

# New Zealand Speaks!

2019 Roy Morgan NZHR Opinion Poll



New Zealanders for  
**HEALTH RESEARCH**

*Ngā Tāngata o Aotearoa mō  
te Rangahau Hauora*



ROY  
MORGAN

## A Message from New Zealanders for Health Research

When it comes to what's important, New Zealanders continue to put health right up the top.

That's the strong message that comes through in our 2019 New Zealanders for Health Research public opinion poll where three of the top ten priorities for spending relate to "looking after our health".

We commissioned this poll to gauge the strength of community support for health and medical research. The results are overwhelmingly positive, with Kiwis ranking it more highly than making house prices affordable, lowering taxes, helping the environment and addressing climate change.

New Zealanders for Health Research (NZHR) is a dedicated national public education and advocacy alliance. Our goal is to make health research a higher priority, attracting greater investment from government, industry and philanthropy. To do so will generate big wins for our nation. It will ultimately improve the health of New Zealanders and enhance our quality of life, now and into the future. It will boost productivity and generate new knowledge-based businesses and jobs.

Modelled on highly successful sister organisations in Australia, Canada, the USA and Sweden, New Zealanders for Health Research is an independent and diverse alliance supported by industry, philanthropic research funders, universities and research institutions. Together we represent the interests of New Zealanders, working together to promote health and prosperity for all Kiwis.

This is the fourth of what has now become an annual public opinion poll that will enable us to chart the attitudes of New Zealanders towards health research. The poll provides us with important insights which equip us to engage credibly on issues and debates relating to investment in health and medical research, and its translation into practice and policy. We are particularly excited to report on new questions which ask respondents how well informed they are about health research, and how strongly they believe in measures which health research has shown to be beneficial to health outcomes.

This detailed "members only" edition includes all of the information provided in the publicly available headline report, presents comparisons with the 2018 and earlier poll results, and provides further insights into how the results vary with age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and living with a disability where there was a five percentage point difference or more from the total sample result.

NZHR Members and partners can request further detailed information and will also be given an opportunity to request additional questions for inclusion in the 2020 poll.



**Chris Higgins**

Chief Executive  
New Zealanders for Health Research



**Graham Malaghan**

Chair  
New Zealanders for Health Research



## Acknowledgements

The polling for this report was conducted by Roy Morgan, Australia. New Zealanders for Health Research has benefited from the strategic support of this market research leader. Our latest Roy Morgan poll has provided us with valuable insight which will inform our advocacy programme and help keep our finger on the pulse of New Zealanders' attitudes to health research and health funding.

## Table of Contents

Foreword.....	2
Acknowledgment.....	2
Priorities for the New Zealand Government.....	4
Valuing Health and Medical Research.....	5
Awareness and Beliefs .....	6
Government Investment in Health Research .....	7
Philanthropic Investment in Health Research.....	8
Industry Investment in Health Research .....	10
Clinical Trials .....	10
Opinion Polling Questions.....	12
Methodology.....	14
About New Zealanders for Health Research .....	15
Our Supporters .....	15
Copyright.....	16

# Priorities for the New Zealand Government

## New Zealanders' top 15 priorities for the Government in 2019

RANK		SCORE %
2019		2019
1	Improving hospitals and the health care system	92
2	Improving education standards and outcomes	84
3	Managing the government budget	81
4	Keeping the national economy strong	81
5	Improving national infrastructure	81
6	Addressing domestic and family violence	79
7	Increasing preventative healthcare funding and programmes	79
8	Providing strong leadership	78
9	More funding for health and medical research	78
10	Doing more to keep prices and cost of living down	76
11	Helping the environment in practical ways	76
12	Creating more skilled jobs and apprenticeships	76
13	Reducing crime and improving law and order	74
14	Improving employment opportunities	73
15	Making house prices affordable	70



We asked people to rate 27 different issues in terms of importance for the Government to focus on over the coming 2–3 years. Each issue was rated using a 0–10 scale, where 0 meant that it is not important, and 10 meant it is a critical priority. The figures in this table represent the proportion of respondents rating the item as either 7, 8, 9 or 10 on this scale.

