

# Feedback on the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners Final Draft Māori Health Strategy

New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine

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**23 April 2012**

The New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine (NZCPHM) has reviewed the Final Draft Māori Health Strategy (the Strategy) developed by the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (RNZCGP); our comments on the Strategy are provided below. In addition to making specific comment on the content of the Strategy, we have also provided information on our own policies, processes, and experience that might be useful for RNZCGP.

## **General Comments**

NZCPHM commends RNZCGP for the thoughtful development of a comprehensive Māori Health Strategy. The suggested processes appear to be sound, and are accompanied by impressive anticipated outcomes.

NZCPHM also thank RNZCGP for providing a framework in which both organisations can work collaboratively to enhance the education available to our Māori Registrars, support our Māori members, and continually address issues of inequity. Furthermore, NZCPHM is grateful for the opportunity to comment on the Strategy.

## **Public Health Perspective**

NZCPHM acknowledges the significant inequalities in health outcomes which exist for Māori in New Zealand. Social determinants such as income levels, housing conditions, and access to health services have a significant role in alleviating and ultimately resolving such inequalities.

Like Public Health Physicians, General Practitioners are in a unique position to identify, and assist in resolving, a number of the risk factors that contribute to the health outcomes of Māori. Areas in which we can both advocate for better outcomes include legislation and policy development, modifiable disease risk factors, targeted health programmes, investment in maternal health and early childhood, and cross-sector collaboration to improve social determinants by reducing existing poverty levels of Māori.

## **Training for Māori Registrars**

NZCPHM is supportive of the comprehensive actions identified for the training and mentoring of Māori Registrars in the General Practice Education Programme (GPEP).

### **Supervision**

NZCPHM Māori Registrars are supported by a Māori Training Programme Supervisor (MTPS), currently Dr Rhys Jones. As with all Training Programme Supervisors the MTPS is responsible for:

- Assisting and ensuring a Registrar has an annual Competency Development plan in place.
- Monitoring Registrar progress on competency development, signing-off achieved competencies and facilitating progress discussions as and when required.
- Liaison with a Registrar's Workplace Supervisor on Registrar's progress (at least two times per annum).
- Liaison with the Training Programme Director on professional training programme matters.
- Participation in supervisor training and refreshers provided by NZCPHM.

In addition to the generic Training Programme Supervisor tasks listed above, the MTPS is also responsible for:

- Organising (a minimum of two) training days for Registrars under his/her supervision.
- Meeting with the Registrars under his/her supervision collectively on a regular basis (at least six times per annum).
- Supporting a Registrar to manage any issues that arise in the Training Programme.
- Providing guidance in relation to career development.
- Planning, implementation, and evaluation of a NZCPHM recruitment strategy for Māori Registrars (with the support of the General Manager).

Provision of the additional responsibilities by the MTPS has been an effective way for NZCPHM to provide its Māori Registrars with adequate support and guidance as they progress through their training and prepare for their future as Public Health Physicians.

### Training Days

NZCPHM welcomes engagement with RNZCGP on collaborating for future training days held specifically for Māori Registrars across both college training programmes.

As indicated in the MTPS responsibilities, NZCPHM provides at least two training days designed specifically for our Māori Registrars. The description in the Strategy (pg 25) stating 'the focus in these training days is to prepare Māori Registrars for the unique challenges they will face in their career as Māori specialists' is an accurate summation of the overarching purpose of these training days.

These training days are funded from the John McLeod Fund.

### John McLeod Fund

In honour of Dr John McLeod who died in 1994, and with the agreement of the Clinical Training Agency, the New Zealand Population Health Charitable Trust created the John McLeod Fund to assist with Public Health Medicine training for Māori and Pacific Registrars; this Fund is now administered by NZCPHM. Currently, interest earned on this investment is used to fund study grants for Māori and Pacific Registrars, and also for the provision of training days for Māori Registrars. This funding is intended to enable eligible Registrars to develop their competence in public health, particularly in relation to the public health of Māori and Pacific populations/communities in New Zealand and its Pacific neighbours.

### Support for all NZCPHM Māori

NZCPHM supports the concept of collective mentoring outlined in the Strategy and also strongly encourages the proposal for regional hui.

### NZCPHM Māori Caucus

NZCPHM welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with RNZCGP on supporting and facilitating joint meetings of the Māori constituencies of both Colleges.

NZCPHM has made funding available for informal meetings of its Māori Fellows and Registrars. Such events are coordinated by Dr Rhys Jones (Education and Training Committee Member and MTPS) and Dr Ramon Pink (Council Member). This initiative is relatively new; historically similar gatherings would occur as part of the training days for Māori Registrars. By allocating separate funding, the training days can focus on the specific needs of the Registrars, while these wider gatherings can facilitate general collaboration and support for all Māori involved with NZCPHM.

