

Immediate Release
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No alternative plan for Māori health, Tribunal confirms in new report, claimants say

Māori health claimants say the Waitangi Tribunal's Hautupua Part 2 report confirms the Crown never delivered the alternative to Te Aka Whai Ora it had promised.

Two lead claimants Lady Tureiti Moxon, Chair of NUMA and Managing Director of Te Kohao Health, and Janice Kuka, Managing Director of Ngā Mātāapuna Oranga, say the newly released *Hautupua: Te Aka Whai Ora (Māori Health Authority) Priority Report, Part 2* report by the Waitangi Tribunal confirms there was no substantive alternative plan following the disestablishment of Te Aka Whai Ora.

The Tribunal found the Crown had almost 18 months to set out what would replace Te Aka Whai Ora the Māori Health Authority but ultimately relied on policy and legislative settings that were already in place.

"For nearly 18 months, we were told a different approach was coming. We repeatedly asked what it would be. When the time came, the Crown's position was that there was nothing new to put forward. The Tribunal has now confirmed that no clear substantial alternative had been developed," Moxon said.

The timing of the report was affected by legislation being introduced in the House, the Tribunal stating, "The Healthy Futures (Pae Ora) Amendment Bill ('the Healthy Futures Amendment Bill') was introduced to Parliament on 2 July 2025, thus preventing us from reporting at that time, as our jurisdiction was removed."

Janice Kuka says the findings need to be considered alongside the Tribunal's previous recommendations about how decisions affecting Māori health were made.

"The Tribunal has made it clear that decisions about Māori health cannot continue to be made without Māori. The evidence shows that Māori health requires approaches that are designed with Māori and informed by evidence."

In *Hautupua Part 2* the Tribunal delayed its process in anticipation of an alternative from the Crown. But in the end, there was no real alternative plan with the Tribunal saying the Crown "had nothing of substance to report", decisions about Māori health were made without adequate Māori involvement and a one-size-fits-all approach to health risks entrenching inequity.

The recommendations in the 116-page document outline that the Crown needs to revisit the option of a stand-alone Māori health authority, consult extensively with Māori on any alternative, and ensure decisions affecting Māori health are based on sound evidence and proper policy processes.

For the claimants, the answer is not simply to recreate Te Aka Whai Ora. Both say Te Aka Whai Ora demonstrated the potential of a Māori health authority but did not fully reflect the model sought in their original 2018 claim.

They are calling for a 'New Whare' which is a Māori-designed and Māori-governed authority with genuine decision-making power over Māori health priorities, policy, funding and monitoring.

Lady Tureiti says the vision has remained consistent throughout their legal journey.

"Since 2018 we have been advancing our legal argument for the right to exercise tino rangatiratanga and mana motuhake in hauora. Te Aka Whai Ora showed what was possible, but the next step needs to give Māori genuine authority to design and lead the system."

The proposed New Whare would set direction and priorities for Māori health, oversee resources allocated for Māori health, monitor performance and support resources flowing to regional and local Māori communities, including iwi, hapū, whānau and urban Māori.

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