TE RĀ O TE WAKA HOURUA II
Second Strategic Research Agenda for Māori and Pasifika Suicide Prevention

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1 Waka Hourua, a National Māori and Pasifika Suicide Prevention Programme

The symbol of a double hull waka brings together Māori and Pasifika, from Te Rau Matatini and Le Va to provide a vehicle to counteract the stormy waters of self-harm and suicide amongst Māori and Pasifika communities. The waka represents each organisations relationship and commitment to building the capabilities and capacity of Māori and Pasifika people. Waka Hourua represents the background to the joint relationship between Te Rau Matatini and Le Va. Whilst the National suicide prevention strategy ended 2016, and recommendations are yet to be communicated by the Ministers’ Mental Health Inquiry the following remains relevant.

Four primary objectives guide the Waka Hourua Programme. These are:

- Building the capacity and capability of Māori whānau, hapū, iwi, and Pasifika communities, to prevent suicide and to respond safely and effectively when and if suicide occurs
- Ensuring that culturally relevant education and training are available to Māori whānau, hapū, iwi, and Pasifika communities that focus on building resilience and leadership
- Building the evidence base of what works for Māori whānau, hapū, iwi, and Pasifika communities to prevent suicide, through research carried out by, with and for these groups
- Building the leadership for suicide prevention.

2 The Second Strategic Research Agenda for Māori and Pasifika Suicide Prevention

Te Rā o Te Waka Hourua II is the Second Strategic Research Agenda (Second Agenda) for Māori and Pasifika Suicide Prevention. The Second Agenda continues to be driven by distinctive Māori and Pasifika priorities, aspirations, and values that are underpinned by the realities of Māori and Pasifika experience and world views.

The development of the Second Agenda builds on the first agenda as well as including priorities raised at the Global Indigenous Suicide Prevention, Mental Health and Wellbeing Research Symposium (Symposium) Otago University in Wellington on 26 – 27 February 2018. The article The case for Re-framing Māori Suicide Prevention Research in Aotearoa/ New Zealand: Applying Lessons from Suicide Prevention provoked further thought.

The final contribution involved an online consultation process post the Symposium conducted through the Waka Hourua website http://wakahourua.co.nz/ from March to May 2018. A 5:1 ratio of Māori to Pasifika completed the online survey and results are embedded in the Scope of Research Priorities contained in the Second Agenda. Priorities in Kato Fetu: Review of the Pacific mental health and addiction research agenda are also embedded in the Scope of Research Priorities. The Second agenda continues a framework for the strategic priority areas that will help to build the evidence base of what works for Māori whānau, hapū, iwi, Pasifika families and communities to prevent suicide, through research carried out by, with and for these groups.
3 Objectives for Te Rā o Te Waka Hourua II

Te Rā o Te Waka Hourua II - The Second Strategic Research Agenda - provides a mechanism to:

- build the evidence base of what works for Māori whānau, hapū, iwi, Pasifika families and communities to prevent suicide, through research carried out by, with and for these groups; and
- build the leadership for suicide prevention.

This will also contribute to the wider programme goals of Waka Hourua to:

- build strong resilient families and whānau
- support families and whānau that are vulnerable or at risk
- assist those families and whānau that have been impacted upon by suicide

Setting the Direction

Te Rā o Te Waka Hourua II is driven by distinctive Māori and Pasifika priorities, aspirations, and values that are underpinned by the realities of Māori and Pasifika experience and worldviews. It builds on previous material in Te Rā o Te Waka Hourua that has previously provided valuable insights in navigating the research agenda for Māori and Pasifika.

Diagram 1: Visual Guide for Te Rā o Te Waka Hourua II

Goal

To build the capacity of Māori whānau, hapū, iwi, Pacific families and communities to prevent and reduce suicide and respond effectively if and when a suicide occurs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Principles</th>
<th>Priorities</th>
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<td>- Building the evidence base of what works for Māori whānau, hapū, iwi, Pacific families and communities to prevent suicide, through research carried out by, with and for these groups</td>
<td>- Māori and Pasifika Aspirations</td>
<td>1. Realising Potential: Māori and Pacific Development</td>
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4. Guiding Principles

There are four principles that are integral to *Te Rā o Te Waka Hourua II*, and are:

- Māori and Pasifika Aspirations
- Building on Gains
- Excellence and Relevance
- Knowledge, Transfer and Application

4.1 Māori and Pasifika Aspirations

*Te Rā o Te Waka Hourua II* is Māori and Pacific Governance Research which is owned, driven and directed by Māori and Pacific peoples in the principles of self-determination and autonomy. Fostering Māori and Pasifika Governance research acknowledges the intrinsic value of research being owned and undertaken by the community from which it draws and for the benefit of those communities.\(^4\) Research exists within the broader context of family, whānau, hapū, and iwi. Māori and Pasifika aspirations for research carried out by Māori and Pasifika to flourish as Māori and Pasifika.\(^5\) These aspirations for health and wellbeing are consistent with the broad concept of Whānau Ora. Implicit within Whānau Ora is full whānau participation in society generally, and within Māori and Pasifika communities.

4.2 Building on Gains

*Te Rā o Te Waka Hourua II* builds from the existing evidence base on Māori and Pasifika research and evaluation. Research priorities, processes and outcomes must seek to consolidate, maintain and continue to build on the gains - specifically those which have been made in relation to the interface between research, Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pasifika and Indigenous knowledge.\(^6\) When research outcomes are maximised, foundations for new directions are provided and priorities can become aligned with Māori and Pasifika aspirations.

