

WHAKAHĀ O TE PĀ HARAKEKE

REALISING THE VISION FOR A SMOKEFREE FUTURE

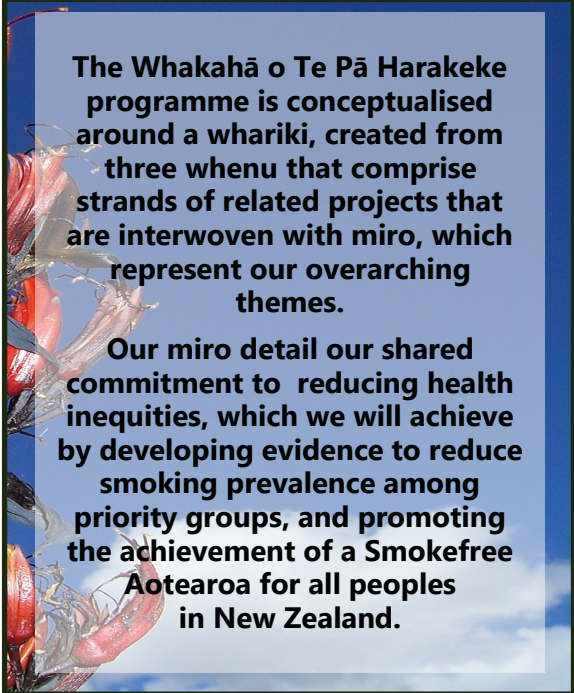
Welcome to the Whakahā o Te Pā Harakeke quarterly newsletter

Our very successful 5 year Whakahā o Te Pā Harakeke programme is coming to a close next year. We are very pleased to announce our success in securing a Health Research Council Programme Grant and Project Grant to continue our research towards a healthier Aotearoa New Zealand. Further details are available on page 2. We look forward to keeping you updated with our progress.

In addition to our newsletters, we provide updates on our work throughout the year via our website. You can view it here:

www.aspireaotearoa.org.nz

Kia kaha, the ASPIRE Aotearoa team.



The Whakahā o Te Pā Harakeke programme is conceptualised around a whariki, created from three whenu that comprise strands of related projects that are interwoven with miro, which represent our overarching themes.

Our miro detail our shared commitment to reducing health inequities, which we will achieve by developing evidence to reduce smoking prevalence among priority groups, and promoting the achievement of a Smokefree Aotearoa for all peoples in New Zealand.

Research snapshots



Is there any evidence that oral tobacco and nicotine products help people stop smoking? Find out more [here](#).



The government have proposed new vaping policies, but critical gaps remain. Find out more [here](#).



The government slashed tax on heated tobacco products— could this help reduce smoking rates? Find out more [here](#).

Plans for the future

Our 5 year Whakahā o Te Pā Harakeke programme is coming to a close next year. We have had a terrific number of outputs from this programme that have enabled us to continue providing a strong evidence-base to support the Smokefree Aotearoa 2025 Goal. You can read about the latest progress from each of the study whenu on page 4. However, there is still much work to do in this space. As a result, we are very pleased to let you know about our recent success in securing grants for two new research projects:

Te Tupu o te Harakeke

The Te Tupu o te Harakeke research programme just started this month, and will run for 5 years. We received almost \$5 million dollars in funding from the Health Research Council to conduct the programme, which will assess factors shaping the rapidly changing tobacco policy environment and identify opportunities to accelerate progress towards tobacco endgame goals. The programme includes integrated qualitative and quantitative studies, and a novel tobacco industry monitoring system. Māori-centred studies will explore policies' meanings and impacts, probe how rangatahi experience vaping and smoking, and explore measures that could elevate their influence on policymaking. We look forward to providing you with more information about each of the studies over the next few newsletters.

Te Hao Hou: Rangatahi Māori experiences and perceptions of smoking and vaping

Inspired by the whakataukī 'ka pū te ruha, ka hao te rangatahi' ('when the old net is cast aside, the new net goes fishing'; often used to refer to intergenerational shifts in leadership), this project centres on elevating Rangatahi Māori voices, experiences, and perspectives in the development of tobacco and nicotine control policies.

This study was awarded a Health Research Council grant for just under \$1.2 million and runs for 3 years. We will partner with up to 20 secondary schools and engage with rangatahi in various ways so we can understand what is happening in their world. Our mixed-methods approach is reflected in the three pillars of the study that will allow us to create a platform for rangatahi Māori voices, survey form-year cohorts of students, and conduct a range of qualitative activities like in-depth interviews, deliberate democracy hui and thought/space wananga to really delve into issues around vaping, tobacco, and nicotine. As researchers we will be led by and will support rangatahi in looking for opportunities for rangatahi themselves to take part in decision making processes, where we can explore their ideas or try to apply them.

The project is being led by Andrew Waa, Karyn Maclennan and Lani Teddy. The team is supported by Micheala Pettie, Richard Edwards, and James Stanley. Alongside the schools, we are partnering with Research New Zealand and Hāpai te Hauora.

