"I would love more ways to connect as a sector and also tikanga, how we can embed the practice into every day. Share more stories of kaimahi and the work they are doing to support whānau and community. Celebrating the work and making it a norm for people to celebrate themselves and one another."