4.3 Excellence and Relevance

*Te Rā o Te Waka Hourua II* enhances the evidence base by facilitating innovative and high-quality research focused on the distinctive needs and priorities of Māori and Pasifika communities.\(^7\) Relevance and excellence is attained through pre-research consultation to guide the research question, and subsequently the use of appropriate study design, methodologies and analysis.\(^8\) Researchers must have the expertise to understand the findings within the context of Māori and Pasifika realities and world view.\(^9\) Research processes consistent with Māori and Pasifika aspirations are not limited by specific methods, research designs, or research teams. However, key elements must be present to ensure processes are consistent with these aspirations.\(^9\) Research processes will: prioritise Māori or Pasifika world views; will be Māori/ Pasifika -centred; Māori/ Pasifika -initiated and Māori/ Pasifika -led. Research processes will lead to outcomes and knowledge that will benefit Māori and Pasifika peoples.\(^10\) In practice this means that this research will consider the need and value of communal relationships, reciprocity, holism and respect in all aspects of the research process.\(^11\)

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\(^4\) (Health Research Council Pacific Guidelines, 2005)
\(^5\) (Ministry of Research Science and Technology, 2005; Health Research Council; 2010)
\(^6\) (Durie, 2005)
\(^7\) (Baxter, 2005)
\(^8\) (Health Research Council, 2010)
\(^9\) (Health Research Council Pacific Guidelines, 2005)
\(^10\) (Ministry of Research Science and Technology, 2005)
4.4 Knowledge Transfer and Application

Te Rā o Te Waka Hourua II realises positive outcomes from research outputs which requires a focus on fostering greater awareness of and confidence in research within Māori and Pasifika communities. In line with this, linkages between researchers and the ability of Māori and Pasifika communities to access, and utilise research outputs need to be strengthened. Knowledge transfer and application is critical if Māori and Pasifika communities are to utilise research to realise greater control and autonomy over wellbeing.

5. Strategic Priorities

The Te Rā o Te Waka Hourua II has four strategic priorities, they are:

1. Realising Potential: Māori and Pasifika Development
2. Realising Potential: Cultural Identity
3. Realising Potential: Supporting Recovery
4. Realising Potential: Cultural Knowledge

5.1 Realising Potential: Māori and Pasifika Development

Whānau, hapū, iwi, Māori and Pasifika people's aspirations include the desire to have greater control over the direction and shape of their own institutions, communities and development as a people.12 Realising potential will be facilitated by research which builds on the embedded strengths and assets of whānau, family, hapū, iwi, Māori and Pasifika peoples, supporting the identification of what is needed to facilitate and maintain wellbeing, as well as to prevent mental illness and support recovery.13

5.2 Realising Potential: Cultural Identity

Among Indigenous and minority peoples, identity is a critical factor for wellbeing.14 An important foundation for mental health and wellbeing lies within the context of identity as Māori and Pasifika. This dimension recognises the importance of Māori and Pasifika aspirations, values, experience and worldviews, and the need to retain and nurture the distinct identity that comes from a unique heritage, common journeys and familiar environment.15 In terms of cultural identity, we recognise that Māori and Pasifika communities are diverse and the characteristics of 'being Māori or being Pasifika' are always in a state of dynamic change.

5.3 Realising Potential: Support Recovery

Whānau Ora has been described as a korowai (cloak) for recovery. Understood in its' broadest sense Whānau Ora facilitates relationships and connections which enable participation and engagement in safe, inclusive and non-stigmatising environments. Whānau Ora recognises the differing realities experienced by Māori and Pacific communities.16

5.4 Realising Potential: Cultural Knowledge

The ‘Cultural Knowledge Creation’ dimension recognises culture is experiential; a way of seeing, being, thinking and experiencing the world. This dimension recognises the creative potential of mātauranga Māori and O a tautou measina (Pasifika) and that research innovations will flow from that and other cultural concepts related to knowledge creation.

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12 (Health Research Council, 2010)
13 (Health Research Council, 2010)
14 (Durie, 2013)
15 (Health Research Council, 2010)
16 (Le Va, 2017)
6. **Scope of Research**

The Scope of Research is directed by the Principles of *Te Rā o Te Waka Hourua II* and identified through the Realising Potential priorities aims to explore the following:

### Realising Potential: Māori and Pasifika Development

1. Social and physical environments which support whānau development, the realisation of potential, and protection from risk exploring the relationship between access to Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pasifika and realising positive health outcomes.

2. Relationship between inclusion and connectedness, with a focus on taiohi (youth) development, intergenerational awareness and connectedness to family, whānau, hapū, iwi and Maori and Pasifika communities.

### Realising Potential: Cultural Identity

3. Application of Māori and Pasifika cultural concepts which support positive mental health and wellbeing, including the role of collective cultural identity and pride and the value and need for ethnic specific research conducted within the Pasifika context (i.e. Samoan, Cook Islands, Tongan, Niue).

4. Pathways which can lead to positive mental health outcomes including the exploration on how outcomes in education, health, housing, employment impact on positive mental health and wellbeing.

5. Inclusion and acceptance of Takatāpuihi/ LGBT/ Rainbow whānau and the impact on positive mental health and the reduction of suicide risk.

### Realising Potential: Supporting Recovery

6. Best practice in relation to building whānau and community responsiveness to mental ill health, addiction and distress with a focus on engaging those with lived experiences. ¹⁷

7. Understanding pathways to suicidal behaviours/thoughts and effective pathways to recovery.

### Realising Potential: Cultural Knowledge

8. Relationship between healthy physical environments and positive mental health and wellbeing for whānau and Pasifika families.

9. Improving tools and approaches to engaging with young Māori and Pasifika people around the Taha Wairua (spirituality) especially within mainstream services.

¹⁷ [Le Va, 2017]
References


