



Whakapiki Ake

Evaluation Summary

Understanding what works when recruiting
Māori students into health career pathways



Dr Frances Hancock and Dr Fiona Cram

Tuia te pō, tākiri te
ao kapohia te awatea

Align our yesterday,
as a platform for today
to secure our tomorrow



Introduction

Whakapiki Ake is a pioneering, research-based, Indigenous/Māori recruitment programme that works within kaupapa Māori to support rangatahi Māori in secondary schools and wharekura across the North Island. Through diverse interventions, Whakapiki Ake promotes health as a career option and supports entry into Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences health professional programmes at the University of Auckland and other institutions. Whakapiki Ake supports the academic, cultural and social journey of students from Year 9 through to graduation. Whakapiki Ake invites whānau to go on the journey with their rangatahi.

A new, in-depth, independent evaluation highlights the intrinsic value, innovative approach, significant outcomes, and strategic contribution of Whakapiki Ake. Funded by the Ministry of Health, Whakapiki Ake is helping the government to achieve its health, health workforce development and tertiary education priorities for Māori. The evaluation offers rigorous evidence to inform funder decision-making and programme developments.

*"The name **Whakapiki Ake** is a doing word. **Piki Ake** means to climb, to ascend and, in this case, to increase the mana, vision, aspirations, knowledge, and opportunities of whānau moving forward."*

Kaumātua Rawiri Wharemate and Dolly Paul

Whakapiki Ake is a component of the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences' (the faculty) Vision 20:20 initiative, which aims to grow the number of Māori and Pacific health professionals. The role of Whakapiki Ake is to increase the recruitment of rangatahi Māori into tertiary programmes in the faculty. Once recruited, student retention and completion initiatives include Whakapiki Ake support and other components of Vision 20:20 –

the Certificate in Health Sciences (CertHSc), a bridging/foundation pathway to health professional programmes, and the Māori and Pacific Admission Scheme (MAPAS), which provides academic and pastoral support to Māori and Pacific students.

Whakapiki Ake is a 'tried and true' kaupapa. Established in 2003, it was redesigned in 2012 based on international 'best practice' research and evidence. Known as 'interventions', Whakapiki Ake outreach and support initiatives include early exposure of junior high school students to the sciences and careers in health, transitioning senior secondary students successfully to programmes in the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, and retaining students enrolled in a faculty programme or the First Year Bachelor of Science programme at the University of Auckland until graduation. In other words, opening up, encouraging and supporting students' pathways into professional careers in health. But the programme does much more, especially enhancing the cultural connections, identity and knowledge of students as well as their kaitiaki role in supporting Māori health and wellbeing.

The four goals of Whakapiki Ake are:

1

To **engage** with whānau/hapū/iwi and community to encourage and support Māori success in education and health careers

2

To **provide** Māori students with opportunities for an education that will support them to become a health professional

3

To **support** the cultural growth of Whakapiki Ake students to enhance their Māori leadership potential to becoming positive future leaders to support the transformation of whānau

