



JOINT STATEMENT BY THE AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKER (ANZASW), THE TANGATA WHENUA SOCIAL WORKERS ASSOCIATION (TWSWA) AND THE COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND (CSWEANZ)

16 June 2026

A unified voice for social work in Aotearoa

Social work in Aotearoa is increasingly shaped from the outside in, by policy, regulation and risk-driven systems, while social workers face unsustainable workloads, risk and moral distress, and communities come under growing pressure.

In response, the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers (ANZASW), the Tangata Whenua Social Workers Association (TWSWA), and the Council for Social Work Education in Aotearoa New Zealand (CSWEANZ) stand together in tūhonohono, united in our resolve to stand up for social work and the people it serves.

This marks a clear shift: we will no longer respond in isolation or at the margins. Together, we will lift and project the voices of practitioners to help shape the future of social work in Aotearoa.

We are clear:

- Te Tiriti o Waitangi must be upheld across all social work kaupapa
- Social work must be led by values, not driven by risk
- Social workers and communities must be worked with, not decided for, with power and voice held alongside them
- Diverse knowledge and lived realities must be recognised and protected

We will strengthen coordinated advocacy, sector leadership and a more visible public voice, engaging with government, the regulator and partners to advance ethical, sustainable and mana-enhancing social work, grounded in practice realities and in partnership with communities.

Systems not grounded in practice realities are failing both social workers and communities. This must change.

Each organisation continues its own mandate, but on the fundamentals, whakamāramatanga, mātauranga and oranga, we stand together in tūhonohono, bound by shared purpose.

- To social workers: We stand with you, your mahi matters, and your voice will be brought to the centre of decision-making.
- To decision-makers: We are aligned and will speak with a unified, influential voice.
- To communities: We are committed to practice that upholds mana and partnership, with you shaping the systems that affect you.

This is about reclaiming the narrative of social work in Aotearoa ensuring it is shaped by those who live it, and by the communities it serves.

Signed:

Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers (ANZASW)

Tangata Whenua Social Workers Association (TWSWA)

Council for Social Work Education in Aotearoa New Zealand (CSWEANZ)