



GOVERNMENT INQUIRY INTO
Mental Health and Addiction
Oranga Tāngata, Oranga Whānau

Tēnā koutou katoa, Talofa lava and warm Pacific greetings

The Inquiry panel today formally handed over to the Minister of Health the Honourable Dr David Clark, *He Ara Oranga: Report of the Government Mental Health and Addiction Inquiry*.

Today's handover marks 10 months since establishment of the Inquiry and appointment of panel members. Each phase of the Inquiry – planning, consultation, deliberations and report writing – has been intense and challenging.

Our consultation was launched in April in Palmerston North and led to over 5,200 submissions. For several months, the panel travelled around New Zealand meeting with and listening to people at 26 public forums and at hundreds of meetings with people with lived experience, whānau, service providers and community groups. We heard from all the population groups identified in our terms of reference, tangata whenua and Pacific peoples.

People took the time to phone, write, email, complete online submissions, send videos and post on Facebook. Several thousand people turned up at our meetings from Kaitia to Invercargill. The voices of the people gave us a clear sense of what's working and what's not working in mental health and addiction in Aotearoa, and how to improve wellbeing in our communities.

We are grateful to all the people and organisations who shared stories, ideas and insights with us during the Inquiry. We have been inspired, encouraged and uplifted by your thoughts, prayers and messages.

It has been a privilege to lead this Inquiry. I thank my fellow panel members – Sir Mason Durie, Dr Barbara Disley, Dean Rangihuna, Dr Jemaima Tiatia-Seath and Josiah Tualamali'i – for their dedication and aroha. We brought different backgrounds and perspectives to the Inquiry, but have been united by a sense of responsibility, commitment and hope. We have been supported by an able Secretariat. All of us have worked together closely and shared a determination to fulfil the expectations of so many people – to realise this 'once in a generation' opportunity.

We are confident our report reflects the voices we've heard and sets a clear direction for the future – pathways to wellness – that government, the sector and communities can pick up and implement.

He Ara Oranga is now in the hands of the Government, which will release it publicly after a period of deliberation. We look forward to the report being made available on our website, <https://www.mentalhealth.inquiry.govt.nz/> and to the Government's response to our recommendations.

He mihi mahana ki a koutou

Ron Paterson

Inquiry Chair