

Collated Responses from NZ Political Party's to NZHT Questionnaire – August 2005

NZHT Questions	Act New Zealand	Green	NZ First	Maori	National	Progressive	United Future	Labour
Q1. Does ((the party)) recognize the important role of natural health products in New Zealand?	YES	YES	YES	YES	No final policy but in principle YES	YES	YES	Did not respond
Q2. Does ((the party)) agree that good nutrition is a major factor in preventing and mitigating illness & disease?	YES	YES	YES	YES	No final policy but in principle YES	YES	YES	Did not respond
Q3. Is ((the party)) committed to preserving New Zealander's right to access a wide range of effective dietary supplements at a reasonable price?	YES	YES	YES	YES	No final policy but in principle YES	YES	YES	Did not respond
Q4. Does ((the party)) support the unanimous recommendations of the Health Select Committee report into the proposed Joint Trans Tasman Therapeutic Goods Agency?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES National supported the Health Select Committee report	<i>Click here for letter attached</i>	YES	Did not respond
Q5. Does ((the party)) intend to support the proposed Joint Trans Tasman Therapeutic Goods Agency?	NO	NO	NO	NO	<i>See comments in Q6</i>	<i>See Q4</i>	<i>Click here for letter attached</i>	Did not respond
Q6. Are there any circumstances in which ((the party)) would support the proposed Trans Tasman Therapeutic Goods Agency	NO Not as things stand at the moment.	NO	NO The public must be informed of the benefits of this agency and support the changes before we would begin to consider the other issues of this JTA that concern NZ First.	NO It is important that safety processes and regulations are developed by and for New Zealand	YES National has made it clear that we would only support the proposed Trans Tasman Therapeutic Goods Agency when we are satisfied that New Zealand businesses, small, medium and large are not disadvantaged relative to Australian, and that compliance costs are cut to a minimum.	<i>See Q4</i>	<i>See Q5</i>	Did not respond

Conti...	Act	Green	NZ First	Maori	National	Progressive	United	Labour
Q7. Does ((the party)) support New Zealand controlled regulation of dietary supplements, designed specifically for that industry?	YES	YES	YES	YES	We have no specific policy on this issue.	<i>See Q4</i>	<i>See Q6</i>	Did not respond
Q8. Will ((the party)) endeavour to protect SME's from unnecessary bureaucracy and compliance costs where there is no actual risk profile justifying such costs?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	<i>See Q6</i>	Did not respond
Q9. Should New Zealanders be encouraged to take greater responsibility for their own health based on better education and information?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Did not respond
Q10. As long as Dietary supplements are prepared appropriately and properly labelled, should consumers be able to make their own choices?	YES	YES	YES	YES	In principle YES	YES	<i>See Q6</i>	Did not respond
Other Comments:					In replying to these questions, it is important to emphasize the 'National Party' is committed to health promotion and disease prevention. For many of these questions there is no formal policy.			
Questionnaire completed by:	Heather Roy	Sue Kedgley	Barbara Stewart	<i>Not known</i>	Dr Paul Hutchison	Jim Anderton	Judy Turner	

Bowen House 12.12
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

15 August 2005



Re: NZ Health Trust questionnaire - United Future approach to the natural health sector

Dear David,

Thank you for your election questionnaire, please find United Future's response attached. I have also included a general statement on United Future's approach to the proposed Joint Trans-Tasman Therapeutic Products Agency - this gives detailed answers to several questions which haven't been circled.

Please feel free to be in touch if you require any more information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judy".

Judy Turner MP



United Future Approach to the proposed Joint Trans-Tasman Therapeutic Products Agency

United Future believes that the Complementary and Alternative Medicines Industry is a significant contributor to the wellness of New Zealanders and is emerging as an important growth sector in the New Zealand economy. Its particular strengths are that it

- Encourages personal responsibility – fosters the attitude that people can take active steps to ensure their own wellness.
- Is prevention-focused - aiding people to consider preventative health care options, rather than responding only when illness occurs.
- Is innovative and oriented towards research & development.

We would welcome greater integration between complementary and conventional approaches and would support any effort to establish a CAM (Complementary and Alternative Medicines) unit at the Ministry of Health to more deliberately facilitate this.

We believe the reputation of all groups involved in the complementary and alternative medicines sector deserve protection through ensuring adequate professional and manufacturing standards, and quality assurances of complementary products.

