



May 20, 2022

## MEDIA RELEASE

### First Indigenous Woman Appointed to Global Role



The world's first election of an Indigenous woman as Vice President of the [World Federation of Public Health Associations](#) (WFPHA) is being celebrated.

Emma Rawson-Te Patu was officially confirmed at the WFPHA's General Assembly hosted from Geneva, Switzerland yesterday.

Of Ngāti Ranginui, Ngāi Te Rangi, Raukawa and Ngāti Hauā, Emma is the current Co-Vice Chair of the Indigenous Working Group of the WFPHA and member of the Public Health Association of New Zealand

(PHANZ) and its Māori Caucus.

She will be Vice President for two years after which she will transition to President of the Federation for a further two years.

The Federation is a civil society with over 100 member organisations that has an accumulative membership of five million academics, physicians, researchers, and health promoters globally.

Mrs Rawson-Te Patu says the role is an incredible opportunity for Indigenous voices to be heard on the global stage.

“This is a hinge moment in time and the opportunity for Māori and other Indigenous voices to be highlighted on this public health global stage.” She also says it is critical in seeing the transformation required for our environments and to ensure authentic efforts are made to address all inequities in public health, particularly Indigenous inequities. Emma expects to draw from what Aotearoa has to offer whilst energising what can be done here.

“I am excited about working collaboratively with the new President Luis Eugenio De Souza from Brazil, the dedicated and skilled staff in the office in Geneva and with the other working groups of the association to better effect change throughout our spheres of influence.”

Mrs Rawson-Te Patu also acknowledges Adrian Te Patu who has represented the PHANZ on the WFPHA Governing Council since 2016 and was the first Indigenous person on that body, representing the Asia Pacific region.

Grant Berghan, Chief Executive of the PHANZ, welcomes Mrs Rawson-Te Patu’s appointment to the role.

“This is an opportunity to amplify Indigenous voices on a global stage. Indigenous knowledge and leadership can make a positive difference to the existential challenges we face.”

**For interview requests please contact:**

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