

December 2022

Te Rerenga

News from the Western Bay of Plenty Primary Health Organisation



Western Bay of Plenty
Primary Health Organisation

TŪNGIA TE URURUA KIA TUPU
WHAKARITORITO TE TUPU
O TE HARAKEKE



Meri Kirihimete!

As we head into Christmas and the New Year, it is a time to reflect, as well as look forward to some well-deserved rest and relaxation.

The past year has seen a significant period of change for the organisation. There has been so much incredible work undertaken by our Western Bay of Plenty Primary Health Organisation staff, Iwi partner organisations and General Practice teams across our rohe this year. I am inspired by the dedication and passion you bring to your mahi, and I am truly thankful to you all for your contribution to the achievements of the network for our people.

In the coming year I look forward to furthering our work in, and commitment to health equity within the communities we serve.

Getting into the Christmas spirit and displaying our commitment to the

community, to give back this year, our team has contributed to food banks across the Bay of Plenty to help provide food to those that need it most this Christmas.

A huge thank you also to everyone who came to our Friends of the WBOP PHO Christmas Lunch. It was great to host such a well-attended event and to connect with you over some food and shared celebration.

On behalf of the executive team, I wish our staff, General Practices, and Iwi partners a Merry Christmas and a prosperous and Happy New Year. Enjoy the summer holidays and time spent with your loved ones.

Nāku, noa nā
Lindsey Webber

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Unique partnership supports gang whānau



Providing a unique model of care to support gang whānau and marginalised communities, the Western Bay of Plenty Primary Health Organisation has partnered with Waiariki Whānau Mentoring Trust to assist the organisation to build and strengthen its hauora arm.

Waiariki Whānau Mentoring Trust is a Māori owned social and health service provider that offers brokering and advocacy services to support whānau in many aspects, including health and wellbeing.

Building trusted relationships within the gang space, the Trust sits as a connection between marginalised communities and other service providers.

"We facilitate honest discussions about unresolved trauma and then lock in support, such as triage, housing options, mental health and drug addiction services, suicide prevention, weight loss advice and more," says Waata Heathcote, Board Chair at Waiariki Whānau Mentoring Trust.

"We are a whānau movement, not an organisation. We walk alongside whānau and our team has worked hard to build a high level of respect with rangatira within gangs by embracing passion, commitment, openness, and honesty to build relationships."

Waata Heathcote, Board Chair at Waiariki Whānau Mentoring Trust

The organisation has a non-traditional approach to healthcare, improving health outcomes and saving lives by being responsive and flexible, identifying trends by meeting whānau in crisis, and working backwards.

"Waiariki came about because of the inadequacy of a system that is not conducive to the needs of marginalised communities. Our model sits outside current health and social frameworks because it's been designed to catch people that fall through the gaps. It's the net that serves those that the mainstream health system doesn't serve.

"We are a whānau movement, not an organisation. We walk alongside whānau and our team has worked hard to build a high level of respect with rangatira within gangs by embracing passion, commitment, openness, and honesty to build relationships.

"Our diverse workforce uses their lived experiences to help our community members. We have just over 50 employees, nine or ten of which are patched gang members," Waata explains.

At the beginning of 2022, the WBOP PHO formed a relationship with the Trust by committing to a five-month funding period to help build an outreach clinical, nurse and navigator team.

"I didn't want to create a partnership with the WBOP PHO because a partnership is a business model," says Waata. "What I was looking for was a relationship. I wanted to create connections with trusted people and organisations who can help us continue our work."

Evolving overtime, the WBOP PHO is now focussed on providing clinical support and advice about what's needed to establish a hauora arm.

"We just love being involved," says

Phil Back, General Manager of Network Services at Western Bay of Plenty Primary Health Organisation. "There are a lot of opportunities that can come out of this partnership. If we are instrumental in making sure that Te Aka Whai Ora promotes the Trust through commissioning conversations with Te Whatu Ora, there is recognition, capacity, and ability to financially support them. That in itself is a benefit of the relationship.

