

Canterbury

District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora o Waitaha

**Corporate
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MEDIA RELEASE

TO: News Room

FROM: Amy Milne, Media Liaison

DATE: January 23, 2012

SUBJECT: Canterbury Health Laboratories now able to test for controversial synthetic cannabis products

Canterbury Health Laboratories (CHL) has become the first laboratory in New Zealand to be able to screen for synthetic cannabis products such as “Kronic” at its toxicology laboratory.

CHL Quality and Business Development Manager Kevin Taylor says laboratory staff last year developed a method to detect synthetic cannabinoids in urine.

The next step in being able to do the testing was to gain accreditation, which was issued last week.

“CHL is the first laboratory in New Zealand that we know of to have this accreditation and the only one in New Zealand able to test for these synthetic products, Kevin says.

“It means companies using CHL's workplace drug testing service will now be able to test for these substances and depending on their individual health and safety policy, be able to use this information accordingly.”

Last August the Government banned Kronic, which had been marketed as ‘legal weed’, after emergency departments around the country reported they were treating increasing numbers of people with adverse side effects as a result of smoking the product.

ENDS

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