You can find out more about the study in [Lani's interview on Waatea News](#) or Karyn's interview with [The Star](#).

Congratulations!

We are thrilled to advise that Dr Jude Ball has received an Early Career Research Award from the University of Otago. This prestigious award recognises the sustained excellence of Jude's research programme, her success in attracting funding, and her outstanding track record of publishing in very high quality journals. It also recognises Jude's exceptional collegiality and leadership. Jude has been impressing us ever since she began working in ASPIRE Aotearoa and we are delighted to see her many talents receive the recognition they deserve.



Jude Ball

Vape store compliance: An update from one of our summer students

Summer Studentships are a great way for students to improve their research skills in an area of interest. Last summer, medical student Lesieli Katoa audited vape retailers' compliance with regulations for single-use vapes. She visited over 70 retailers as a 'mystery shopper' and found that single-use vapes were still widely available at prices school children could afford. Of concern was the number of vape retailers in areas with higher Māori and Pacific populations, which could perpetuate inequities. You can read more about the study on the ASPIRE Aotearoa website [here](#).



Lesieli Katoa

In conjunction with her supervisor Jude Ball, [Lesieli published her findings in the New Zealand Medical Journal in June this year](#). Her findings [gained media interest](#) and will contribute to the evidence base in ASPIRE Aotearoa's public submission on the [proposed amendments to the Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products Amendment Bill](#) to better protect young people from vaping.

Team member update

Welcome to Melissa-Jade Gregan. She has a public health and addictions background, having worked as a dual diagnosis clinician, a health promoter, and a liquor licensing inspector. Melissa-Jade is particularly interested in the systems that support the commercial determinants of health. In 2024, she completed a PhD at the University of Auckland, where she explored how and where alcohol, food, gambling, and tobacco industry actors attempt to influence political decision-making, and the political and legal systems that enable these activities. Melissa-Jade's research at ASPIRE Aotearoa focuses on tobacco industry political activity.



Melissa-Jade

Programme update

Whenu tahi

This whenu includes the Evidence for Achieving Smokefree Aotearoa Equitably (EASE) and INSPIRED projects. EASE is part of an international research programme which follows cohorts of people who smoke or who have recently quit smoking. We recently completed recruitment for Wave 5 of the study, which will provide up-to-date information on the impacts of nicotine addiction, attempts to quit smoking, patterns of use of other nicotine products (including vapes, heated tobacco products, and oral nicotine products), and views on the repeal of the legislation to introduce very low nicotine cigarettes, a reduction in tobacco retailer numbers, and a smokefree generation.

The INSPIRED study monitors progress in the first six countries to adopt 'endgame goals' to minimise smoking prevalence (Aotearoa, Canada, Finland, Ireland, Scotland, and Sweden). We are currently drafting a manuscript on progress between 2018 and 2024, which we will submit for publication later this year.

Whenu rua

Our work has continued to probe vaping among young people and we have published a [new study](#) probing the trajectory from vaping initiation to addiction. Work exploring the tobacco free generation and experiences of vaping addiction are also under review.

Jude Ball's study of [compliance with new vaping regulations](#) was published in the NZMJ and attracted considerable media interest. In line with our new programme's focus on industry interference, we have begun analysing the Hansard repeal debate and hope to have a draft manuscript submitted within the next couple of months. We are still finalising a protocol that outlines key information interviews we will be undertaking to probe interpretations of the smokefree policy repeal and perceived implications for different population groups. We have nearly completed a manuscript analysing industry arguments presented in submissions on the smokefree regulations and we are preparing an invited manuscript on the same topic.

We have been very busy developing Briefings that examine industry influence on the repeal and outline how the decision varied from advice provided by the Ministry of Health to the Health Minister and Associate Health Minister. Three briefings have examined oral nicotine products, how these are marketed, and their efficacy as cessation aids. After discussions with rōpū members and advisors, we have submitted a proposal for future work examining oral nicotine product regulation.

Other work published includes a [review of global tobacco retailing regulation](#) and a review of studies assessing [pharmacy-only supply of tobacco products](#). We have also published a study examining [pictorial warning labels five years post-introduction](#) and three further manuscripts outlining findings from this project are nearing completion.

Whenu toru

This whenu focusses on understanding influences and interactions within the tobacco system. Lindsey MacDonald is leading a Q-methodology study. We asked those with knowledge of the tobacco system to sort statements along a continuum of agreement-disagreement and to comment on this placement. Interviews are now complete, and results are being finalised. Initial findings will be presented at the Oceania Conference in the Gold Coast (23-25 Oct), and a manuscript will be submitted for publication. Sudesh Sharma's work uses a causal loop diagram approach. Further understanding of the complexity and dynamics within the current tobacco system will help to inform future development of effective tobacco control strategy. Sudesh will also be presenting this approach at the Oceania conference and will lead the manuscript outlining this study.