"The beauty of what I embrace is that the Trust is out there doing the hard mahi and making a difference, but not in the way we traditionally measure outcomes because what they do is not traditional. Their model is built on relationships and trust, not partnerships. The intent is absolutely brilliant."

It was during the COVID outbreak that the Trust was formed because opportunities were identified to work with marginalised communities. A clinical arm was formed to provide health and wellbeing connections with community members who weren't part of the mainstream system.

"When COVID hit, we started to look at how we could reach marginalised communities in a medical capacity, enabling them to stay at home and survive for the 10-day COVID isolation period," Waata says.

With the establishment of this new clinical arm, the Trust was able to form relationships with gang members and marginalised communities that would otherwise have missed out on services and help.

"During the Omicron surge, we got a call at 9.30pm reporting four or five potentially contaminated households. We deployed nurses out with RAT tests and had conversations with gang leaders in the

community to find out what they needed from us," explains Waata.

"We were able to do things that other providers couldn't because we have solid, trustworthy relationships with these community members. Our teams were on the ground at 10pm on a Saturday in gang territory. The next morning by 10am we were back on the ground with RAT tests."

As the first real experience for the newly established nursing team, the Trust was able to RAT test 93 gang whānau, discovering 21 positive cases, recalls Waata.

"We focused on whānau and got the job done. If it wasn't for us being able to reach these communities, we were told that it would've been a challenge to suppress the Omicron strain."

The establishment of the clinical arm has allowed the Trust to further assist their communities post-COVID by offering a range of health services including screening and smear tests for wahine and tane, general health checks, vaccinations and immunisations, health promotions, and more.

With a health kaupapa, the Trust has a mobile nursing team that can visit whānau in their homes, as well as three nursing clinics.

"Most marginalised communities such as gangs, homeless, and those living on the fringe just want to connect with people who will listen. That's exactly what we do, for the betterment of our people and the betterment of our whānau."

The Trust additionally mentors whānau to connect with services independently.

"Access criteria currently block members of these communities, but it's important to remember that behind a patch is a whānau member who needs a house or health check-up.

"Equity comes from bringing whānau together and this can be done through the restoration of relationships and reconnecting with identity and whakapapa. We challenge them in a loving way," says Soifua Pearson, Te Wai Aio Team Lead.

The bigger picture

Empowering Tāngata whai ora to make practical changes to enhance their wellbeing is the focus for Health Improvement Practitioner (HIP) Rebecca Lovett.

HIPs remove common health barriers by working alongside GPs and nurses to provide behavioural interventions for patients. Appointments are available on the same day and are free of charge.

"I work with a range of patients on any issue that can affect their health, from work stresses to weight loss, coming to terms with a diagnosis, adapting to change, and anything in between," says Rebecca.

In the Health Improvement Practitioner role, Tāngata whai ora are seen as the experts of their own wellbeing and are empowered to make achievable changes to improve their future.

"Tāngata whai ora may already have an idea of what they need to do, or we might look at a skill they can try out. Some people only require one appointment, and others return to learn new skills or set new goals," Rebecca says.

Integrating Health Improvement Practitioners into General Practices promotes a multidimensional view of wellbeing which models such as Te Whare Tapa Wha embrace.

"It's vital that we focus on achieving equity for Māori, breaking down stigma and barriers to accessing services, and supporting general practices to promote population health," Rebecca adds.

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Health Improvement Practitioner Rebecca Lovett looks forward to empowering Tāngata whai ora in her new role.

"The values of the Western Bay of Plenty Primary Health Organisation align with how I want to work with people, where inclusivity, equity, innovation, mana motuhake and manaakitanga are the core beliefs.

"I love the creativity of the role and am looking forward to working with practices to provide workshops and specialised pathways to better support population health.

"I was always drawn to mental health having studied psychology prior to occupational therapy. I've worked in the mental health sector at Hauora a Toi Bay of Plenty for the last 12 years. In moving to primary care, I hope I can do my small part to work in a preventive and proactive way with a view to improve things for Tāngata whai ora and general practice."

