

Te Rau Matatini: Māori mental health workforce development

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First, a background to the development of Te Rau Matatini: As we are all aware, Māori are under-represented across the range of health disciplines. A report released by the Health Workforce Advisory Committee (2001) revealed that while Māori comprised 15% of all mental health workers, only 1.3% of clinical psychologists, 6% of registered nurses, 0.6% of occupational therapists, and less than 2% of psychiatrists were Māori. These figures highlight the existing discrepancy between the number of Māori mental health workers and the number of tāngata whaiora. In addition to this is the reality that Māori are often employed in support rather than professional roles.

A number of Government policies and documents acknowledge, and continue to acknowledge, that the Māori mental health workforce needs greater numbers, retention strategies, training options, and increased coordination. In 1997, the Ministry of Health released *Moving Forward: the National Mental Health Plan for More and Better Services*. The Plan outlined a number of national objectives for the following 4-10 years, one of these being to increase the Māori mental health workforce by 50% by 2005 (objective 6.4).

Furthermore, in 2000, *Tūtahitia te Wero: Meeting the Challenges*, Mental Health Workforce Development Plan was released by the former Health Funding Authority. It outlined 11 mental health workforce development goals including, as a priority, building a robust Māori mental health workforce. Te Rau Matatini was established in December 2001, as one of a number of initiatives funded by the Ministry of Health, to strengthen the Māori mental health workforce as in line with *Tūtahitia te Wero*.

Organisational arrangements

Te Rau Matatini is based at Massey University, but as it is a Charitable Trust, an independent Board governs it. The Board members have purposefully been selected for their experience, knowledge, and networks within Māori mental health, and are therefore largely representative of the Māori mental health sector. As previously mentioned, the Programme is contracted by the Ministry of Health until June 2004, and has four core staff including Professor Mason Durie as the Director, Kirsty Maxwell-Crawford as the Programme Manager, myself Paul Hirini, as Clinical Coordinator, and Toni Waetford as our Administrator.

Project themes

The aim of Te Rau Matatini is to strengthen the Māori mental health workforce by:

- Contributing to Māori mental health workforce policy at a national and regional level
- Contributing to a Māori mental health workforce which subscribes to excellence in clinical and cultural expertise
- Expanding and extending the Māori mental health workforce
- Promoting rewarding career opportunities in mental health for Māori

Principally, these aims will be achieved through the progression of eight projects, the culmination of which will contribute to four areas of Māori mental health workforce development, workforce expansion, workforce extension, workforce excellence, and workforce navigation. These are the four project themes of Te Rau Matatini. They centre on recruitment and the promotion of Māori mental health careers, training enhancement, the attainment of dual competency, increased retention strategies, the extension of mental health expertise to other related sectors,

increased coordination, purposeful direction, and strategic planning.

As there are eight projects in total, and explaining each one would take some time, to provide an outline, Te Rau Matatini is aiming to support the Māori mental health workforce in the following ways:

- Training packages
- The development of a national strategic plan
- Promotion of Māori mental health careers
- Closer alignment of education and health
- Enhancement of career pathways
- Identification of core competencies
- Mental health detection in primary health care
- The establishment of a Māori mental health workforce development focussed website
- Māori child and adolescent mental health workforce development.

Two projects, Te Rau Piatāta and Te Rau Whakamaru, will be the focus for the remainder of the presentation, as they are particularly relevant to you here today as Māori psychologists, graduates and psychology students.

The recruitment of Māori students to mental health

Te Rau Piatāta focuses on the area of recruitment. As stage one, Te Rau Matatini has developed two Māori mental health career information video resources. The videos aim to raise the awareness of Māori mental health needs, remove the mystery and stigma surrounding working in Māori mental health, and promote Māori mental health as a challenging and rewarding career.

A concise and compact 15-minute video is designed to convey mental health career opportunities to rangatahi Māori (Māori youth), while the second provides detailed coverage intended for Māori who have work experience in a related sector and are seeking a career change. Each video features six Māori staff talking about their roles, training, and how they came to work in Māori mental health.

The roles featured include:

- Community Support Work
- Tāngata Whaiora (Consumer)

Advocacy

- Social Work
- Psychiatry
- Alcohol and Drug Counselling
- Mental Health Nursing
- Clinical Psychology.

Two staff featured in the videos are here with us today, Clive Banks and Simon Bennett, who both talk about their training and work in Māori mental health as Clinical Psychologists. The videos are intended for use by career advisors, teachers, employment promotion agencies, and whānau, as well as Māori youth and adults seeking more information about employment opportunities within Māori mental health. The videos have been distributed to all public libraries, tertiary institutions, and career services, in addition to rūnanga/trust boards, resource centres, and secondary schools who indicated an interest.

