

A whānau-centred approach to producing justifiable research priorities: Insights from an indigenous Commissioning Agency

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Background

As the Whānau Ora Commissioning Agency for the North Island of New Zealand, Te Pou Matakana (TPM) looks to develop whānau-centred initiatives and policy which promote positive whānau outcomes. Research is an important component of this process and ensuring that research priorities are relevant and meaningful requires an intimate knowledge of your population and a unique and inclusive research approach. The 'Kaumātua Needs and Wellbeing Study' conducted by TPM will be presented to highlight this approach.

Objectives

TPM worked with kaumātua (Māori elders) to develop the following research objectives:

- Identify the needs and aspirations of the ageing Māori population;
- Understand what an ageing population means in the context of Whānau Ora approaches;
- Recognise how Te Pou Matakana as the Commissioning Agency for Whānau Ora can further promote the wellbeing of kaumātua.

Method

This research consisted of two phases. The first, was the survey phase which sought to identify the kaumātua specific services that were being provided in the North Island. The second, was the qualitative component which explored in detail the needs and aspirations of kaumātua.

Results

Several key narratives emerged from the research including:

- 1) a lack of funding and provision of both mainstream and Māori kaumātua specific services
- 2) discourse around Māori ageing needs to happen sooner and more frequently
- 3) Iwi, hapū, government providers, NGOs and funders should work together to enable cross-sector strategies
- 4) strategies to support kaumātua should be developed in concert with kaumātua.