

WHAKAHĀ O TE PĀ HARAKEKE

REALISING THE VISION FOR A SMOKEFREE FUTURE

Welcome to the Whakahā o Te Pā Harakeke quarterly newsletter

The introduction of the Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products (Smoked Tobacco) Amendment Bill, scheduled to have its first reading later in July, represents a huge milestone for everyone working in the smokefree sector. We join with the wider smokefree community in warmly congratulating Dr Ayesha Verrall for her leadership.

We've been working with several groups to plan submissions on the Bill, once it's referred to the Health Select Committee, and findings from the Whakahā programme and other work the ASPIRE 2025 Centre has underway will be very helpful. The ITC/EASE data offer insights into the new policy measures that will be implemented as do some of the qualitative studies we have undertaken. Please check out our [website](#) for more information on our team and mahi.

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 Smoke-free Aotearoa for all peoples in New Zealand.



New research team members

We are very pleased to welcome new researchers to ASPIRE 2025 and the Whakahā programme.

Dr Janine Nip has a background in clinical research with interests in public health and respiratory medicine. Janine will be working on the INSPIRED project, which examines tobacco endgame strategies set by different countries.



Anna Graham-DeMello has a background in human nutrition and qualitative research and is interested in a range of public health issues. Anna is working on a Cancer Society-funded retailing project and will soon start working on the social supply project in Whenua rua.



Lani Teddy (Ngāti Ranginui, Ngāi Te Rangi) has a background in qualitative research and is interested in issues that affect young people and Māori. Lani is working primarily on Whenua toru and the tobacco control systems project but is lending invaluable support to Whenua Rua projects.



WHENU HIGHLIGHTS

WHENU 1

Evidence for smokefree interventions, equity and endgames

The main focus of the ITC/EASE project has been developing the questionnaire for the wave 4 of data collection. This is always a mammoth task, and this time was all the more intense because we had to develop so many new questions to make sure we have data to inform the evaluation of key measures included in the Smokefree Action Plan and forthcoming legislation. We have made great progress and should be ready to launch data collection in early September. We have also been working on enhancing our recruitment methods for wave 4 – particularly to boost the number of Pacific participants. The wave 3 and wave 3.5 datasets are now fully prepared so that we can proceed with analysis and generating papers and other outputs.

The INSPIRED project has been in ‘hibernation’ for quite a while. However, we are delighted to report that with Janine joining the team and doing sterling work to get things moving, this project is now very much alive. We have almost finished the report from the first phase of data collection and have a paper in preparation. We have recontacted the six in-country teams (who have all agreed to continue to participate) and started developing the template for the follow-up data collection.

WHENU 2

Reducing the appeal, availability and accessibility of tobacco

We have begun interviews with retailers who have voluntarily delisted tobacco. We conceptualised this project when Smokefree Officers and other advocates were working with retailers to encourage them to stop selling tobacco. Unfortunately, Covid disrupted this work and teams liaising with retailers were diverted to contact tracing; it has thus been more difficult than expected to recruit study participants. However, Mei-Ling Blank, who is leading data collection, has conducted three very fruitful interviews and we hope to recruit at least another two retailers. We have had superb support from the Cancer Society UTIG members and Bridget Rowse from Ngā Tai Ora, who have helped us identify potential cases.

Given reductions in smoking prevalence among young people, we propose expanding our social supply project to include vaping. This change recognises the marked rise in vaping prevalence among young people and responds to the changing patterns of nicotine use.

We have nearly completed the smokefree generation manuscript that Ell Lee drafted as part of her summer studentship work and have given several presentations on this work.

Lindsay Robertson led the Vaping to Smoking relapse study, which has just been accepted (with Anaru Waa, Kealey-Rei Sanford (a trainee intern) and Janet Hoek as co-authors).

WHENU 3

Evidence to Action

Study 3.1 key informant interviews have concluded and data analysis is well underway. The team recently met in-person to discuss some exciting preliminary findings, next steps in analysis and the development of concise statements that will inform Study 3.2 (Q-Method).



Whenu 3 team meeting in Christchurch. Left to right: Lindsey MacDonald, Andrew Waa, Maria Hepi, Mat Walton, Lani Teddy, Sudesh Sharma

Achievements

Warm congratulations to Professor Janet Hoek who was recently awarded a prestigious national prize—the 2022 Critic and Conscience of Society Award.



The Award supported by the Gama Foundation and administered by Universities New Zealand is for excellence in providing the public with independent expert commentary on issues affecting the Aotearoa New Zealand community or future generations.

The award recognises Janet's enormous contribution over many years to communicating research findings and providing expert advice and commentary to the public, policy-makers, practitioners and the media on key public health issues and debates, most notably recently in support of robust public health action to ensure the equitable achievement of the Smokefree Aotearoa 2025 goal.

Further details of Janet's contribution are available [here](#).

Upcoming Events

Webinar | “Not a cigarette, not an e-cigarette”: IQOS marketing strategy and responses

TUESDAY 19 July, 12-1pm (NZST): Dr Minji Kim is visiting Aotearoa and will be presenting a webinar on heated tobacco products, specifically IQOS and how this product is being marketed globally. [Registrations](#) are open.

Other work with Cancer Society

We also hold a programme contract with the Cancer Society.

In mid-June, Dr Jude Ball and Dr Louise Marsh presented very interesting seminars on work examining the impact of social media use on risk behaviours such as smoking, and outlining the impact different restrictions could have on the density and location of tobacco retail outlets.

We are currently analysing work exploring how people who smoke interpret and anticipate responding to the retail reduction policy. Anna Graham-DeMello is leading this work; we have finished data collection and have begun analysing the data. We aim to have topline findings to the Cancer Society to inform their submission.

Summer Students

Work writing up all the summer projects is on-going and we hope to have all manuscripts submitted over the next two to three months. We are also looking at projects for the 2022-23 summer and welcome suggestions for these.

Recent publications

Robertson L, Hoek J, Blank ML (2022) [A qualitative analysis of electronic nicotine delivery systems \(ENDS\) uptake and use among young adult never-smokers in New Zealand](#). PLOS ONE 17(5): e0268449.

Robertson L, Hoek J, Waa A, Sanford, K-R (in press). A qualitative analysis of the experiences of people who resumed smoking following exclusive electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) use. Nicotine & Tobacco Research.

Dell C, Edwards R, Gilmore A, Robertson L, Hoek J (2022) [Tobacco industry 'transformation' – more smoke and mirrors?](#) Public Health Expert Blog, June 7, 2022.

Hoek J, Ball J, Edwards R, Waa A, Teddy L, Graham-DeMello A, Robertson L (2022) [The Smokefree Generation: A core measure in New Zealand's endgame strategy](#). Public Health Expert Blog, 28 June, 2022.

Hoek J, Edwards R, Waa A (2022) [Smoking denormalization and tobacco endgames](#). Public Health Expert Blog, 24 March, 2022.

Funded through the Cancer Society collaboration

Quigg, R., Marsh, L. and Clark-Heu, B. (2022), Indigenous Māori perspectives of smokefree parks. Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1753-6405.13228>