The long term expected outcome is an increased number of Māori mental health professionals, including senior secondary Māori students entering training that would lead to a Māori mental health career, greater numbers of tertiary students entering Māori mental health careers upon graduation, and increased Māori mental health professionals entering the workforce from a Māori health background. While we are unable (due to time restraints) to show you both videos, we do have a 5 minute trailer that we would like to show you now. This trailer can also be viewed on our website www.matatini.co.nz.

Positive feedback on, and demand for, the videos has been overwhelming. Other workforce areas who are struggling to attract Māori have approached Te Rau Matatini for input and ideas. To us, the key ingredients for the potential impact of the videos appear to be that they are:

- **Māori focussed and centred:** The videos are very much focussed on Māori audiences. This is reflected in the language, music, imagery, and content of the videos.

- **Māori driven:** The process, content, and outcome was not overseen or overridden by a mainstream institution.
- **Māori role models:** The videos feature our greatest resource within Māori mental health, the stories and expertise of our kaimanāki (workforce).

Retention of Māori students in Psychology

The second project we would like to share with you is Te Rau Whakamaru, a project designed to attract Māori students to consider Psychology: through enhancing the training experience and retaining them once they have made Psychology their training of choice.

Barriers to the progression and purposeful participation of Māori in Psychology have been well documented: including the reliance of tertiary institutions that teach Psychology on Western paradigms, models of practice, research and literature (Levy, 2002; Glover & Robertson, 1997; Lawson-Te Aho, 1994; Brady, 1992). This reliance has led to concern over the readiness and competence of graduate psychologists, and the training needed to enable Māori students to deliver effective services in the Māori community (e.g., Levy, 2002). One area of particular concern is the area of Māori mental health placements and internships.

The endeavour of Te Rau Whakamaru is to generate collaboration and communication through the facilitation of a joint working party, and in so doing, create a forum for Māori mental health service providers, trainers and professional bodies to collectively consider and strengthen the quality of:

- **Training outputs:** It is intended that quality will be achieved by ensuring service providers and professional bodies are able to provide feedback to trainers on the type of knowledge, skills, and competencies that are required to encourage effective practice, including the promotion of dual competency. A competent Māori health workforce is one that can demonstrate excellence in both cultural *and* clinical domains. This was affirmed in a recent survey of the Māori mental health workforce undertaken by Te Rau Matatini

which revealed 94% believed dual competence to be very or extremely important. Therefore, dual competency needs to be evident in both Māori health service delivery and training.

- **Tertiary placement options:** Quality is to be attained through the promotion of access by trainers to suitable placements, and collaboration to ensure the placements are mutually beneficial.

Graduate competence and work-readiness: Quality is to be reached through the enhanced coordination and quality improvement of training, recruitment, and retention strategies.

The initial focus of Te Rau Whakamaru is the profession of Psychology: this is due to the plethora of publications/opinions calling for Psychology training to be more responsive to Māori, the experiences of the implementation team (which contains two Māori psychologists), and the dire need for more Māori Psychologists.

The working party will track the placements and internships of Māori clinical psychology students. The party will work together resolving any foreseen or unforeseen issues, which may arise during the year, to strengthen the student placement and learning experience. They will identify the key barriers to positive placement experience, and develop guidelines to help avoid these barriers and improve the shortcomings that Māori participants in clinical psychology training have historically faced (e.g., Abbot & Durie, 1987).

Prior to the establishment of the working party, a consultation exercise with practicing Māori clinical psychologists and current Māori clinical psychology students was undertaken. The consultation exercise obtained feedback from current or recent Māori students, regarding their impressions and experience of participating in the training endeavour. A report detailing the findings from the consultation will provide a key resource to guide the undertakings of the working party.

Overall, the working party's expected outcome is an increase in the quality and coordination of the working relationships between trainers, providers, and professional bodies in the New Zealand mental health sector.

More specifically, the pilot is expected to:

- Increase access to relevant quality placements
- Improve the quality of graduates by ensuring they have the skills, knowledge, and competencies identified as those required by service providers and professional bodies
- Increase recruitment options by improved communication and networking
- Increase positive, professional exposure to Māori mental health career options

- Develop a template for other Māori mental health professions in the establishment of collaborations of this kind.

Overall, Te Rau Matatini is aiming to contribute to the development of the Māori Psychology workforce, by encouraging increased responsiveness of the profession to Māori, recruitment and retention of Māori students studying in mental health and Psychology in particular, increased national recognition of the need for dual competence for Māori Psychologists, and improved service responsiveness for Māori consumers/ tāngata whaiora Māori.

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