Having lived in Tauranga Moana for 12 years, Rebecca loves the landscape and local friends she has made.

"The UK is my homeland, and I'm lucky enough to have Aotearoa as my home too which is the best of both worlds."

WBOP PHO champions Mental Health Awareness Week

The Western Bay of Plenty Primary Health Organisation (WBOP PHO) is actively living its values by putting staff first and encouraging a safe and open work environment where mental health takes a front seat.

Embracing Mental Health Awareness Week, which took place from 26 September – 2 October this year, the WBOP PHO implemented several activities for its employees to get involved in, bringing the wider team together to share, learn, connect, and support one another.

The importance of mental health and its connection to our overall health and wellbeing is an emerging topic that has been brought to light in the health sector over recent years.

Run annually by the Mental Health Foundation, Mental Health Awareness Week has been acknowledged and celebrated in over 150 countries since 1993. This year, the aim of Mental Health Awareness Week was to reconnect with the people and places that you love – hei pikinga waiora.

Creating a gratitude wall, the mental health team at WBOP PHO helped fellow employees start the

day by practising gratitude to improve happiness, health, positive emotions, relationships and more. Staff were encouraged to write down the things they were grateful for and add their thoughts to the gratitude wall to stimulate conversations and start the day on a positive note. The simple idea resulted in some lovely responses and helped bring the wider team together.

With the goal of lifting each other up and creating a safe space, the team bonded further on 'wind down Wednesday' with reconnect cards.

Gathering in a circle, each team member took a card and asked the person to their right the question on the card to connect and share with others.

Creating sincere and authentic interactions by helping team members think on the spot, the activity stimulated conversations and encouraged a positive culture within the workplace.



The gratitude wall helped employees reflect on the positive things they have in their lives.

WBOP PHO fun walk and run highlights community connections



Bringing the workplace and the wider community together, the Western Bay of Plenty Primary Health Organisation team and members from local general practices took part in a network-wide fun walk and run on Saturday 29 October.

The event was held in memory of Lizzie Nicholls, Acute Demand Administrator at WBOP PHO, who sadly passed away last year. In the run up to the event, WBOP PHO staff donated \$150 to the Child Cancer Foundation, Lizzie's family's charity of choice.

General practice and WBOP PHO staff members enjoyed the much-anticipated event, which was previously postponed in March due to COVID-19 regulations and restrictions.

With both 5km and 10km trails around Mauao and the surrounding area to choose from, over 40 participants attended, enjoying a sausage sizzle at the end. It was great to see a good turnout, with keen people from both the WBOP PHO

and general practices showing up with big smiles despite the weather being a little challenging.

"A special shout out to Adam from the IPMHA team who competed as the solo runner in the 10km running category... Of course, he won his category," says Laura Penny, Network Services Development Facilitator.

The other prizes were given to:

- James Peckett (Mount Medical/WBOP PHO) – Fastest 5km Runner
- Emma Skellern (WBOP PHO) – Fastest 5km Walker
- Young Family Member from Epic Health – Fastest 10km Walker
- And who could forget the spot prize for "Cutest Participant" – Saoirse Anahera Peita, the moko of Kiri Peita, WBOP PHO Director of Māori Health and Well-being.

"It was great to finally be able to get our team together to enjoy some time outdoors and explore our beautiful back garden," says Lindsey Webber, CEO at WBOP PHO.

WBOP PHO team members displayed their strong connections within the community after completing the run when the group witnessed a dog fall off the back of a ute.

"At the end of the run while we were enjoying a sausage sizzle, a ute pulled out of a carpark and a dog fell off the back and ran away," explains Emma Skellern, Network Liaison at WBOP PHO.

Team members Emma and Laura jumped into action as the event unfolded. Luckily, with the help of some members of the public who offered dog treats, and a local shop owner who provided a lead, they were able to catch the dog safely. They joined forces with some other passers-by to take the dog to the vets where it was checked over and thankfully was unhurt and returned to its owners.