We believe that consumers deserve:

- Easy and affordable access to these services and products
- The right to make informed choices based on reliable scientific information.
- Products that are safe and reliably deliver results in keeping with the claims made about them.

We believe that the NZ complementary industry as it stands is significantly under-regulated, as evidenced by the fact that “party pills” have been promoted as dietary supplements, the efficacy of expensive weight loss products have been brought in to question, and there have been reports of imported complementary products containing steroids, heavy metals and even grass clippings. This lack of regulation has reached a stage where the reputations of all participants in the industry are put at risk by the questionable practices undertaken by a small minority. We are also concerned about the fact that there are disputes within certain professional groups on matters regarding qualifications and competencies that are still to be settled.

There are currently **two options** for the complementary health products industry. The first is to **self-regulate**. The second is to **jointly regulate** with Australia. The

government is proactively pursuing the second option, although will need to pass legislation in Parliament to clinch the deal.

United Future is unhappy with the manner in which the Government has gone about this process, however looking past this mismanagement; we see clear advantages and disadvantages with both options. We are concerned that opinions within both industry and consumer groups are now polarised into two camps in a way that we believe is unhelpful to the greater cause, that is, finding a suitable regulatory mechanism to protect the interests of all.

United Future has deliberately stayed around the negotiating table, even though we are unhappy with some of the ways the Government has gone about finding solutions. This is too important an issue for anyone to be playing emotive political games over.

We believe the key issues in relation to regulation of the complementary sector are:

1. *Sovereignty* - (particularly with the second option).
2. *Cost* - (this is probably one of the biggest concerns at the end of the day). Compliance costs for meeting manufacturing and labelling standards and product registration costs required by the regulator are all going to be passed on to the consumer, as both options involve full cost recovery. A clear definition around full cost recovery is going to be essential regardless of which option we finally have - to ensure the inevitable costs of regulation are met in a fair and equitable way.
3. *Access* - many consumers fear losing access to relied on products, particularly if they are imported. Some are scared that their NZ supplier will be squeezed out due to costs. Practitioner prescribed products need to be accounted for.
4. *Innovation & business development* - it is essential that the contribution of this growing industry to the New Zealand economy is recognised and protected throughout the process of introducing regulation. Ultimately, the introduction of a regulatory mechanism should provide the environment in which growth can be maximised and sustained, rather than hindered.
5. *Timing around any implementation* - whatever option we end up with, there will be a need to be fair time frames within which industry is required to become fully compliant. These timeframes could make the difference for many between surviving the process and financially collapsing. This would be true for either option.

United Future
July 2005



Office of Hon Jim Anderton

Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Industry and Regional Development
Minister of Forestry, Associate Minister of Health, Minister responsible for Public Trust

8 July 2005

New Zealand Health Trust
P O Box 34057
Christchurch

Dear Trust Members

Thank you for your questionnaire regarding the proposed Therapeutic Goods Agency and related matters.

Those questions which deal directly with the proposed agency do not allow of a yes/no answer because the proposed legislation which might establish the agency, has yet to go through the necessary Select Committee procedures and so it is not possible to say what form they might take in the event.

I am enclosing the Progressive Party statement on this issue. I trust that this is of value to you for your purposes.

Yours sincerely

Tony Simpson
Advisor to the Hon Jim Anderton

Statement on the Proposed Trans-Tasman Therapeutic Good Agency

The Progressive Party understands the concerns that have been voiced about this proposal as it might apply to natural therapeutic products. We don't have a problem in principle with there being standards set governing anything which is consumed by people, in the interest of better standards and their stricter enforcement. The question is what those standards should be and who should set them?

We do however, have some reservations about the parallel effects that might have on the local industry and the choices available to consumers and in company with my colleague Progressive M P Matt Robson I am monitoring the detail of the outcome of discussions concerning the proposed joint regulatory machinery with some care.

We can re-assure you to at least some extent. The current initiative was something which began under a previous National-led administration and which has been continued, but nothing can happen to ratify any proposed agreement without changes to existing New Zealand legislation. That means that any proposed agreement must come before parliament and be the subject of Select Committee procedures before it can take effect. This should provide an opportunity for concerns such as those you express to be taken into account.

No-one is able at this juncture to say if the proposal will go ahead, or if it does what form it might take. We are therefore waiting for the publication of any proposed legislation to try to ensure that our concerns are met as far as possible before we make a decision on how we might vote on it.

Jim Anderton

M P for Wigram and Leader of the Progressive Party