Maori health models as a vehicle to health and wellbeing in our communities

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Te Matatini - the National Māori performing Arts Festival is the largest biannual gathering of Māori people in Aotearoa New Zealand, celebrating excellence in performing arts, culture, and positive Māori identities. There is clear evidence linking positive cultural identities to indigenous health outcomes. Te Kāika Waiora – the Māori health village at Te Matatini in Christchurch 2015 involved a collaboration of more than 35 organisations across the health and wellbeing sectors utilising Professor Mason Durie’s holistic model of Maori Health Promotion - Te Pae Māhutonga to take whānau on a journey of empowerment and celebration of wellness. Alongside Mana Whenua (Ngāi Tahu) the wider kaupapa included layering hauora (health) across the entire event.

For the first time in the history of the festival, it incorporated a sugar, fat, smoke, alcohol and violence free kaupapa. Change in our communities must be empowered and driven by Māori with the support of our wider community where culture and wellbeing are inseparable. Te Matatini was an example of this. Te Kāika Waiora was not only about the festival, but how we look to the future in creating healthy public policy and whānau friendly events with health and culture at the centre of everything we do.
Haka Ora, A New Innovative way to Effective Policy Development

Thomas Strickland, John Ngatai, Rachael Puru

Raukura Haoura O Tainui

The All Blacks haka is New Zealand’s symbol of identity to the World. Experience the true meaning of the Maori traditional haka, embracing a new understanding of its foundation, its application and relevance to Maori cultural beliefs and practices today. The Haka is a taonga and those who practice the haka are uplifted and empowered to follow in the footsteps of their ancestors and it is held sacred.

Me aro atu ki te haa o Hineahuone raua ko Tane Mahuta
Pay heed to the dignity of woman and man.

What is Haka Ora?
Haka Ora is a Tikanga based programme that uses traditional Maori approaches to healthy lifestyles and policies. Individuals will gain knowledge in the origins of Haka, Waiata, and a basic level of Te Reo Maori meona Tikanga. Haka Ora is a learning mechanism that incorporates traditional Maori teachings physically, mentally and spiritually to further enrich the haka experience. Haka Ora is new innovative way to effective policy within a whanau setting. Practice of the haka brings policy to life making it a living document to adhere to and promote to a wider audience.

Why Haka Ora?
Haka Ora is a living program that assimilates policy to tapu (sacred). Whanau create messages through haka that speak of Maori values, which increases their understanding of Tikanga.

If we look at Tapu, it is viewed as something sacred to Maori that is to not compromise beliefs and values, for example, not smoking cigarettes in a wharenui (meeting house). This is essentially how whanau develop, implement and have an understanding of Policy as they are identifying their values and beliefs to create the Haka.

Who is Haka Ora for?
Haka Ora is for all People, of all Countries.
It is the ability to offer a unique and cultural experience, while entrenching policy as a living document.
Māori and Pacific voices in New Zealand public health policy

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Background: In New Zealand health inequalities between Māori, Pacific and other New Zealanders are a deeply entrenched and increasingly important injustice. Research has revealed that some of this inequity is generated through the administration of the health system through pathways of institutional racism. Critical theorists argue the architecture and mechanics of health policy are inherently political, favouring solutions that favour established distributions of power. Our study explores ways in which Māori and Pacific voices are discounted and marginalised within policy making which is inconsistent with public health values.

Methods: Utilising critical race theory this study presents a thematic analysis of public health policy documents from 2006-2016, revealing hegemonic narratives. These are contrasted with the accounts of purposively recruited senior Māori and Pacific leaders who have participated in advisory groups.

Results: Government narratives showed Māori and Pacific research was rarely cited in public health policy. Instead policy was most clearly informed and influenced by health science from the global north or local Pākehā scholarship. One third of the public health strategies developed within the study period had advisory groups to inform their preparation. Māori and Pacific were represented on all such groups but consistently made up less than 25% of the membership except the work focussed on ethnic-specific strategies.

Māori and Pacific content in policies, unlike that relating to the population at large, was often framed around deficit discourses. The importance of Māori and Pacific leadership and models of health were occasionally referenced.

Māori and Pacific narratives showed considerable effort was required by participants to navigate advisory meetings as they worked to establish their credibility, be heard and have impact on the paradigms informing the strategies. Māori intelligence was not valued and participants regularly encountered racism so that maintaining focus on the achievement of desired outcomes required resourcefulness and strategic manoeuvres.

Conclusions: Public health policy would be enriched by the deeper engagement and connections with Māori and Pacific public health intelligence. Māori and Pacific leaders have constructive solutions for eliminating health inequities.
Wai Ariki – Ko te wai te ora o ngā mea katoa!!

Megan Tunks, Crystal Pekepo, Callie Corrigan, Erina Korohina & Darrio Penetito Hemara (Toi Tangata)

Ko wai mātou? Toi Tangata is a national Māori public health provider with a focus on innovative design and systems that contribute to the wellbeing of our whānau. We have a particular focus (but not limited to) the kaupapa of kai and nutrition, and activity. Wai Ariki – our water, your future is a contribution towards building content and understanding around Wai Māori. Through the kaupapa of Wai Ariki we want to promote and normalise the importance of wai ora and its effect not only on our wairua, and tinana, on the mauri of our taiao also! Across Aotearoa the current status of our taiao is changing, and the kaupapa of wai kino (in this context sugar sweetend beverages) amongst our whānau is also having a impact. What is Toi Tangata doing and how can we connect together to tautoko positive impacts for our whānau and communities. Mauriora
Mauri Ora: Forging Vital Connections that Foster Cultural, Social, Physical, and Spiritual Outcomes for Māori Health and Wellbeing

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The notion of public health in Aotearoa New Zealand can be intuited from a tangata whenua lens as comprising the embodiment of practices that promote healthful connections between, to and across the diverse yet inter-connected realms of tāngata (people), tipuna (ancestors), atua (primal energy sources) and tāiao (environment).

This presentation will highlight these connections through discussion of key Māori cultural concepts of critical importance to ensuring health gains and outcomes for Māori. A focus upon the notion of mauri will demonstrate the importance of how teaching and research can be better informed through an enhanced understanding of elements such as mauri as a core determinant for optimal Māori health. The interconnected nature of mana and tapu will also be explored using a broader more holistic lens in order to highlight the diverse yet profound ways in which both elements exert significant influence upon outcomes for Māori health and wellbeing.

Māori cultural concepts that exist within Māori bodies of knowledge (Mātauranga Māori), provide the necessary foundation upon which to better understand the broad trajectory of Māori health and wellbeing as experienced by tangata whenua. Addressing the socio-cultural contexts of health and wellbeing therefore is crucial in order to improve outcomes for Maori. The presentation will take the view that this is integral to the effectiveness of public health policy and initiatives that focus on outcomes for Māori.

Indeed, institutions that specialise in the exploration and advancement of Maori knowledge will play an increasingly important role through provision of an informed process of teaching and research. Te Putahi a Toi (School of Maori Art, Knowledge and Education) are developing a curriculum that builds further upon the work of past contributors and based on Maori philosophical underpinnings of health and wellbeing. The School views this an as opportunity to also contribute to other health initiatives throughout the University and indeed the wider tertiary sector.

In concluding, the presentation will share insights into the development of this curriculum within the broader context of Māori health promotion and the subsequent opportunities that present in terms of delivery to both Maori and non-Māori health students, professionals and policy-makers.