



He Manaaki Tangata: Tikanga Informed Guideline Adapted for Mental Health Services, and Acute Mental Health Units

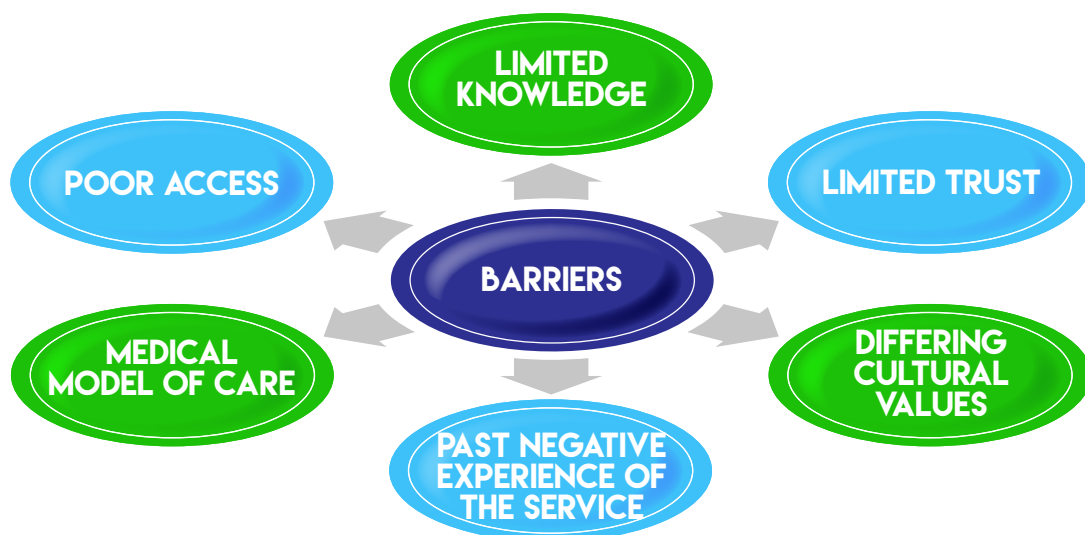
A guideline for mental health services to be responsive to Māori cultural values, rights, needs and interests.

THIS RESOURCE IS TARGETED TO MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

This tikanga informed practice guideline has been adapted to guide health professionals employed within mental health services. Targeted toward health professional practice when supporting Māori tangata whaiora and their whānau in mental health services, and especially so in the acute mental health unit. Founded on Māori values and practices, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, as well as knowledge of the mental health sector, the aim of this guideline is to enhance the experience of Māori by ensuring culturally safe practice in mainstream mental health services.

OVERVIEW

Māori often experience a number of barriers to accessing mental health services. Compounding barriers are structural whilst other barriers may pertain to service delivery models of care, socio economics or cultural perspectives. These barriers to access and care can greatly affect health outcomes for Māori and their whānau.



EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATION

STAFF GUIDE

The encounters of mental health professionals and mental health services are important contact points with Māori tangata whaiora and whānau. Staff are encouraged to use each opportunity to welcome and engage Māori with a focus on creating rapport and positive relationships. It is also helpful if staff have an understanding of their community, and local Māori.

- ✓ Staff will use welcome phrases such as Kia Ora or Welcome
- ✓ Staff will adopt non threatening body language and tones.
- ✓ Staff will not make assumptions about Māori people or their behaviour.
- ✓ Staff will introduce themselves and explain their role and the service to Māori and whānau.
- ✓ Staff will endeavour to pronounce Māori names correctly and ask when unsure.
- ✓ Staff will acknowledge whānau and others when present.
- ✓ Staff will offer and encourage access to Māori staff (especially on referral; in triage, assessment and admission)
- ✓ Staff will ask Māori and whānau if they have specific cultural, spiritual, language or other needs.
- ✓ Staff will document in the notes the identification of specific cultural, spiritual, language or other needs.
- ✓ Staff will check ethnicity data is correct.
- ✓ Services will maintain information about resources and contacts to foster choice to Māori and their whānau (e.g. Kaupapa Māori mental health services).
- ✓ Staff will ensure any information provided is clear and in terms Māori and their whānau understand.
- ✓ Staff will ensure Māori images, design or significant landmarks in / to the service are appropriate and promote a sense of connectedness with Māori, the location and the service.

KARAKIA

KARAKIA (prayer, incantations, blessings) are essential in fostering; protecting and maintaining spiritual, mental, emotional, physical and whānau wellbeing, especially when a person is unwell.

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- ✓ Staff will enable and acknowledge time for karakia.
- ✓ Karakia will not be interrupted unless the care of the tangata whaiora is compromised.
- ✓ At the beginning of the engagement process with tangata whaiora and their whānau, staff will verbally offer the choice of having karakia.
- ✓ Staff will verbally offer karakia throughout the care and treatment process.
- ✓ Staff will involve whānau and appropriate Māori staff when support is required for karakia in heightened situations (e.g. psychotic incident; distress).
- ✓ Staff will know how to access kaumatua, chaplain, Māori minister, Tohunga or suitable persons knowledgeable in providing karakia.
- ✓ Staff will support tangata whaiora and whānau in their choice of people to provide karakia.
- ✓ Staff will support the access to water and to places of significance for the purpose of spiritual practices.

WHĀNAU

WHĀNAU extends beyond the nuclear or biological family. The concept of next of kin may also vary amongst Māori. Having whānau support and positive relationships with whānau are crucial to the wellbeing of tangata whaiora.

