



## **Whanau and Friends of People Affected by Addiction Need Lots of Support**

**12.02.19**

Professional addiction practitioners say whanau and friends of people affected by addiction need properly funded support and acknowledgement for the complicated and very difficult issues they face.

In a statement to mark the **Manukau Counties AOD(Alcohol & Other Drugs) Family Day (Tuesday February 12) and the upcoming International Family Drug Support Day (February 24)**, **Dapaanz (Addiction Practitioners' Association Aotearoa New Zealand) Executive Director , Sue Paton**, says a well-funded system that supports wellbeing and recovery from addiction must support the addicts whanau and friends as well.

“Whanau and friends often bear the brunt of their loved one’s addiction related behaviours.

Almost all are coping with profound grief over the perceived loss of beautiful son, daughter, parent, lover or friend.

Many feel desperately lonely and very isolated. Some feel stigmatised and judged by people with have no understanding of addiction.

Without adequate support these caring whanau can inadvertently reinforce their loved one’s behaviours. On the other hand, with well-resourced support they can be a pivotal and very positive factor in their loved one’s recovery,” she says.

“I have enormous respect and aroha for the family and friends who come together online or in face-to- face support groups to help each other. Their lived experience is vital.

However, addiction is first and foremost a health issue which needs to be resourced appropriately in order to reduce harm.”

Dapaanz represents people working in addiction treatment, some of whom have their own lived experience of addiction.

“We need addiction practitioners, but we also need people who understand what whanau are going through and who can support others in the same situation. It is the specific role of this peer workforce to get alongside people and provide a bridge for them to begin a recovery journey back into the community”

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Dapaanz - Fostering Excellence in Addiction Practice

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