## Valuing Health and Medical Research

### High value placed on health and medical research



84%

of New Zealanders are either somewhat interested or very interested in health and medical research



69%

say that health research is part of the solution to reducing health care costs

### All types of health and medical research are valued

Compared with 2018 there were big increases in the percentages of respondents who valued all types of health and medical research, with the largest increases associated with the importance of working in collaboration with researchers internationally and making new discoveries about human health and disease. The importance of research into antibiotic resistance to infectious diseases and research to make our health system more effective and efficient continued to be ranked as the top two areas for health research.

RANK		SCORE %
2019		2019
1	Important to do research into antibiotic resistance to infectious diseases	85
2	Important to do research to make our health system more effective and efficient	83
3	Important to work in collaboration with researchers around the world...	79
4	Important to do research focused on finding ways to prevent illness and promote good health	78
5	Important to invest in better research facilities and equipment	74
6	Important to turn discoveries into new drugs and treatment	73
7	Important to make new discoveries about human health and disease	72
8	Important to invest in national programmes and equipment for all health researchers	71
9	Important to do more research into the things we can do to improve our health	67
10	Important to do research into the effects of climate change on health	45

Percentages represent the proportion of respondents who considered the research area extremely or very important.

### Kiwis willing to be personally involved

It is encouraging to see that Kiwis are generally amenable to sharing personal information in support of medical research and improving health care and outcomes

79%



Willing to share personal health information to advance medical research

78%



Willing to share personal health information to improve patient care

72%

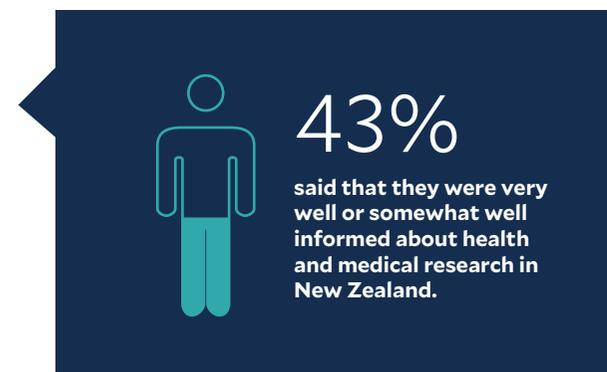


Willing to share personal health information to track illness and disability and causes

## Awareness and beliefs

New Zealanders for Health Research is pleased to present responses to its inaugural set of questions testing the extent to which kiwis feel that they are informed about health research, and their knowledge and beliefs about the safety and effectiveness of a set of health research validated measures for improving health outcomes.

	AGREE %	DISAGREE %	DON'T KNOW %
Vaccinations are a safe and effective way of keeping people healthy	93	5	2
Adding fluoride to public water supplies is a safe and effective way of reducing tooth decay	72	18	10
Adding folic acid to flour and bread is a safe and effective way of preventing spina bifida and neural tube defects	54	13	33
Genetically modifying organisms is a safe and effective way of making new medicines	51	27	22
Eating plenty of fruit and vegetables is a safe and effective way of keeping healthy	97	3	1
Regular exercise is a safe and effective way of keeping healthy	97	3	0
Cutting down on sugary food and drinks is a safe and effective way of keeping healthy	93	6	1
Cutting down on salt is a safe and effective way of keeping healthy	79	17	4