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- ✓ Staff will enable and foster whānau involvement at any service contact- intervention and decision making encounter with Māori (e.g. admission, assessment, treatment planning, and discharge).
- ✓ Staff will include and encourage whānau involvement in personal cares.
- ✓ Staff will ensure whānau are aware of available support and resources to them whilst their loved one receives care.
- ✓ Staff will work with whānau to ensure they understand information given, including the status, care and treatment of tangata whaiora.
- ✓ Staff will be supportive of whānau visits and presence, especially when the tangata whaiora is distressed.

- ✓ Staff will enable time for whānau to discuss issues and solutions without staff present.
- ✓ Staff will be prepared to meet with, discuss, and address any issues with whānau as need.
- ✓ Staff will respect the preferences of whānau and will not be judgmental.

SAFE PRACTICES WITH THE SEPARATION OF THE BODY & FOOD

Two key concepts that underpin many Māori cultural practices are known as tapu and noa. In regard to this guideline and its purpose, tapu is viewed as keeping things restricted (tapu) and away from things that are unrestricted (noa). In most cases and in the context of mental health services these principles ensure good health and safety, and promote effective infection control practices.

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- ✓ Staff will not touch tangata whaiora on the head or the body, unless a request and explanation has been given, and the tangata whaiora consents.
- ✓ Anything that comes into contact with the body or body fluids must be kept separate from food and drink. For example: toileting facilities, including (paper mache) bedpans, urinals and food are not to be present in the same place.
- ✓ Any excreta is not to be placed on surfaces where food or drink is placed.
- ✓ Food and drink is not to be placed nearby or consumed where there is toileting or bathing utilities.
- ✓ Staff will not sit on tables or workbenches used for food or medication.
- ✓ Chairs will not be used as tables to consume food or drinks from.
- ✓ Fridges used to store food or medication will be clearly identified and not used for other purposes.
- ✓ Tea towels will only be used for drying dishes.
- ✓ Towels and flannels will only be used for the body and no other purpose.
- ✓ Cups for drinking fluids will be used solely for this purpose.
- ✓ Microwaves used for food will not be used for heating anything that has come into contact with the body.

TAONGA

Taonga can be interpreted as a treasure, something special which is highly prized by the person. In this context, this may refer to a person wearing a greenstone, bone carving or something that is significant to them. Or the person may have something in their possession which has personal, spiritual, whānau or and cultural reverence.

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- ✓ Staff will ask tangata whaiora and whānau if they are wearing or are in possession of Taonga when they are being admitted to the acute mental health unit.
- ✓ Staff will encourage discussion of the taonga, and identify its importance. Staff will document this in the notes.
- ✓ Staff will seek advice from tangata whaiora, their whānau and Māori staff regarding the Taonga and if it places the person at risk whilst on the unit.
- ✓ Staff will seek consent of the tangata whaiora and whānau for its removal or and encourage whānau to care of the Taonga. Staff will need to consider the balance of the tangata whaiora having meaning in the spiritual significance of the taonga versus its physical presence.
- ✓ If Taonga remains in the acute unit, and staff are to keep it in the identified valuables area as provided, tangata whaiora and whānau are to be given information of this practice and policy.

DESIGNATED AREAS

Some areas will be governed by Māori protocol, such as Marae, whare nui or whānau rooms, at times rooms will be used for Māori protocol. In any situation, tikanga Māori will be observed by all staff, and people who enter and use the facility. For example: pōwhiri, mihi whakatau (greeting processes); whānau hui (meetings) karakia (prayer).

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- ✓ Staff will respect any areas set aside permanently or on occasion that will be governed by tikanga Māori.
- ✓ In areas where shoes have been taken off, and left at the door, staff will follow the practice by removing their shoes before entry to the room.
- ✓ In areas where food and drink are forbidden because of customary practice, staff are to follow protocol.
- ✓ Staff are to ask questions of appointed Māori staff when they are unsure of protocols and practice.
- ✓ Staff are encouraged to complete cultural competency based training to advance their knowledge and practice when working with Māori.

GLOSSARY

Hui	Meeting, gathering
Karakia	Prayer, blessing, incantation. Shared at almost all occasions and part of lifestyle.
Marae	Māori meeting house, place for ceremonial, social forum.
Mihi Whakatau	Official welcome to acknowledge people who have gathered together for a purpose.
Noa	Free from tapu. Tapu and noa are terms used to describe a state or condition affecting both the animate and inanimate. Tapu denotes a state of restriction or sacredness. Noa is free from tapu
Powhiri	Māori ritual of encounter, is a formal process of welcome usually on Marae, although also conducted elsewhere.
Tangata Whaiora	Māori person seeking wellness
Taonga	Treasure, valuables. Taonga is interpreted to mean in its broadest sense an object or resource which is highly valued. Children and future generations are also regarded as taonga
Tapu	Sacred. Tapu and noa are terms used to describe a state or condition, affecting the animate and inanimate. Tapu denotes a state of restriction or sacredness. Noa is free from tapu.
Tikanga	Issues of principle/integrity of intent. Tikanga is used as a guide to moral behaviour and within a health context indicates the way resources, guardianship, responsibilities, obligations and future generations will be protected.
Wairua	Spirit or spirituality. A recognition that the Māori view of spirituality is related to the wellbeing of the patient
Whānau	The extended family. Takes responsibility for its members, their wellbeing and broader inter-relationships with others.

Manaaki Tangata

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