

# Media Policy

*Mā te kimi ka kite, Mā te kite ka mōhio, Mā te mōhio ka mārāma.  
Seek and discover. Discover and know. Know and become enlightened.*

## Purpose

1. This Media Policy outlines the approach to ensure Te Whatu Ora-Health New Zealand and its staff interact appropriately in and with the media.
2. This Media Policy supports the Health Sector Principles as set out in the Pae Ora (Healthy Futures) Act 2022 (the Pae Ora Act).

## Application

3. This policy applies to everyone in Te Whatu Ora National Office, including permanent, seconded, and temporary employees and contractors (referred to as our people).
4. For other parts of Te Whatu Ora, the corresponding policies that were in place before 1 July 2022 continue to apply until changed by the Board of Te Whatu Ora or its delegate.

## Definitions

5. The following definition is used for the purposes of this policy:

**Te Whatu Ora  
National Office**

- a) Staff who are working in roles that would **not** have been District Health Board, Te Hīringa Hauora/Health Promotion Agency or Shared Services Agency roles under the previous health system (including all staff employed/engaged by Te Whatu Ora on or after 1 July 2022); and
- b) for operational policies other than employment policies, staff who are transferring from the Ministry of Health (MoH) under the Pae Ora Act.

## Policy

6. The news media have a legitimate interest in Te Whatu Ora and its activities and they are an important means of communication with the general public. Dealing appropriately with the media requires sensitivity and skill. Te Whatu Ora's approach is to be open and to develop a strong working relationship with the media. It recognises that Te Whatu Ora will both respond to media enquiries and talk proactively to highlight key work programmes and topics of interest.

## Objectives

7. To ensure Te Whatu Ora is appropriately represented in media responses to provide balance and context in stories.
8. To ensure Te Whatu Ora is recognised as a credible source of fact-based health information, including on our work programmes and priorities, and on national, regional and local matters.
9. To encourage and enable Te Whatu Ora proactive media at a national, regional and district level to support communities to manage their health needs and achieve health outcomes.
10. To ensure that regional and district communications leads (and authorised spokespeople) are well supported and familiar with the Te Whatu Ora Media Policy and together form a core part of Te Whatu Ora's media function and voice.
11. To provide clear guidelines to all Te Whatu Ora staff on authorised media spokespeople and the requirements for making public comment on the work of or on behalf of Te Whatu Ora, both directly to the news media, on social media platforms, or at an event where the media may be present.

## Key Principles

12. Media responses should accurately reflect Te Whatu Ora and/or the wider Government's facts, messaging, policies and work programmes, and should respect the right to privacy of our people and patients.
13. Communications and engagement staff at Te Whatu Ora National Office will work with regional and district communications leads to ensure a consistent approach to media, and when and how issues should be escalated to Te Whatu Ora National Office.
14. Only designated Te Whatu Ora spokespeople should comment on behalf of Te Whatu Ora, including commenting on behalf of Te Whatu Ora on social media platforms or at an event where the media may be present.
15. Interviews and media responses are to be given only by authorised Te Whatu Ora spokespeople with the support of the media team. Any staff member may be asked to brief a spokesperson and prepare messages on an issue prior to an interview, which will be reviewed by the media team.
16. The Te Whatu Ora Board Chair is the only person who should comment to the media on behalf of the Board, and only around governance issues. If the Board Chair is to make a media comment, they should advise the CE and the Director Communications and Engagement prior to this occurring.
17. All Te Whatu Ora spokespeople are to be media trained.
18. Te Whatu Ora will have an on-call media function available 24/7, including planning for regional and district needs around after hours media coverage.

19. All media enquiries, including those received by Board members, are to be referred to hnzmedia@health.govt.nz immediately and all media calls and emails should be acknowledged and responded to as soon as possible.
20. No home numbers or mobile phone numbers are to be given to the media except mobile phone numbers of communications staff.
21. A summary of media requests and responses is to be circulated to the leadership of Te Whatu Ora at the end of each day, with summaries to be shared with relevant Ministerial offices, the Ministry of Health, Te Aka Whai Ora-Māori Health Authority, Board members and other key partner agencies.
22. Te Whatu Ora will appropriately share media queries it is responding to with relevant stakeholders on a 'no surprises' basis.
23. Any complaints about the media are to be coordinated by the Media team.

## Roles and Responsibilities

24. The Board of Te Whatu Ora is represented in the media by the Chair.
25. The Chief Executive and Communications and Engagement Lead are responsible for designating people within Te Whatu Ora to be authorised spokespeople.
26. The Media team is responsible for providing media training to authorised spokespeople prior to them engaging with the media.
27. The Media Lead is the only person authorised to speak to the media about issues for general background, unless the Director Communications and Engagement has otherwise approved it.
28. Media team members should work closely with all communications and engagement staff across Te Whatu Ora to ensure a consistent and joined-up approach to the broad media landscape.

## Non-compliance with policy

29. Failure by staff to fully comply with this policy may result in Te Whatu Ora taking disciplinary action in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

## Related Policies and Procedures

- Code of Conduct
- Media Policy

OWNER:	Communications and Engagement
CONTACT:	Helen Mexted
ENDORSED:	July 2022
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