- A majority of respondents strongly or somewhat agreed that every one of the listed measures was a safe and effective way of staying or becoming healthy.
- Significant minorities responded “don’t know” to, or disagreed or strongly disagreed with, statements relating to fluoridation of public water, adding folic acid to flour and bread, genetic modification of organisms in the manufacture of medicines and consumption of salt. 47% of females between 18 and 34 years old responded “don’t know” to the question relating to the safety and effectiveness of adding folic acid to bread and flour.
- Only a minority of respondents said that they felt well informed about health and medical research in New Zealand suggesting that the health and medical research community has work to do in raising public awareness of the results of health research
- There is a high degree of public acceptance of vaccination as a safe and effective way of keeping people healthy, despite a vocal anti-vaccination minority<sup>1</sup>
- Given the increasing role of genetic modification in the development of new medicines (such as vaccine based anti-cancer therapies) improved communication about their safety and efficacy appears to be required

<sup>1</sup> See also Wellcome Global Monitor: How does the world feel about science and health? June 2019. <https://wellcome.ac.uk/sites/default/files/wellcome-global-monitor-2018.pdf>. According to this international Gallup poll 73% of New Zealanders agree that vaccines are safe, 82% agree that they are effective, and 92% of parents said that their own children had been vaccinated against one or more diseases. Results based on 1002 telephone interviews undertaken in September 2018.

# Government Investment

84% agreed or somewhat agreed or strongly agreed that that the government should invest more funding in health research. Furthermore 74% rated the current annual budget of \$125m for health research as too low.

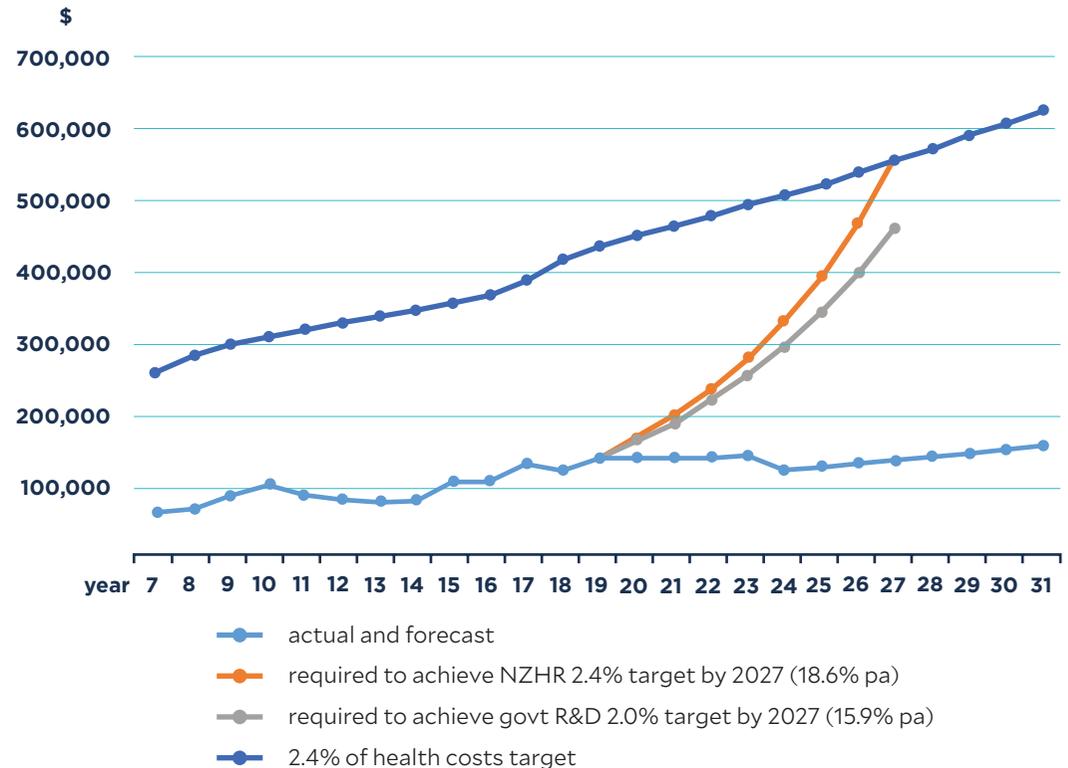
New Zealanders for Health Research agrees. Since 2007/08 the government's direct specific investment in health research averaged 0.69% of health care costs. NZHR maintains that the government should be aiming to lift this to 2.4% of health care costs by 2027<sup>2</sup>, which is the timeframe for implementing the Health Research Strategy.