Phil Back, General Manager, Network Services at WBOP PHO says being part of a local workforce that's so committed to helping the community is something he's proud of.

"Laura and Emma went above and beyond to help the dog and reunite it with its owner. It was great to see the community come together to help. There were smiles all round when we found the dog, got clearance from the vet, and were able to safely reunite it with its owner."

Bridging health inequities

On 9 November, Ngā Matapihi o te Wairua, a rūpū of senior Māori Primary Health kaiārahi, met with Minister of Health Andrew Little to discuss health equity leadership in primary care and its role in contributing to the collective effort of improving access for Māori.

Having already created several initiatives for healthcare organisations to adopt, the rūpū, which is made up of representatives from GPNZs 24 member PHO networks, met with Minister Little to form a relationship and work with the government to create enduring, positive change for Māori.

Western Bay of Plenty Primary Health Organisation Director of Māori Health and Well-being, Kiri Peita, who has been fundamental in the leadership and development of the rūpū, attended the meeting to support the kaupapa of the rūpū.

"This meeting was a great opportunity to promote our rūpū, our Pou and signal that we are willing to genuinely engage and co-design with both Te Aka Whaiora and Te Whatu Ora, to be a voice of whānau and provide a primary care perspective. We are supported by our organisations, and we have been mandated," Kiri says.

Sharing the purpose of the rūpū, the work they have done to date, and future activities to bridge health equity gaps and

shift cultural and social norms, Minister Little acknowledged that Primary Care is where the most significant difference will be made.

The rūpū offers a positive, collective, and collaborative voice for Māori in primary health care, representing the interests of 80% of the enrolled Māori population and supporting cultural change in general practice.

Providing a consolidated view on matters of primary health equity for kaimahi Māori and Māori communities and creating a hub where Māori health related material can be shared between member PHOs, the rūpū is focussed on action and change with a collaborative, collective voice.

Having already implemented several initiatives, the rūpū has its sights set on establishing further changes within general practice to accelerate and spread the delivery of Kaupapa Māori and whānau centred services, shift cultural and social norms, eliminate inequities and improve Hauora outcomes for Māori, and strengthen system accountability settings.



Pictured from left Dr Jeff Lowe – Chair GPNZ, Kiri Peita Director Māori Health and Well-being WBOP PHO, Mihi Blair Kaiwhakahaere Māori Procure, Minister Andrew Little, Irihapeti Mahuika Director Hauora Māori and Equity Pegasus Health (Chair Ngā Matapihi o te Wairua), Cherie Seemark Kaiwhakahaere/Māori General Manager – Tu Ora Compass Health, Justine Te Moananui-Makirere Bi-cultural Educator Tu Ora Compass Health.

New responses to family violence breaks taboos

A three-year research project aiming to strengthen primary healthcare approaches to family violence is reframing the way we talk about responses and developing a network of health and social care professionals dedicated to prevention.

The Atawhai project, funded by the Health Research Council of New Zealand through the centre of Interdisciplinary Trauma Research at Auckland University of Technology (AUT), is participant-led and involves working with primary care health and social workers to develop tools, resources, knowledge, and connections, with the goal of making it easier for them to respond to whānau impacted by family violence.

The Atawhai team has facilitated the research process by drawing on participant knowledge and experience, which has shaped discussions, findings, and solutions.

“We’ve had seven one-day deliberative dialogue workshops where participants have come together to identify system pathways and tools that professionals can use to make it easier for them to respond to family violence,” says Dr Claire Gear, Atawhai project lead.

“Frontline practitioners have shared their collective experience, wisdom and uncertainties to build the confidence to have conversations with family violence victims, knowing they have support from their practice.”

A series of practice gems as well as four key pathways to responsiveness have been developed through the workshops, providing healthcare workers with useful resources.

“We challenge participants to look at what’s needed and work with them to develop what is missing. The network of peer support means practitioners can discuss ongoing care options with someone they trust. When you have more people involved in whānau care it takes an individual burden off the health professional,” Claire adds.

