

Service Coordinator Drug Checking

Position Description

About Te Puna Whakaiti Pāmamae Kai Whakapiri | NZ Drug Foundation

Our vision is an Aotearoa New Zealand free from drug harm. Our mission is to transform the way Aotearoa New Zealand addresses drug issues. We influence this through our leadership, by supporting communities and inspiring action that promotes wellbeing, is mana enhancing and prevents drug harm.

Te Puna Whakaiti Pāmamae Kai Whakapiri works on some of the most challenging issues facing communities. Because of this we invite people to work for us who share our vision and values, and who are committed to positive social justice outcomes.

We transform the way Aotearoa addresses drugs through leadership, supporting communities, and inspiring wellbeing and mana-enhancing actions. This means that we:

- Commit ourselves to health equity for Māori and meeting Māori health aspirations.
- Create kind, compassionate and people-centred responses to drug harm reduction.
- Support communities to create solutions for themselves.
- Respect the power of evidence to inform our own work and promote healthy public policy.

We are a non-government charitable trust. We are staunchly independent and place very high value on the advocacy role of community organisations. We have a team with a reputation for credibility and professionalism. Our work is respected by policy makers, politicians, and other alcohol and other drug agencies.

Working for Te Puna Whakaiti Pāmamae Kai Whakapiri

Te Puna Whakaiti Pāmamae Kai Whakapiri has high expectations of those who work with us, and in return we strive to provide a supportive, flexible, innovative and professional work environment. We pride ourselves on having a friendly, supportive, and genuine culture where we treat each other as people first.

Our staff are all expected to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of, and commitment to, our values and core principles outlined in our constitution, strategic plan and staff code of conduct.
- Work within our stated vision, mission and goals, and follow our operational policies and procedures.
- Work well as part of a team
- Abide by the staff Code of Conduct and individual employment agreements.
- Incorporate the principles of continuous quality improvement into their activities.

- Ensure their own safety and the safety of others in the workplace and actively participate in maintaining a safe working environment.
- Maintain and develop their skills, knowledge, and expertise.
- Work to enhance the wellbeing of Māori and help the Drug Foundation to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

We have offices in Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch that are close to great coffee, good food, and public transport.

Reports to: Programme Lead, Drug Checking.

Location: Auckland

Hours: Part-time permanent, 22.5 hours per week (Monday to Friday 11am-4pm, including a half-hour unpaid break). Occasional additional hours may be required for community drug checking clinics outside these hours.

About drug checking

Drug checking is a free, legal, and confidential service that helps people find out what is really in their drugs. New Zealand was the first country in the world to make drug checking permanently legal, in 2021.

The NZ Drug Foundation operates regular drug checking clinics in Auckland and occasional clinics in other communities or events across Aotearoa. At a clinic, a person brings in a small sample of their drug. Drug checking staff use a spectrometer alongside reagent tests and test strips to identify what the sample contains. Staff then talk with the person about their results and discuss ways to stay safer, particularly if the substance was not what they expected.

Drug checking is free, confidential, and legal.

The Drug Foundation's drug checking service is part of a wider harm reduction approach that centres the wellbeing of people who use drugs, without judgement.

Purpose of the Service Coordinator Drug Checking position

The Service Coordinator Drug Checking keeps the day-to-day operation of the NZ Drug Foundation's Auckland drug checking service running smoothly. This role sits at the heart of the drug checking team, providing operational coordination, quality assurance, and drug checking support so that the service consistently meets the needs of people who use drugs and fulfils its obligations under the Drug Foundation's drug checking licence.

The person in this role is an experienced (or trainable) drug checker with who also brings strong coordination and administration skills. They deliver our in-office drug checking service, alongside one other staff member. In addition, they provide coaching and support to other drug checking staff to strengthen practice in line with organisational policies and procedures. Working closely with the Programme Lead, they ensure clinics are well-staffed, equipment and logistics are in order, and results are quality-assured and published accurately and on time. This includes preparing clinic rosters (with Programme Lead oversight and sign-off) and coordinating all clinic logistics.

This role is grounded in the harm reduction practice that makes the service what it is.

Key relationships

Internal: Programme Lead Drug Checking, Casual Community Activators, Principal Science Advisor, Deputy Executive Director Programmes, and other NZ Drug Foundation staff.

External: Venue and community clinic partners, other drug checking and harm reduction services.

Focus areas

1. Clinic coordination and logistics

Expected results:

- Rosters for Casual Community Activators are developed in a timely way, with support and sign-off from the Programme Lead, ensuring all clinics are adequately and appropriately staffed.
- Logistics for community clinics are organised and confirmed in advance, including venue bookings, equipment, and partner communications.
- Risks or issues that could affect clinic delivery are identified early and escalated to the Programme Lead.

2. Drug checking

Expected results:

- Drug checking is carried out competently and in accordance with the Drug Foundation's licence conditions, standard operating procedures, and harm reduction principles.
- Harm reduction advice is shared as a two-way conversation with people who use drugs, based on evidence and experience, and provided without judgement.
- Sample storage, transport, and follow-up testing are managed appropriately where required.
- Drop-off samples are received, tested, and processed, or passed to a Casual Community Activator during clinic hours, in line with service protocols.

- The Service Coordinator acts as overflow drug checker when the Casual Community Activator has a waitlist or is unavailable, ensuring the service continues without interruption. This includes supporting later-arriving clients.
- Providing support to Casual Community Activators to help them carry out the drug checking process. This includes initial consultation and troubleshooting (in-person or on-call), and escalating issues to key staff, such as the Principal Science Advisor, as needed.

3. Quality assurance and results

Expected results:

- Drug checking results are quality-assured before being finalised and before results are placed online, in accordance with the Drug Foundation's quality assurance (QA) processes. Note: the Service Coordinator does not QA samples they have tested themselves.
- Results are published online accurately, within agreed timeframes, and in a way that protects the confidential nature of the service.
- Quality issues or data anomalies are identified and escalated appropriately.
- Opportunities for continuous improvement in service quality are identified and shared with the Programme Lead.

4. Contributing to best practice in the Foundation's work

Expected results:

- Opportunities for new innovations in harm reduction are identified and shared with the team for consideration.
- Opportunities for quality improvement are identified, escalated, and addressed as appropriate.
- Contributed to the creation and sharing of knowledge about how to reduce drug harm in Aotearoa New Zealand communities.
- Opportunities to progress the Drug Foundation's four strategic outcomes are identified.

Person specification

Essential

- Experience in, or demonstrated ability to be trained in, drug checking in accordance with the Drug Foundation's service requirements. Experience providing drug checking with the Drug Foundation is highly desirable.
- Strong coordination and administration skills, with the ability to manage rosters, logistics, and multiple operational tasks simultaneously.
- Ability to work positively and professionally with a range of internal and external stakeholders, community members, and people who use drugs.

- Self-motivated and able to work autonomously, manage time well, and follow tasks through to completion.
- Committed to harm reduction and a health-based, non-judgemental approach to drug use.
- Understanding of, and commitment to, hauora Māori and the Drug Foundation's obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- Has a valid NZ Driver's License and access to a reliable vehicle

Desirable

- Existing knowledge of, or relationships within, communities of people who use drugs.
- Experience in a health, community, or peer support context.
- Familiarity with quality assurance or data collection processes.