The accompanying graph illustrates the extent of the problem:

- The top dark blue line represents what ringfenced government health research investment would like if it were achieving NZHR's recommended target of 2.4% of health care costs.
- The bottom light blue line reflects actual to date levels of investment and NZHR forecasts based on the 2019/20 budget - dropping from the current 0.78% of health care costs to 0.6% from 2024/25 onwards
- The orange line represents the trajectory required to achieve the 2.4% target by 2027 - annual increases of 18.6%
- The government has established a generic aspirational ten-year R&D investment target of 2% of GDP, requiring annual increases of 15.9% to achieve by 2027 if applied to health research, as represented by the grey line.

<sup>2</sup> New Zealanders for Health Research. Government health research investment trajectories 2007 – 2031. June 2019. <https://www.nz4healthresearch.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/government-health-research-investment-trajectories-090619.pdf>

Government Health Research Investment Trajectories 2007 - 2031



74%

rated the current annual budget of \$125m for health research as too low



84%

somewhat agreed or strongly agreed that the government should invest more funding in health research.

2019

## Philanthropic Investment

60% somewhat agreed or strongly agreed that philanthropic organisations (charities) should invest more in health research.

32% somewhat or strongly agreed that individuals should donate more to health research.

35% confirmed that they currently donate to health research (almost all of whom donated \$500 or less per year).

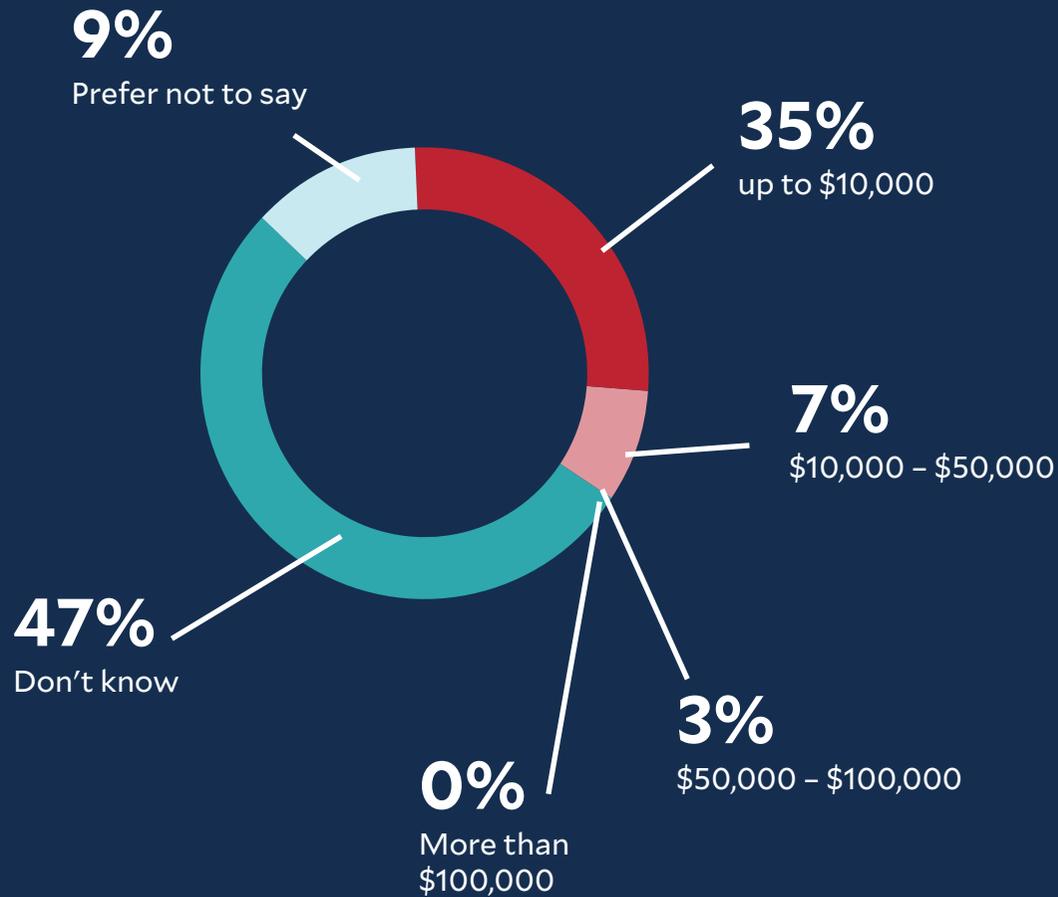
The percentage of respondents who cited not having been asked as a reason for not donating was 61%.