“It’s about recognising that kōrero about family violence can be many shared moments in time underpinned by tika,



Atawhai research team comes together for the Conference for General Practice in Christchurch from 22 - 24 July.

pono and aroha. We realise we don’t have to fix problems in that moment, but rather be someone that whānau can trust to walk alongside them.

“We’re developing supportive tools and resources to help practices share their experience of engaging with whānau and the challenges associated with that. There’s a lot of fear and uncertainty involved in family violence, so it’s about sharing that load with one another.”

A strong component of the project involves raising awareness of family violence as a key determinant of ill health at policy and practice levels, says Emma Skellern, participant in the Atawhai research project.

“The programme has been developed to empower participants to come up with the content and to advocate, step up and create change. It has created a network that healthcare workers can sign up to for peer support around these issues,” explains Emma.

Atawhai is founded on a Te Tiriti based partnership and has a strong Te Ao Māori presence. The project began in September 2020 and is due to finish in October 2023.

“This is when the funding finishes, not

necessarily the work. It’s a rare opportunity to have a research project that spans over such a long period of time. It’s helped us form strong relationships which will continue beyond the project,” says Claire.

Moving forward, the project team is looking at leadership and sustainability for the long term by developing an investment plan to gain post research funding. Local and national representatives are also guiding a key knowledge translation strategy, mapping out how the knowledge generated can improve responsiveness to family violence.

As an extension of over a decade of work, the team are additionally looking at ways to evidence the impact of the research, with sights set on conducting future research around how to optimise health and wellbeing when accessing family violence services.

“It’s been a big learning journey for everyone and has provided the time and space for participants to reflect and critique the way we think about practice,” says Claire.

“Healthcare has traditionally been outside of the typical family violence response, so we’re bringing health into the picture to understand the role we can play.”

Whitiora Medical Centre officially opens in Pāpāmoa

Whitiora Medical Centre in Pāpāmoa is making strides in the local community by providing another much-needed healthcare facility for residents.

The new and improved facility opened on 12 October, being blessed by Reg Tahau, who was accompanied by his wife Bubby Tahau.

Staff from the new facility gathered outside for the blessing, before enjoying a shared breakfast and commencing their first day of work.

Following the blessing, Whitiora Medical Centre hosted an open evening celebration on Friday 14 October. Golden Sands primary school kapa haka group welcomed guests by performing waiata, before leaders from the facility thanked those involved in the project.

“Thank you Bluehaven, Livingstone Builders, and everyone who made this

vision a reality. Thank you to our staff who have stuck with us through this process and to Jen Brodie for contributing to this project with clinical expertise and management acumen,” says Davitt Sheahan, co-owner of Whitiora Medical Centre.

Jen Brodie, co-owner of Whitiora Medical Centre along with Davitt and his wife Pamela, was accompanied by her father, Grant Brodie, a tradition which has been around for many years.

“I’m honoured to be part of the team and I’m glad my family is here to celebrate. It’s a tradition to have my dad say a few words when opening a new centre so having him by my side means a lot,” says Jen.



Co-owners of Whitiora Medical Centre and Pāpāmoa Pines gather for a team photo.

Ben van den Borst from My Pharmacy, Pāpāmoa Plaza, additionally shared his appreciation for being involved in a fantastic project in such a vibrant area.

Celebrating and socialising, the evening displayed the strong connections between staff, whānau, and the wider healthcare sector.

Now forming an integral part of the Pāpāmoa community, the purpose-built health hub aims to cater to the growing population and bridge health equity gaps.

One size doesn't fit all: The future of primary health

A whānau-focussed model of care, Te Āhunga Whānau, which provides support to individuals and whānau living with long-term or complex health needs, is set to roll out across the Bay of Plenty.

Following the success of the pilot in the Western and Eastern Bay of Plenty, the Western Bay of Plenty Primary Health Organisation (WBOP PHO) is working in conjunction with Ngāti Ranginui Iwi in the West and Tūhoe Hauora in the East to manage the five pilot practices who have permanently adopted the programme.

