

Background information: Questions and Answers

Te Umanga Whakaora launch

Te Umanga Whakaora

1. What is Te Umanga Whakaora Accelerated Māori Occupational Therapy Workforce Development?

Te Umanga Whakaora provides a tool to help address critical work shortages and challenges in occupational therapy. It includes a Strategic Framework, Action Plan and Action Pathways. It will guide the expansion and development of Māori occupational therapists, the Occupational Therapy profession as a whole, including development of dual cultural and clinical competencies within the profession. It provides opportunities and challenges for employers, funders and planners, and educational institutions to support the expansion and development of the Occupational Therapy profession within New Zealand.

The strategy provides a practical guide for services, practitioners, communities, training and professional bodies and funders about workforce solutions that build:

- Recruitment and retention
- Best practice, and
- Cultural Competency.

2. Why is Te Umanga Whakaora necessary?

Across the health and disability sector there continues to be significant under-representation of Māori practitioners. The proportion of Māori across the professional health and disability workforce is approximately 5.7% of the regulated workforce.

In 2008, only 2% (44) of the 2159 registered occupational therapists were Māori.

3. Who are the key organisations who will be involved in the implementation of this plan?

The key organisations are:

- New Zealand Association of Occupational Therapists (NZAOT)
- Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand (registration board) (OTBNZ)
- District Health Boards
- Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC)
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Social Development
- Ministry of Education, and

- Te Rau Matatini.

The two Occupational Therapy tertiary providers involved are:

- Auckland University of Technology (AUT)
- Otago Polytechnic

Te Umanga Whakaora Reference Group

4. Who are the key people involved with the development of the Te Umanga Whakaora?

Māori occupational therapy practitioners, tangata whaiora and kaumātua have in the development of this strategy. Below are the members of the Reference Group for Te Umanga Whakaora:

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| <i>Kevin Brown</i> | Ngāpuhi; Māori Occupational Therapist, Counties Manukau District Health Board (DHB) |
| <i>Kristi Carpenter</i> | Kai Tahu; Māori Occupational Therapist; Lecturer and Fieldwork Associate; Otago Polytechnic |
| <i>Georgina Davis</i> | Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Porou, Ngāi Tai; Māori Occupational Therapist; Te Huarahi Ora and Manaaki Ora; Adult Māori Mental Health; Counties Manukau DHB |
| <i>Te Ara Whittington</i> | nee Isla Emery; Ngāti Kauwhata, Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa; Māori Occupational Therapist, He Kākano - Māori Child and Adolescence Mental Health Service, Counties Manukau DHB |
| <i>Jo-Anne Gilsenan</i> | Ngāti Apa Ki Te Rā Tō, Ngāi Tahu; Māori Occupational Therapist; Manager Occupational Therapy Services |
| <i>Jake Tahitahi</i> | Ngāti Manuhiri; Māori Occupational Therapist; Community Mental Health DHB; Whānau, Hapū and Iwi Development |
| <i>Riwai Wilson</i> | Ngāti Porou; Māori Occupational Therapist; He Kākano - Māori Child and Adolescence Mental Health Service, Counties Manukau DHB |
| <i>Tania Marino</i> | Ngāti Ruanui; Tangata Whaiora Advisor |

Occupational Therapy

5. Who are tangata whaiora?

Tangata whai ora means a service user, “person seeking health” and is also frequently written as tangata whaiora, which refers to “a person who has wellbeing” and is broader than but inclusive of those with mental health issues.

6. *What is Occupational Therapy?*

Occupational therapy is based on the premise that part of being human requires us to be engaged in meaningful activity.

Occupational therapy is defined in Aotearoa as a profession that “enables occupation to optimise human activity and participation in all life domains across the life span, and thus promote the health and wellbeing of individuals, groups, and communities”(Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand).

7. *How many Occupation Therapists are there in New Zealand and how many are Māori?*

In 2008, only 2% (44) of the 2159 registered occupational therapists were Māori.

In 2001, 84% of Māori occupational therapists were estimated to be in the workforce but by 2004, only 68% were retained; a drop of 16%.

In 2006/07, Māori made up 14.6% of the population, but were presenting to disability services at the higher rate of 24% compared to non-Māori of 17%.

8. *How hard is it to recruit an Occupational Therapist?*

A recently released report to the New Zealand Association of Occupational Therapy confirmed ongoing difficulties in recruiting staff with only 34.5% of vacancies being filled within 10 weeks of advertising.

9. *What qualifications do you need and what tertiary education institutions are involved?*

- Bachelor of Health Science Occupational Therapy completed at Auckland University of Technology (AUT)
- Bachelor of Occupational Therapy at Otago Polytechnic
- Equivalent qualifications from overseas along with New Zealand registration

10. *Where do Occupational Therapists work?*

Most Occupational Therapists work in District Health Boards (DHBs) with 52% of the profession employed there including in community health services and kaupapa Māori and Māori-led health service providers. Limited numbers of Occupational Therapists also work in the education sector, particularly special education and for the Ministry of Social Development.