About the Manifesto and the Inquiry

The Wellbeing Manifesto for Aotearoa New Zealand is calling for open access to a full menu of services for people with mental distress and addiction. It is proposing the biggest system change in the history of services in New Zealand.

The Wellbeing Manifesto was created by Mary O'Hagan, director of PeerZone, a social enterprise that develops supports and resources for people with mental distress, run by people who have used mental health services. It is being presented as a submission to the Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction in partnership with ActionStation. ActionStation is a community of everyday New Zealanders who act together in powerful and coordinated ways to create what we cannot achieve on our own: a society, economy and democracy that serves all of us - everyday people and Papatūānuku, the planet we love.

The Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction was established by the New Zealand Government in response to widespread concern about mental health and addiction services among the mental health and addiction sector and the broader community.

The inquiry is keen to hear from all New Zealanders who have an interest in mental health and addiction. There are public forums through the months of May–July 2018, with a report and recommendations due in October 2018.

The Manifesto’s key messages

Here are the Manifesto’s key messages which you could adapt and include in your submission, your writing or your conversations:

• All people and their whānau need to have the skills and to live in social conditions to sustain wellbeing, manage stress and recover from mental distress and addiction.
• We need to stop viewing mental distress and addiction by default as health problems that require medical interventions before all else.
• Stress, distress and addiction need to be viewed primarily as social, psychological and spiritual disruptions.
• All the sectors that have responsibility for wellbeing, distress and addiction - not just health - but social development, justice, corrections and education etc., need to jointly fund a full menu of services at the local level, in partnership with people affected by distress and addiction.
• Māori need to design and deliver services for Māori.
• The menu of services they fund needs to include personal and whānau support, income, work and housing support, talking therapies and treatments, spiritual healing and community-based crisis responses.
• The services need to be co-delivered, under as few rooves as possible, in community settings, such as primary health, marae, community centres and large workplaces.
• The workforce needs to undergo a transformation so that cultural workers and peer workers (who have lived experience or distress and addiction), work alongside the traditional workforce with equal status and in equal numbers.
• Although the health sector and health professionals have a role, a system lead by health will not deliver open access to a full menu of services or better outcome for people and their whānau.
Making a submission

Use the Manifesto and the key messages to connect with friends, family and decision-makers.

We know face to face conversations are effective in sharing ideas and influencing decisions but you can choose whatever medium suits you.

If you want, refer to the key messages above to communicate with:

• The Panelists on the Inquiry.
• Your Member of Parliament.
• Other decision-makers (city councillors, health professionals or managers).
• Whānau and friends.
• Contacts on social media.

You can also use or reference the Manifesto in a written submission to the Inquiry.

What to share in your conversation or written submission

Say what is missing in the present system and what needs to change to make it better:

• Share your concerns about the mental health and addiction system and your reasons why they are important.
• Highlight the key messages in the Wellbeing Manifesto that are most important to you, and give an example of how they would benefit.

What to listen for in your conversation

• Do they share your concerns?
• Where do they stand on the solutions you highlight?
• What can they do to support the Wellbeing Manifesto?
• Report back to let us know where the individual MPs stand on the Manifesto key messages.

At a public meeting with the Inquiry Panel

Depending on the format of the meeting or how many people are attending, you may get the chance for only one or two questions. Prepare the top two questions in your mind that you would like to raise, highlighting specific key messages in the Manifesto if you want. Mention the Manifesto and where to find it if you have the opportunity.

Print out a copy of the Manifesto from the website, or share the link https://www.wellbeingmanifesto.nz to those who ask.

At a private meeting with the Inquiry panel

If you get the opportunity to meet the panel in private or with a group:

• Consider, prioritise and adapt the key messages.
• Signal your support for the Wellbeing Manifesto.
Meeting with your MP

Planning a meeting:

- Email or call your local MP to ask for time to meet at their electorate office; remember they won't be available on the days Parliament is sitting.
- Decide on what you're aiming to cover in the meeting. Before your meeting it is well worth rehearsing your thoughts.

At the meeting:

- Be punctual and polite.
- Stay on topic.
- Give them the link to the Manifesto or a copy if you have one

After the meeting:

- Email and thank the MP for the meeting.
- Follow up the actions, which you or the MP agreed to take.

Helpful info

Wellbeing Manifesto website:  https://www.wellbeingmanifesto.nz

Action Station submission site:  https://our.actionstation.org.nz/p/wellbeingmanifesto

Visit the Wellbeing Manifesto Facebook page:  https://www.facebook.com/wellbeingmanifesto

Public meetings and submissions to the Inquiry:  https://www.mentalhealth.inquiry.govt.nz


Get in touch

Mary O’Hagan:  mary@peerzone.info

PeerZone:  https://www.peerzone.info

ActionStation:  http://www.actionstation.org.nz

Need to talk?

Free call or text 1737 any time for support from a trained counsellor

Lifeline: 0800 543 354 or (09) 5222 999 within Auckland

Youthline: 0800 376 633, free text 234 or email talk@youthline.co.nz or online chat

Samaritans: 0800 726 666