



**National Council of  
Women of New Zealand**  
Te Kaunihera  
Wahine O Aotearoa

National Office  
Level 4 Central House  
26 Brandon Street  
PO Box 25-498  
Wellington 6146  
(04) 473 7623  
www.ncwnz.org.nz

29 May 2006

S06.20

**Submission to the Ministry of Health  
on the Draft National Drug Policy 2006 - 2011**

The National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ) is an umbrella organization representing 38 Nationally Organized Societies. It has 32 branches throughout the country attended by representatives of those societies as well as some 150 other societies, and many individual members. The Councils function is to work for the well-being of women, the family and the community at local, national and international levels through research, study, discussion and action.

For the 110 years NCWNZ has been in existence it has made continual and strong submissions on the harm and costs to families, communities and society, at every opportunity. Therefore we are pleased to be asked to comment on this Draft National Drug Policy 2006 – 2011. We are also interested in the companion document that is to be developed and feel that it would have been good to have this information before replying to this Draft Policy.

**General Comments**

NCWNZ agrees with the overarching goal and objectives of the policy. NCWNZ agrees with the harm minimisation approach as described in the consultation document and also agrees that the National Drug Policy should cover both prevention and reduction of harm from drugs. NCWNZ felt it would have been useful to have a copy of the companion document when replying to this document.

In response to the broader focus on social and economic harms NCWNZ strongly agrees that the cost in terms of marriage breakdowns, job loss, and participation in crime has a great cost to society.

NCWNZ agrees with the four broad strategy areas as described in the consultation document, but we would also like to see a greater education on the dangers of binge drinking among young people.

NCWNZ would like to see a special emphasis and enhanced legislation for people who supply alcohol and drugs to those under 15 years of age.

NCWNZ agrees with the method for monitoring progress and also agrees that the 'Features of New Zealand approach' adequately reflect the New Zealand situation.

**Specific Comments**

**Question 3 Are there other objectives you believe should be included?**

NCWNZ is very concerned at the very young age, eg 10 years of age, that many children are beginning to regularly consume alcohol, and take drugs. We have this information from one





member who works within the court system and completes initial assessments for entry into rehabilitation programmes. This is why we see so many 15 year olds listed as drinking and consuming in greater quantities more frequently than in the past. Therefore we need to research the habits of the 10 to 15 year old children and instigate a stringent enforcement of parental responsibility and accountability.

**Question 10. Would you add anything further to the action points for 2006 – 2011 for demand Reduction?**

NCWNZ would like to see the education through schools to include meetings for parents of Year 6 – 7 pupils, many of whom do not realize that children this young are vulnerable to pressure to start experimenting with these substances. Many people who have been to rehabilitation programmes state that their first experiences with drugs and alcohol happened while they attended Intermediate school.

**Question 11.**

NCWNZ would strongly support the following points in relation to action points for 2006 – 2011 for problem Limitation:

- Improve service delivery for people with co-existing mental health, alcohol and other drug-related problems, and
- Improve access to and quality of primary mental health services for people with, or at risk of developing, an alcohol or other drug problem.

and in relation to information Collection, research, evaluation and monitoring:

- Identify, prioritise and fill the gaps in current data collection to support work toward the overarching goal of this policy.
- NCWNZ would like to see the research on what is happening with the 10 – 15 year age group.

**Question 14.**

NCWNZ agrees that the 'Features of New Zealand approach' adequately reflect the New Zealand Situation.

**Question 15. Does the 'Drug use in New Zealand' section provide a fair overview?**

NCWNZ agrees, but as mentioned before we would like to see research completed on how drugs and alcohol affect the under 15 year olds. NCWNZ would also like to see the problem of 'binge drinking' addressed and the dangers of what this behaviour has on the body's functioning ability.

Christine Low  
**National President**

Christine Rattray  
**Convener, Social Issues Standing Committee**