



Western Bay of Plenty
Primary Health Organisation

TŪNGIA TE URURUA KIA TUPU
WHAKARITORITO TE TUPU
O TE HARAKEKE



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SUBMISSION TO THE HEALTH COMMITTEE ON THE HEALTHY FUTURES (PAE ORA) AMENDMENT BILL ON BEHALF OF WESTERN BAY OF PLENTY PRIMARY HEALTH ORGANISATION

About Western Bay of Plenty Primary Health Organisation (WBOP PHO)

WBOP PHO is a non-profit organisation supporting and delivering primary health care and wellness services through our network of general practices, Iwi partners and community providers from Katikati to Whakatāne. Committed to creating better and more equitable health outcomes, we strive to make services accessible to each person in our community, when and where they need them.

We are a joint venture (JV) between Ngāi Te Rangi Iwi, Ngāti Ranginui Iwi, and Western Bay of Plenty Primary Care Providers Inc (Provider Inc), an umbrella organisation for general practices and other related providers. Our Board comprises 50/50 Iwi partners and Providers Inc. This successful and unique co governance structure was established over 20 years ago.

We are all about ensuring our community receives the care and support it deserves. Our mahi (work) can be anything from coordinating after-hours care, to promoting immunisation, supporting kaupapa Māori and Iwi led services, and providing free counselling sessions or healthy lifestyle programmes. We exist to keep the people in our community well.

Our position

We DO NOT support the Healthy Futures Pae Ora Bill.

Summary of Opposition

The proposed Healthy Futures (Pae Ora) Amendment Bill undermines the foundational equity and Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles embedded in the original Pae Ora (Healthy Futures) Act 2022. This Bill removes legal responsibilities to address health inequities and actively dismantles mechanisms designed to improve Māori health outcomes. It reverses progress made under the recommendations of the Wai 2575 Waitangi Tribunal Report, and weakens commitments to culturally safe, equitable healthcare for all marginalised communities, particularly Māori. The WBOP PHO takes a strong pro-equity approach, as we know that the health system is not



working for all priority groups as identified in the Pae Ora (Healthy Futures) Act 2022. The purpose of the Act 2022 is to achieve equity in relation to health outcomes among all of the population groups of Aotearoa / New Zealand. This includes, striving to eliminate health disparities, in particular, for Māori.

1. Erosion of Equity and Te Tiriti Commitments

- The Bill eliminates the equity provisions from the Act 2022, removing Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora's statutory obligation to address systemic health inequities. It replaces this with an approach framed as "equality"—a uniform, "one size fits all" model that has been shown to be ineffective in practice.
- It undermines the Wai 2575 Hauora Inquiry recommendations, continuing the Government's breach of Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations.
- It strips tino rangatiratanga and mana motuhake from Māori in the health system by downgrading the role of Iwi-Māori Partnership Boards to advisory-only, replacing shared decision-making with a politically appointed Hauora Māori Advisory Committee (HMAC). Māori should have an active **decision-making** role alongside the Crown for Māori health.

2. A Step Backward for Culturally Safe and Inclusive Care

- The Bill removes requirements for tikanga, mātauranga Māori, and cultural competence on Te Whatu Ora's board—at a time when trust and safety in care settings are critical for Māori, Pasifika, Rainbow, Migrant and Takatāpui whānau.
- The removal of Te Mauri o Rongo – The NZ Health Charter undermines efforts to ensure physically, mentally, and culturally safe health workplaces, while working towards Pae Ora at every level of the system.
- Community-based services that build long-term trust, especially those that centre culturally safe, relationship-based models of care, will not be prioritised.

3. Privatisation and Loss of Public Accountability

- The Bill encourages outsourcing healthcare delivery to the private sector, which risks further undermining the capacity and equity focus of our public health system.
- Increasing reliance on for-profit providers will fragment care and move focus away from collective wellbeing and long-term investment in public health equity.



4. Tokenistic Restructuring and Political Signalling

- Changing the title of the Act 2022 from *Pae Ora (Healthy Futures)* to *Healthy Futures (Pae Ora)* has no substantive benefit and requires updates to 40 other pieces of legislation—a costly symbolic change with no impact on health delivery. This is another example of undermining Te Reo Māori as an official language of Aotearoa / New Zealand.

5. Direct Community Impact

- Disability, Rainbow, Migrant, Māori, and Pasifika communities will be directly impacted by the removal of equity-focused planning and funding.
- Culturally competent care is essential; its removal will worsen health disparities and erode trust in the system.
- Health providers that currently deliver equity-led, trusted services to underserved communities will be left unsupported.

Recommendation

Given its departure from Te Tiriti obligations, disregard for the Wai 2575 Waitangi Tribunal Report findings, removal of **equity** as a guiding principle, and dismantling of mechanisms that support Māori health leadership in decision making and culturally competent care, this Bill must be abandoned in full. The Healthy Futures (Pae Ora) Amendment Bill takes us further away from where we need to be in terms of health equity and a healthy future.