Publications and outputs (page 1 of 2)

JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS

- Canty R, Gartner CE, Hoek J, Hefler M. Global policy scan of commercial combustible tobacco product retailing regulations by WHO region. *Tob Control*. 2024 Aug 7;tc-2023-058523. doi: 10.1136/tc-2023-058523.
- Graham-DeMello A, Sloan O, Frost K, Hoek J. Young people's experiences of addiction to nicotine vaping products: A qualitative analysis from Aotearoa New Zealand. *Drug and alcohol review*. 2024. doi: 10.1111/dar.13902.
- Kim H, Gartner C, Edwards R, Puljević C, Morphett K, Kim DH, Chun HR, Ekdahl M, Kang H. Public Support for Tobacco Endgame Policies: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. *Nicotine Tob Res*. 2024 Jun 19;ntae149. doi: 10.1093/ntr/ntae149.
- Mehegan J, Gallagher A, Elmitwalli S, Edwards R, Gilmore A. Analysis of Philip Morris International's 'aspirational' target for its 2025 cigarette shipments. *Tob Control*. 2024 Aug 3;tc-2023-058511. doi: 10.1136/tc-2023-058511.

PRESENTATIONS

- Ball J. Youth vaping in Aotearoa: Context and trends. Society of Youth Health Professionals (SYHPANZ) conference, New Zealand. 2024
- Ball J, Nip J, What are oral nicotine products and why should you care? School of Public Health Seminar Series. University of Otago New Zealand. 2024.
- Ball J, Nip J, Hoek J. Oral nicotine products: What are they and should they be legal in Aotearoa? Wot Matters Call to Action on Vapes, New Zealand. 2024.
- Hoek J. "Having that possibility... that chance to vape, that is just so bad; they should... really narrow down on that." Lived experiences of youth vaping and policy responses. ASPIRE Aotearoa Webinar. 2024.
- Hoek J, Vapotage parmi les jeunes: Quelques recherches de Nouvelle-Zélande. Presentation to EHESP researchers. 2024.
- Hoek J, What will rise from the ashes? Maintaining smokefree momentum. Key note presentation to The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists' Conference. 2024.
- Hoek J, The NZ Smokefree legislation repeal: The phoenix will rise from the ashes. Invited presentation to WHO FCTC Secretariat, McCabe Centre for Law & Cancer, and the Norwegian Cancer Society Law and Tobacco Control Workshop: Global and European perspectives. 2024.
- Hoek J, Tobacco Endgames and Health Equity. Keynote presentation to Public Health Conference Malaysia. 2024.
- Hoek J, Quelques recherches en tabagisme de Nouvelle-Zélande. Presentation to 1er Séminaire du pôle de recherche sur les comportements, la prévention et les politiques publiques du Centre interdisciplinaire en santé mondiale (CISM). 2024.



Publications and outputs (page 2 of 2)

PRESENTATIONS CONTINUED

- Hoek J. What will rise from the ashes? Maintaining smokefree momentum. Presentation to Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol and other Drugs. 25 2024.
- Hoek J. One step back, two steps forward: Achieving the smokefree 2025 goal for all. Grand Rounds. BOP DHB webinar. 2024.
- Hoek J, The Smokefree legislation repeal: Nicotine use, wellbeing and sleep. Invited presentation, Sleep Symposium, University of Otago. 2024.
- Hoek J, The Smokefree legislation repeal: How can we rise from the ashes. Dept of Preventive and Social Medicine Seminar. 2024.

BRIEFINGS

- Nip J, Ball J, Hoek J, Edwards E, Pettie M, Gregan MJ. [Can oral tobacco and nicotine products help people to stop smoking?](#) Public Health Communication Centre. 2024.
- Edwards R, Thomson G, Broadbent A, Wilson N. [Parliamentary voting for smokefree over two decades: Implications for future progress.](#) Public Health Communication Centre. 2024.
- Hoek J, Graham-DeMello A, Gregan MJ, Waa A, Edwards E. [Contradictions surround Government's move to slash tax on heated tobacco products.](#) Public Health Communication Centre. 2024.
- Hoek J, Ball J, Waa A, Graham-DeMello A, Edwards R, Gregan MJ. [Mind the gap: Associate Health Minister's actions conflict with Ministry advice, align with tobacco industry lobbying.](#) Public Health Communication Centre. 2024.
- Hoek J, Ball J, Nip J, Teddy L, Gregan MJ, Graham-DeMello A, Hardie L, McCool J, Pettie M. [Oral nicotine products: Expanding the nicotine marketplace.](#) Public Health Communication Centre. 2024.
- Hoek J, Bostic C, Wilson N, Sing F. [World moving forward on the smokefree generation - Aotearoa NZ goes backwards.](#) Public Health Communication Centre. 2024.

RESOURCES

- ASPIRE Aotearoa. [Webpage Resource: Tobacco-free oral nicotine products and snus.](#) 2024.

If you have anything you would like to add to our next newsletter, please email Janine at: Janine.nip@otago.ac.nz

