

## New Zealand backs study for safer alternative to opioids

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**Safer alternative to opioids is part of more than \$78M allocated to health research**



A New Zealand-led research team who have developed a suite of non-addictive drug compounds to treat pain have received a funding boost to progress their work through the preclinical development phase.

The team received one of 53 grants announced by the Health Research Council of New Zealand (HRC) in a \$78.92 million funding allocation for new and innovative research into some of New Zealand's most pressing health concerns.

Associate Professor Bronwyn Kivell from the Research Trust of Victoria University of Wellington and her team will use a \$1.2 million project grant to find the most effective and safe compound from their novel drug library for treating chronic pain.

The research team will help develop the novel drugs and use innovative technology to 'map' pain in the brain and see how the drugs mitigate that pain.

Associate Professor Kivell says one in five adults in New Zealand suffers from chronic pain and half of pain sufferers report little pain relief with current treatments.