

Maori Resource Centre opened in Auckland

The first Maori Resource Centre for dealing with alcohol and drug problems has opened in Auckland.

Funded by the Alcoholic Liquor Advisory Council, the Resource Centre will fill an urgent need, according to ALAC's Maori Co-ordinator, Ngamaru Raerino.

"I went to hui all over New Zealand to find out what Maori people thought was needed in order to do something positive about the alcohol and drug problems amongst our own people.

"They saw an overwhelming need for a Central Resource Unit in a neutral setting that could pool together people from community groups, Justice, Social Welfare, hospitals and Maori groups to find out answers to the problems."

ALAC has put \$40,000 into the development of the Auckland Maori Resource Unit, which is the first of several to be set up around the country. ALAC has committed \$150,000 for the development of further Maori Resource Centres in other parts of New Zealand.

The Auckland Centre, opened by Maori Affairs Minister, Koro Wetere, is overseen by Te Ara Hou, a committee made up of local Maori people from a wide range of different groups.

"Looking at the ways alcohol and drugs affect Maori people, really involves looking at all of Maoridom," said Mr Raerino.

"This Resource Centre gives us a focus, with a place to hold hui talks to come up with ideas."

The Auckland Maori Resource Centre is already heavily booked by Maori groups, he said.

"For example, we are having a series of Justice Department hui here on the links between alcohol and Maori people in prison. We want to use hapu, iwi or tribal involvement, to help Maori prisoners with alcohol problems.

He says there was no doubt the new Resource Centre would be fully used by Maori people.

Te Ara Hou, with support and funding from the Alcoholic Liquor Advisory Council, initiated the establishment of the first Resource Unit, at 10 Boston Road, Mt Eden. Te Ara Hou's aim is to establish training and services for the prevention, assessment and treatment of alcohol and substance abuse, and also to instil and implement Maori values, principles and procedures in all spheres of operations, communications and business, promotions and supporting any individual or organisation that deals in a Maori perspective.

The Resource Unit, based at 10 Bos-

ton Road, Mt Eden, will provide co-ordination, communication and support for individual workers, committees and alcohol and substance abuse services.

Training programmes are being developed for work within the Social Services with an emphasis on the **Maori perspective**.

The Executive Committee of Te Ara Hou is: Mr Rau Kapa, Chairman; Te Puea Askin, Secretary; Lilly Heihei, Treasurer.

Funded by: The Alcoholic Liquor Advisory Council, Interdepartmental Committee on Substance Abuse.

To combat substance abuse

In September 1985, at the Winter School on Alcohol Studies, a group of Maori workers in the field of alcohol and substance abuse met to discuss the needs of Maori people.

They were concerned that alcohol counsellor training and alcohol treatment services did not adequately meet or address Maori needs.

This lack of cultural sensitivity was seen to exist throughout the whole of the alcohol and substance abuse social services. A meeting was called and the Maori Co-ordinator of the Alcoholic Liquor Advisory Council was invited to attend and present his views and advice.

The issues discussed at the meeting ranged from the need to establish a national co-ordinating body and the need for a resource unit, to the establishment of training courses for counsellors (Maori) in the field of alcohol and substance abuse.

It was agreed to hold a national hui in Auckland, co-ordinated and hosted by those from Auckland, and that group went on to form a duly constituted incorporated society under the name of Te Ara Hou. Another group, based in Christchurch, went on to form Te Rito Arahi.

The national hui was convened in October, 1985, and in line with recommendations made by the Maori Co-ordinator of the Alcoholic Liquor Advisory Council, the hui was funded by the Council.

Held from the 16th to the 18th October, the hui was attended by approximately 65 people from the following organisations: Department of Social Welfare, Presbyterian Support Services, Hospital Boards, Department of Health, Salvation Army, Matua Whangai and the Justice Department.