

## Rebrand reflects reach of organisation

A Māori Mental Health organisation which has broadened its services and does more than was originally intended is changing its name to more accurately reflect the work it does.

This week, Te Rau Matatini - the National Centre for Māori Health, Māori Workforce Development and Excellence – will become Te Rau Ora, in a move chief executive Maria Baker says will reposition the organisation to reflect the holistic approach it takes to Māori health.

The new name will make it easier for people to understand what the organisation does, she says.

“Our kaupapa is very much about strengthening Māori health and wellbeing and the new name is more reflective and considers a range of elements important to Māori Wellbeing - this is what we are aspiring to do.”

Te Rau Matatini was established 17 years ago as a Māori Mental Health Workforce Centre but Maria says that over the years, it has needed to take a broader view and role given the impact other aspects have on mental health and addiction, and for Māori wellbeing.

“The beautiful kaupapa around Māori and any kind of kaupapa Māori is that we tend to be broad in our reach, we are holistic and mindful of our connections and relationships” she says.

“We might come in on a kaupapa but we tend to be holistic, so while we began as a Māori Mental Health Workforce Centre, and the mental health and addiction sector has maintained of upmost importance. Over the years we’ve needed to expand our reach to ensure and cover key aspects important to Māori wellbeing.”

The work Te Rau Matatini does covers various aspects of Māori health other than actually providing direct health services.

“We don’t deliver health care to people, but we support the people in the services that develop the services, and deliver the care to the community. Our interest has always been in the outcome for Māori. There is a need to improve the outcomes for our people and part of that is to have Māori in the health workforce, in leadership, and being integral to the design and delivery of services.”

It also provides support in areas such as education, scholarships, research, wānanga, initiatives to grow the number of Māori working in the health sector and developing mātauranga Māori principles and practices.

“A crucial unit we provide is Te Au the National Māori Suicide Prevention Centre which is one of the most challenging aspects in the collective approach to improving wellbeing” she says.

With staff around the country, Maria says they hope to extend their reach into more communities, and the new brand will help that.

“We provide a range of activities and it makes sense to reflect it better. The activities we provide will continue, it’s the same kaupapa, with the same commitment, drive and dedication to Māori Wellbeing.

We tend to be very pragmatic. People will call us and we’ll say, ‘right, how can we help you, this might involve viewing what they have or what they understand, and providing some advice to shape their solutions. A lot of the time we’ll end up engaging in a way that people or organisations will receive support or strategy. We’re a typical Māori roopu, who do what we can to help, especially if it’s going to improve the situation for Māori.”

- The Te Rau Ora brand will be on show this week at Te Matatini ki te Ao, being held at Westpac Stadium in Wellington from February 20-24 and be rolled out nationwide in the next month.

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