## Māori Health in a wider college context

NZCPHM supports Māori representation across RNZCGP structures.

### Governance

‘We recognise Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the basis for partnership with Māori for health and the development of health services in Aotearoa New Zealand’ is a core value that underpins the work of NZCPHM.<sup>1</sup>

The NZPCHM Council and three of its four sub-committees (Education and Training, Policy, and Registrar) all have a specified position within their membership for a Māori representative.

### Competencies

NZCPHM has three competencies specific to Māori Health and Te Tiriti o Waitangi:

**Ability to analyse public health issues from a Tiriti o Waitangi perspective** including understanding the rights of tangata whenua, the application of Te Tiriti in health, tikanga Māori, institutional racism, the health impacts of colonisation on the Māori population, cultural safety in health services and research, using Treaty principles to assist policy development, research, service planning and delivery, actively seeking opportunities to address inequalities in health status for Māori, and working to eliminate institutional racism.

**Ability to advise on the public health issues affecting Māori** including understanding Māori cultural values, beliefs, practices, models of health and underpinning concepts such as tikanga, hauora and whakapapa, classification of ethnicity, sources of Māori health information and their quality, key demographic trends of the Māori population, key Māori health challenges, inequalities in Māori health and underlying causes, the role that western health services have played in Māori health development since first European contact.

**Ability to commitment to work in partnership with Māori** including effectively engaging with Māori, Māori communities (i.e. whanau, hapu, iwi), and Māori health providers, designing, implementing and evaluating interventions with Māori clients, providers, policy makers and researchers, networking with Māori people using culturally appropriate processes and protocols, respecting correct pronunciations, spelling and titles and seeking direction in these, making available information understandable to Māori.

### Training

The Strategy (pg 3) states:

*The College’s quality standard Aiming for Excellence and the vocational education programme include Māori specific content including Māori cultural competence and have done so for some time. The College ensures the Māori content of the GPEP and quality standard is regularly reviewed and updated.*

There does not, however, appear to be any detailed or specified action within the fifteen identified “action areas” for the provision of Māori-specific content in GPEP.

NZCPHM suggests that training opportunities and requirements specific to Māori Health within the GPEP framework be identified in the Strategy as an additional component of the GPEP action area. RNZCGP may also wish to take this opportunity to review what training is currently provided.

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<sup>1</sup> NZCPHM. Strategic Direction 2010-2014. Wellington: NZCPHM, 2010.

<http://www.populationhealth.org.nz/media/75503/strategic%20direction%20review%20march%202011.pdf>

NZCPHM Registrars are required to attain all three aforementioned competencies at level two in order to meet the requirements of our Training Programme. Level two is described as 'competent in a supervised or supported environment'; this sits within a five point scale used by the College to measure ability.

Biennially, NZCPHM provides a two-day Treaty of Waitangi workshop (facilitated by Waitangi Associates). All Registrars are given the opportunity to participate in this workshop once during their training.

NZCPHM would be happy to engage in further discussion on Māori Health and Te Tiriti o Waitangi training for all Registrars, and how our two colleges could collaborate on future training opportunities.

### **Continuing Professional Development**

NZCPHM commends the proposed action that Māori Cultural Competence be required as part of MOPS, however suggests that careful consideration be given to what is attainable for participants (through individual activity and opportunities provided by RNZCGP).

The NZCPHM Tracking of Professional Standards (TOPS) Programme has four broad categories in which participants must undertake CPD activity; Cultural Competence Development Activities is one of these. Participants must attain a moving five point average within this category across a rolling three year period. In order for an activity to receive points it must meet one or more of the defined competencies for the category in which it is recorded, thus there are no specific Māori Health competencies participants must meet however they must undertake some cultural competence development activity in order to meet the requirements of the Programme.

Prior to 2011 cultural competence requirements of TOPS had a specific Māori Health focus, however the 2010 Review of TOPS identified that the threshold was extremely difficult to meet. As a result the definition of 'culture' was broadened significantly based on the Medical Council of New Zealand definition.<sup>2</sup>

While participants are now able to meet the cultural competence requirements of the Programme, they may do so without undertaking any activity specific to Māori Health or Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

### **Final Comment**

Should RNZCGP wish to discuss any aspect of this feedback, or to further engage on the Strategy moving forward please contact the NZCPHM General Manager, Jane Dancer, on 04 4729183 or at [admin@populationhealth.org.nz](mailto:admin@populationhealth.org.nz).

NZCPHM looks forward to the further development and implementation of the Strategy.

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<sup>2</sup> MCNZ. Statement on cultural competence. Wellington: MCNZ, 2006.  
<http://www.mcnz.org.nz/portals/0/guidance/cultural%20competence.pdf>