## Reasons for not donating or leaving a bequest

Not donating %		Not leaving a bequest %
2019		2019
77	Can't afford it	66
73	Government's responsibility	60
72	Support charities in other areas	53
70	Don't know how money will be spent	54
61	Haven't been asked	46
60	Don't know who to donate to	48
35	Health research already well supported	38

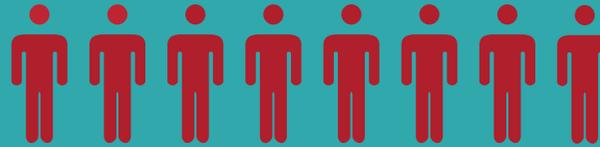
## Philanthropic Investment

17% of respondents said they were likely or very likely to leave a bequest to medical research. Of those who said they would be very likely or likely to leave a bequest to medical research in their will:



# Industry Investment in Health Research

Most industry funded health research takes the form of clinical trials of new medicines, devices and other therapies.



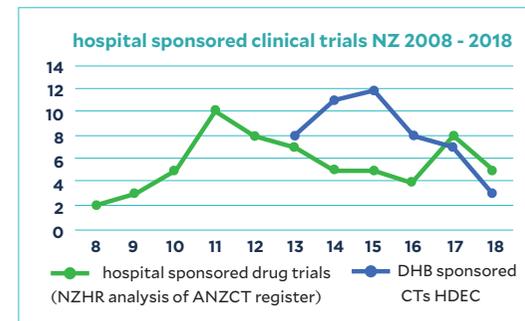
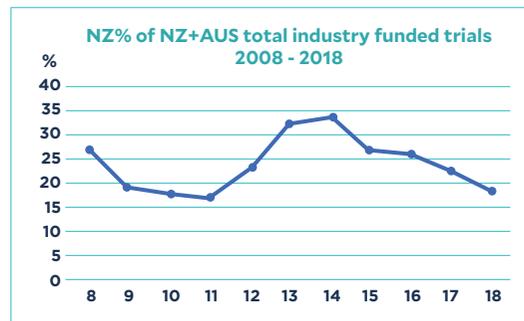
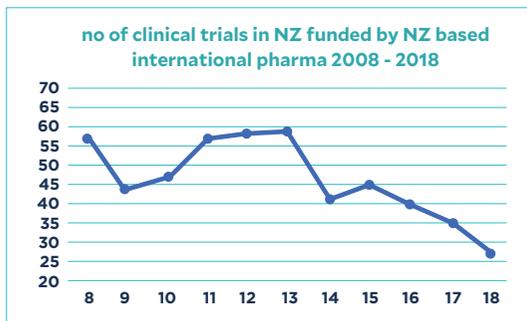
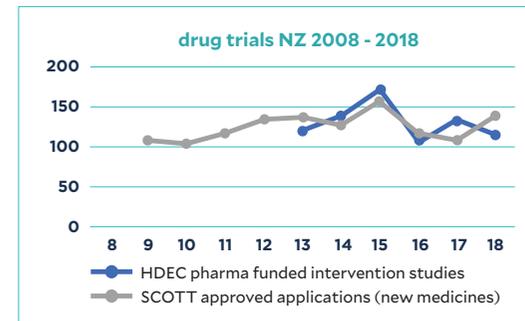
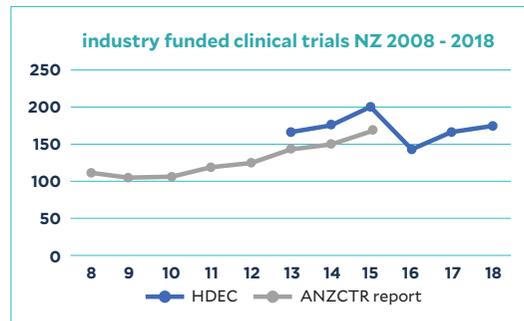
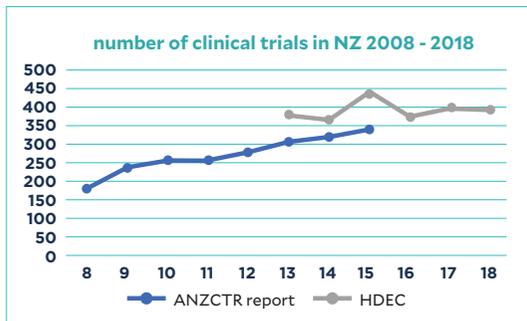
2019