With sights set on bringing more practices on board, the partners are looking to socialise the model of care through an expression of interest process.

The programme consists of mobile registered nurse and Kaiāwhina teams

that work in collaboration with individuals, whānau, and general practice teams as well as allied health and social services agencies. The Te Āhunga Whānau model provides opportunity for a broader exploration of health and social needs with people and whānau within the context of their home/social environment.

A real value of the Te Āhunga Whānau model is the ability to bring services to people who might not otherwise access care, by providing services in places other than a medical centre, such as at home or work. This is particularly helpful for those without reliable transport, in an isolated

location, with no whānau support or with mobility constraints. Networking with social service agencies also provides opportunities for broader health and social issues to be addressed as part of ongoing health management.

Lessons from the pilot and the current work continues to inform the ongoing evolution of the Te Āhunga Whānau model. The model has shown how it can work effectively alongside general practice teams as well as with community based social service agencies, ensuring equity of service provision to vulnerable communities.

Ngāti Ranginui Iwi and Ngāi Tūhoe Iwi are working with the WBOP PHO in the roll out by employing registered nurses and Kaiāwhina to work with whānau referred to the programme.

The success of the pilot points to a bright future for the place of alternative models of care in the new health reforms, particularly for vulnerable communities.

The future of smoking

A new Smoking Cessation Facilitator has joined the Western Bay of Plenty Primary Health Organisation, playing an active role in supporting general practices to achieve their smoking cessation targets.

Working collaboratively with Hāpainga Stop Smoking Service to increase referrals and outcomes for smokers in the region, Smoking Cessation Facilitator Kate Banuve is looking to build strong relationships with Smoking Cessation Practice Champions to ensure they are effectively engaging with their target population.

"I'm looking forward to helping the general practices in the WBOP PHO achieve their smoking cessation targets in the next few months and am excited to make a difference to the lives of smokers," says Kate.

"I have seen first-hand the massive positive impact that stopping smoking has on people. It not only improves their physical health, but it can improve all aspects of their lives including mental health, finances, social lives, and self-worth.

"Although I won't be working directly with whānau in this role, I know the mahi I do with general practice will lead to people quitting and I'm looking forward to contributing to the increase in smoking cessation referrals," adds Kate.



Smoking Cessation Facilitator Kate Banuve plays an active role in supporting local practices to reach their smoking cessation targets.

"I have seen first-hand the massive positive impact that stopping smoking has on people. It not only improves their physical health, but it can improve all aspects of their lives including mental health, finances, social lives, and self-worth."

With a range of beneficial skills, Kate spent five years working as a Stop Smoking Practitioner for Hāpainga Stop Smoking Service, where she gained in depth knowledge of the smoking cessation field and the complexities of engaging with whānau. Kate understands the challenges health professionals have when trying to support people to quit smoking, as well as the difficulties smokers face when attempting to quit themselves.

After completing a Bachelor of Applied Science in Health and Wellbeing, which included the basic ABC quit card training, Kate saw the devastating outcomes smokers were faced with and turned her attention to helping people change their lives for the better. When the job at Hāpainga came up, Kate applied and was successful, staying in that role until she went on parental leave in 2021.

Growing up in Tauranga Moana, Kate is proud to work with a local team in a beautiful place that she is happy to call home.

IN BRIEF

WBOP PHO comes together to strengthen health and safety processes



With the goal of creating a safe work environment, Western Bay of Plenty Primary Health Organisation staff came together during the New Zealand Shakeout earlier this year to practise earthquake drills and ensure the safety of the entire team.

The New Zealand Shakeout - Whakahaumarū Aotearoa - is a national earthquake drill and tsunami hīkoi, which encourages people across Aotearoa to practise earthquake etiquette and limit the long-lasting damage earthquakes can cause.

Gathering in the office, the WBOP PHO team took part in the drill, dropping, covering, and holding for 60 seconds.

As understanding what to do in the event of an earthquake is essential in Aotearoa, the WBOP PHO worked through these drills as a team, coming together to make sure everyone knows what to do in the event of an earthquake.

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