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Health IT Investment and Standards
Ministry of Health
PO Box 5013
Wellington

Tēnā koe i nga ahuatanga o te wa

Ethnicity Data Protocols for the Health and Disability Sector
Submission to the Ministry of Health

Introduction: Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu

Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu writes in response to the *Ethnicity Data Protocols for the Health and Disability Sector*, following the request for submissions on the revised protocols for the collection, recording and output of ethnicity data for the health and disability sector.

Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu is a limited partnership, supported by the nine iwi of Te Waipounamu through a Shareholders Council known as Te Taumata. Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu was launched in July 2014 as the South Island Commissioning Agency for Whānau Ora. Te Taumata has appointed an independent governance board which is responsible for the investment strategy. The name, Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu, represents the convergence of the rivers of Te Waipounamu, bringing sustenance to the people, and reflecting the partnership's founding principle of whānaungatanga.

Commissioning in the context of Whānau Ora is the process of identifying the aspirations of whānau and investing in them whether they are new or existing initiatives. These whānau-centred initiatives are expected to best reflect progress towards Whānau Ora outcomes.

Whānau Ora is an inclusive approach to support whānau to work together as whānau, rather than separately with individual family members. We consider that Whānau Ora outcomes will be met when whānau are:

- Self-managing;
- Living healthy lifestyles;
- Participating fully in society;
- Confidently participating in Te Ao Māori;
- Economically secure and successfully involved in wealth creation;
- Cohesive, resilient and nurturing;

- And able to act as responsible stewards of their living and natural environments.

Te Putahitanga o Te Waipounamu writes in support of the Ethnicity Data Protocols for the Health and Disability Sector. There is a need for clear and consistent data from across the health and disability sector in order to identify needs of different ethnic groups and to provide appropriate funding, resourcing and other supports. The increasingly ethnically diverse New Zealand population will create significant changes in the demographics of health users, and there needs to be strong data to assist health providers anticipate and respond to these changes.

Māori Health Challenges

As recognised by the Ethnicity Data Protocols, Māori face distinct health and wellbeing challenges. In order to ensure that appropriate health and wellbeing services for Māori are being designed and directed to ensure the greatest positive outcomes for individuals, families and whānau, it is imperative that data is available to clearly identify the health and wellbeing needs of Māori. Better data will enable those involved in the health and wellbeing of Māori (including health providers, researchers, community groups, and iwi) to identify the distinct health and wellbeing needs of specific age groups, locations and other lifestyle factors within the Māori population. The health needs of Māori in Motueka will be different from those of Māori in Christchurch, but better data is needed to understand and respond to this.

It is positive to see the recognition of Māori within the Ethnicity Data Protocols, and Te Putahitanga o Te Waipounamu looks forward to the development of better health and wellbeing data for Maori through the implementation of the Ethnicity Data Protocols.

Implementation of Ethnicity Data Protocols

It is concerning to see, however, there is little discussion regarding the implementation of the Ethnicity Data Protocols. While the Ethnicity Data Protocols are well developed and reflect the need for better ethnic data collection, the Ethnicity Data Protocols are only as good as their enforcement. Anecdotal evidence indicates that some agencies have been not as committed to the implementation of the previous versions of the Ethnicity Data Protocols as could have been wished, and this will impact the collection and utilisation of data.

Te Putahitanga o Te Waipounamu submits that more detailed consideration should be given to ensure the Ethnicity Data Protocols are mandatorily implemented across all relevant agencies. Having accurate data is key to the development of solutions to the health challenges faced by Māori, and it is unacceptable to have piecemeal commitment to the recording of ethnic health data.

Cultural Competency

The Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 sets standards of cultural competence to be observed by health practitioners. This is included under section 118(i) of the Act. The concept of 'cultural competence' was developed in health care to better meet the needs of increasingly culturally diverse populations.

Professional registration bodies for the health and disability workforce in New Zealand have each defined cultural competence in different ways by the various professional registration bodies:

- The Medical Council of New Zealand (www.mcnz.org.nz)
- The Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (www.rnzcgp.org.nz)
- Nursing Council of New Zealand (www.nursingcouncil.org.nz);
- The Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers (www.anzasw.org.nz);
- Auckland Region Allied/Public Health/Technical MECA (<http://www.psa.org.nz/YourWorkplace/HospitalsAndHealthServices/HealthAPT.aspx>);
- Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand (www.otboard.org.nz);
- Physiotherapy Board of New Zealand (www.physioboard.org.nz);
- New Zealand Psychologists Board (www.psychologistsboard.org.nz)

It would be good to see how the Ethnicity Data Protocols seeks to define cultural competency in a way that defines how it applies to the interpretation and usage of data as it pertains to Māori.

Finally, it would be helpful to see the on-going contribution that Te Kupenga can make to our knowledge of the experiences and vital data sets specific to whānau, hapū and iwi.

Te Putahitanga o Te Waipounamu is open to any future engagement on the Ethnicity Data Protocols for the Health and Disability Sector, and appreciates the opportunity provided by Ministry of Health to engage in the consultation process.

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Heoi ano



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