88%

somewhat agree or strongly agree that industry (i.e. pharmaceutical companies etc.) should invest more in health research

## Clinical Trials

Clinical trials in New Zealand are funded by government, industry and philanthropy. It may be inferred from the modest or declining performance indicated by the selection of graphs below<sup>3,4</sup> together with the reported participation rates presented in the pie charts on the next page, that there is considerable scope for growth and development.

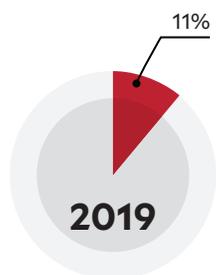


<sup>3</sup> New Zealanders for Health Research. Clinical Trials in New Zealand: a discussion paper. March 2019. <https://www.nz4healthresearch.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Clinical-trials-in-New-Zealand-NZHR-op-ed-130319-V2.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> The clinical trials landscape in New Zealand 2006-2015. ANZCTR. 2018. [http://www.anzctr.org.au/docs/NZ\\_Report\\_2006-2015](http://www.anzctr.org.au/docs/NZ_Report_2006-2015)

# Clinical Trials (continued)

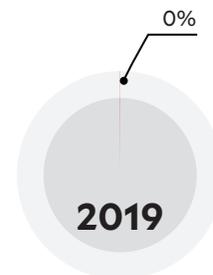
The pie charts below indicate that despite the high value that New Zealanders place on clinical trials, actual participation rates and invitations to participate are relatively low<sup>5</sup>.



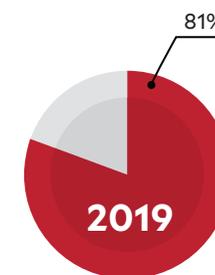
Ever asked to participate in a clinical trial



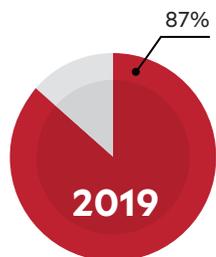
Ever participated in a clinical trial



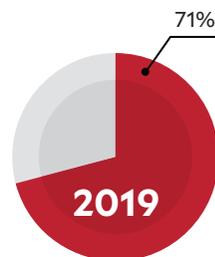
Currently participating in a clinical trial



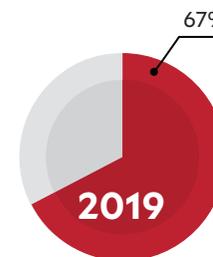
Important that New Zealanders are able to participate in clinical trials



Willing to participate in a clinical trial of a new medicine



There should be more opportunities for New Zealanders to participate in clinical trials for new medicines



Participating in clinical trials for new medicines is as important as donating blood

The last four sets of graphs reflect percentages of respondents who strongly or somewhat agreed with each statement.

