



(Māori, Indigenous &
South Pacific) HIV/AIDS Foundation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**HIV POSITIVE MĀORI WOMAN INVITED TO
PRESTIGIOUS INDIGENOUS HEALTH CONFERENCE**

16 AUGUST 2010

The INA Foundation, a member of the newly established International Indigenous Working Group on HIV/AIDS, has been asked to present issues about Indigenous people and HIV at the Healing Our Spirit Worldwide conference, Honolulu, Hawaii.

Marama Pala *Ngātiawa ki Kapiti*, Kaiwhakahaere/Executive Director (INA), an HIV positive Māori woman, plans to promote the visibility of Indigenous People's HIV and AIDS issues; to increase the support from local, regional and international Indigenous people.

"History shows us that HIV is not openly discussed at Indigenous conferences. It's an issue that gets left off the agenda." says Marama Pala, "Even though Indigenous Peoples experience high rates of HIV and AIDS, it needs to be made visible at all Indigenous conferences and gatherings. It's time that all Indigenous peoples became aware that we are a marginalised community vulnerable to HIV"

Indigenous people globally continue to under represented in HIV prevention, research, policy and funding initiatives, and this contributes to ongoing HIV disparities and resource allocation. The stigma within Indigenous communities further marginalises this health issue, making it difficult to discuss.

"I hope am able to stress the importance of HIV, speaking openly about HIV and facing the stigma of HIV with my Indigenous and aboriginal brothers and sisters" urges Marama. "Silence No More...for the sake of my HIV negative children; we need to eliminate stigma and discrimination and make our people safe."

Healing Our Spirit Worldwide.

The Sixth Gathering.

September 3-10, 2010.

Hosted by Papa Ola Lokahi, Honolulu, Hawaii

www.hosw.com

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Media Enquires:

Marama Pala

Marama.pala@ina.maori.nz

www.ina.maori.nz Tel 027 299 1535