In order to promote increased investment in clinical trials NZHR is addressing the following priorities:

- strengthening incentives and removing disincentives to improve industry investment in clinical trials
- public awareness campaign to promote participation in clinical trials
- mandating publicly funded health service provider commitment to health research and clinical trials
- publicly funded health service provider workforce development to create research capacity
- clinician discussion about clinical trials being a routine aspect of patient care
- ACC coverage to be extended to harm resulting from clinical trials

<sup>5</sup> See also Yeojeong J, Jameson M et al; Investigating strategies to improve clinical trial opportunities for patients with cancer in New Zealand—INSIGHT. NZMJ. 12th July 2019, Volume 132 Number 1498. Results showed that although 86% of cancer patients would consider going on a trial only 19% had actually been on one.

# Opinion Polling Questions

## Priorities for the New Zealand Government

Firstly, please think about what priorities you think the Government should be focusing on over the next 2–3 years. As you read through the following list of issues, please rate how important you personally think each issue is, as a priority for the Government to be focusing on over the next 2–3 years. Please use a 0 to 10 scale, where a 0 means that it is not important up to a 10 that means it is extremely important or a critical priority for the Government to be focusing on over the next 2–3 years.

## Valuing Health and Medical Research

### High value placed on health and medical research

How interested are you in health research? Are you .... Very interested? Somewhat interested? Not very interested? Not at all interested?

### All types of health and medical research are valued

Please rate the importance of research in the following areas:

- Making new discoveries about human health and disease
- Turning discoveries into new drugs and treatments
- Investing in better facilities and equipment in our health and medical research organisations
- Investing in national programs and equipment that can be used by all health and medical researchers to make their work more effective.
- Research to make our health system safer, more effective and efficient
- Research focused on finding ways to prevent illness and promote good health
- Antibiotic resistance to infectious diseases
- Research into the effects of climate change on health
- More research into the things we can do to improve our health

## Kiwis willing to be personally involved

For which of the following reasons would you be willing to share your personal health information, such as the results of diagnostic tests, or the outcome of treatments administered?

- So health care providers can improve patient care
- So public health officials can better track disease and disability and the causes
- To advance medical research
- None of the above

## Research can reduce health care costs

When it comes to rising healthcare costs, do you think that research to improve health is part of the problem because it will increase costs or part of the solution as it will help reduce costs?

## Awareness and Beliefs

How well informed are you about health and medical research in New Zealand?

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- Vaccinations are a safe and effective way of keeping people healthy
- Adding fluoride to public water supplies is a safe and effective way of reducing tooth decay
- Adding folic acid to flour and bread is a safe and effective way of preventing spina bifida and neural tube defects
- Genetically modifying organisms is a safe and effective way of making new medicines
- Eating plenty of fruit and vegetables is a safe and effective way of keeping healthy
- Regular exercise is a safe and effective way of keeping healthy

- Cutting down on sugary food and drinks is a safe and effective way of keeping healthy
- Cutting down on salt is a safe and effective way of keeping healthy

## Who should pay?

How would you rate the current budget of 125 million per year for health research in New Zealand? (\$125 million is 0.75% of health care costs).

Thinking specifically about funding for health and medical research in New Zealand, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements.

- Government should invest more funding in health research
- Industry (ie pharmaceutical companies etc) should invest more in health research
- Philanthropic organisations (charities) should invest more of their resources into health research
- Individuals should donate more to health research

## Philanthropic Investment in Health Research

On average, about how much money in total would you donate to health and medical research each year?

- None
- \$1-\$100 a year
- \$101-\$500 a year
- More than \$500 a year – please specify
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

How important are each of the following as reasons why you do not donate more (or at all) to health and medical research?

- I think it is a government responsibility
- I haven't been asked
- I support charities in other areas

- Health and medical research already gets a lot of support
- I don't know which health and medical research organisations to donate to
- I don't know where or how the money will be spent
- I can't afford to make donations

How likely would you be to leave a bequest to medical research in your will?

How important are each of the following as reasons why you are not likely to leave a bequest to medical research in your will?

- I think it is a government responsibility
- I haven't been asked
- I support charities in other areas
- Health and medical research already gets a lot of support
- I don't know which health and medical research organisations to leave a bequest to
- I don't know where or how the money will be spent
- I can't afford to leave a bequest

## Clinical Trials

Clinical trials are used to test the effectiveness of new medical treatments and drugs before they are commercially available.

- Have you ever been asked to participate in a clinical trial in New Zealand?
- Have you ever participated in a clinical trial in New Zealand?
- Are you currently participating in a clinical trial in New Zealand?

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- It is important that New Zealanders are able to participate in clinical trials for new medicines
- I would be willing to participate in a clinical trial of a new medicine if I had a condition that it might be able to treat
- There should be more opportunities for New Zealanders to participate in clinical trials for new medicines
- Participating in clinical trials for new medicines is as important as donating blood.

# Methodology

Research Overview	
Statement of compliance with international standards	This research project was carried out in compliance with ISO 9001 and ISO 20252
Client name:	New Zealanders for Health Research
Research Service Provider Name(s):	Roy Morgan Research Ltd
Sub-contractor used:	None
Process sub-contracted:	None
Research objectives:	This research was conducted to trend attitudes towards health research in New Zealand
Quantitative Research	
Target group:	New Zealanders aged 18 years and older
Proposed sample size:	500
Actual sample size:	516
Reason for difference in proposed to actual sample size:	Slight over-recruitment in some age/gender/location cells due to some respondents having begun but not completed the online survey when the quota target was met (i.e. they are permitted to finish). This over-recruitment was subsequently corrected during the weighting process (see below)
Fieldwork period:	29 April – 8 May 2019
Sampling method:	Members of Roy Morgan's Proprietary Online Panel, 18 years and older, living in New Zealand, were emailed an invitation to participate in the survey.
Data collection method:	Online survey (CAWI – Computer Assisted Web Interviewing)
Response rate:	4.1%
Weighting process:	Weighted proportional to population by age, sex, area (North/South Island) and projected to New Zealand 18+ population estimates.
Estimation/imputation Procedure:	No estimation/imputation processes used.
Sample Population Representation:	Sample is broadly representative of New Zealand's population by sex, age and area (North & South Island).
Maximum sampling tolerance:	+/- 4.3% Confidence = 95%
Incentive type:	One entry into Roy Morgan's monthly NZ prize draw (\$500)

# About New Zealanders for Health Research

New Zealanders for Health Research is a national, dedicated public education and advocacy alliance committed to making health research a higher priority in New Zealand.

Our members span industry, patient advocacy groups, charities and research institutions. Together, our diverse alliance represents the interests of a broad community all working together to promote health and prosperity for New Zealanders.

Investment in health research is of vital importance. Not only does it improve the health and quality of people's lives now and in the future, it also supports New Zealand's economy through the emergence of new businesses and knowledge-based jobs for kiwis. Our voice promotes health and prosperity for New Zealand and New Zealanders.

New Zealanders for Health Research is a fully independent organisation, and all our activities are funded by membership subscriptions. Our public opinion data, advocacy programs and publications reach the public and decision makers to help advance medical, health and scientific research. By joining our alliance, you leverage resources to help enable the large scale advocacy efforts needed to increase health research funding and speed the development and translation of health benefits to our population.

## Our supporters

### PLATINUM



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New Zealanders for  
**HEALTH RESEARCH**

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