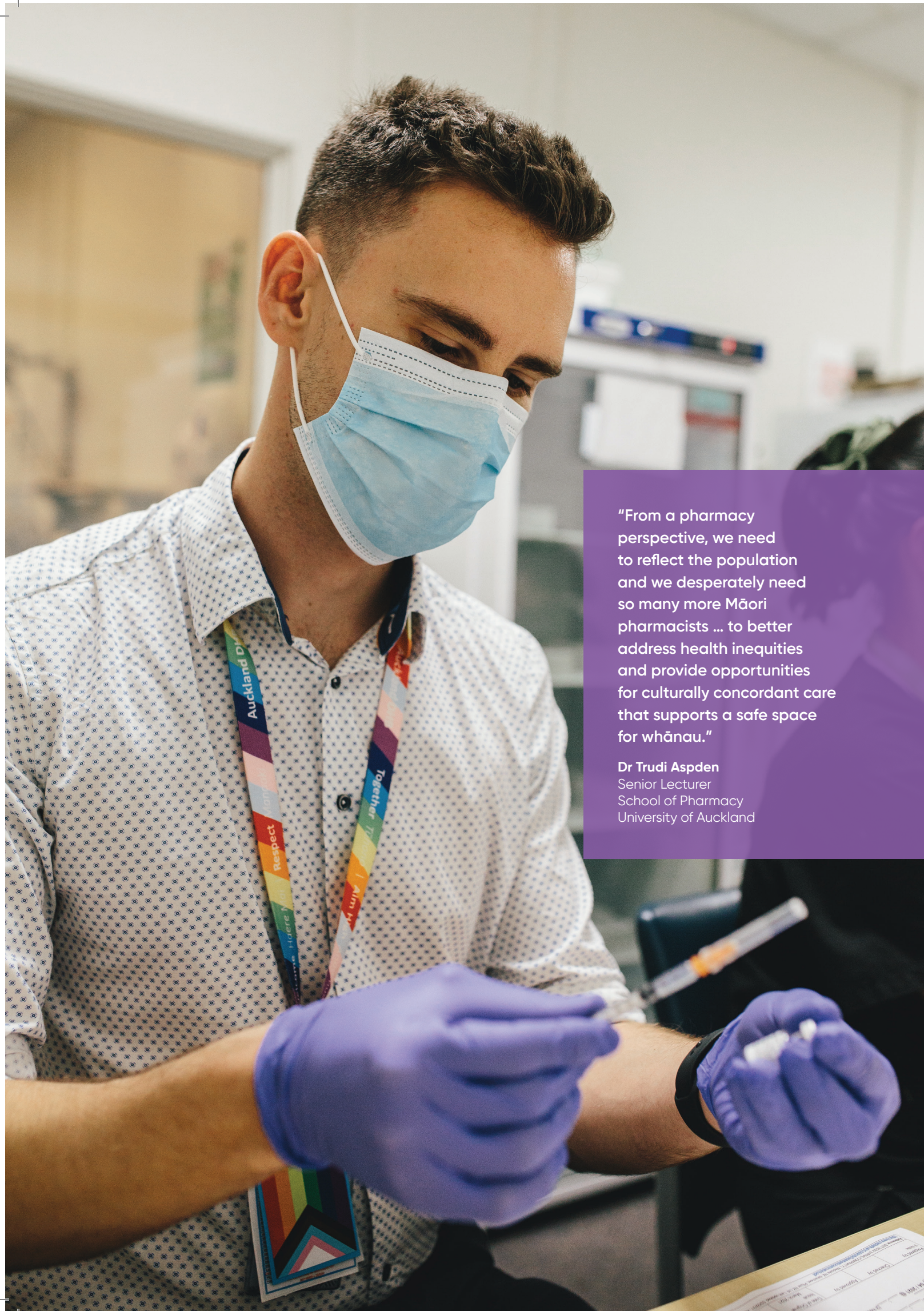
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To **achieve** equitable Māori participation and success in tertiary health education.

The University supports Whakapiki Ake interventions, innovations and research, and values the ongoing strategic partnership with the Ministry of Health. Whakapiki Ake, in turn, seeks to deliver on University aspirations to increase Māori participation, success, retention, and completion in health-related fields.







"From a pharmacy perspective, we need to reflect the population and we desperately need so many more Māori pharmacists ... to better address health inequities and provide opportunities for culturally concordant care that supports a safe space for whānau."

Dr Trudi Aspden
Senior Lecturer
School of Pharmacy
University of Auckland

The need for Whakapiki Ake

Aotearoa New Zealand urgently needs a Māori health professional workforce that can contribute to Māori health gains and the elimination of Māori health inequities. Research shows that “Māori treating/helping Māori results in better health outcomes for Māori” (MoH, 2019a, p.1). When health practitioners are both clinically and culturally competent, it is more likely that the health care needs of Māori will be met and that Māori patients and their whānau will be more satisfied with the treatment they receive.

But research also shows that, currently, it is unlikely that Māori patients and their whānau will receive health care from Māori health professionals because Māori are under-represented in the health practitioner workforce (MoH 2019b). The critical Māori health workforce shortage is compounded by Māori educational underachievement and lower Māori tertiary education participation.

“When it is commonplace to go to hospital and see a Māori doctor, with a mouth that speaks Te Reo, then our tamariki will see this and think ‘I can do that’.”

Dr Eruera Bidois Medical Graduate

Overwhelming evidence indicates that Māori students and whānau not only experience health and educational inequities that are directly connected with being Māori (especially an institutional willingness to allow poor outcomes) but are also exposed to prejudice, stigmatisation, stereotyping and criticisms of special treatment (especially when receiving scholarships or entry into degree courses) (Bryers, 2019; Bryers et. al, 2021). Whakapiki Ake is flipping the switch on this problem, so that more Māori students can thrive in New Zealand’s education system and Māori patients and

whānau encountering Māori health professionals becomes commonplace in our health system.

The Whakapiki Ake pipeline model begins with sparking the interest of rangatahi in health careers from Year 9, followed by support across the school years to help ensure that those who wish to become a health professional are given a real opportunity to do so. In this way, Whakapiki Ake is strongly aligned to current government strategies and action plans for Māori health and Māori health workforce development as well as for Māori tertiary education. The Ministry of Health’s workforce development framework, for example, aims to ensure “that long-standing issues and critical workforce shortages are progressed alongside the delivery of the government’s health priorities” (MoH, 2019c, p.1).

Ultimately, Whakapiki Ake is about ensuring that a higher proportion of our health workforce is Māori in order to provide a pathway to better health access and health outcomes for Māori. Professor Papaarangi Reid also points out that it is the right of every Māori child to have access to the whole menu of career options – without being limited by circumstances of colonial history, the educational outcomes of their parents, the decile of their school and its curriculum, the competence of their teachers, or their socioeconomic position.



How Whakapiki Ake works

Whakapiki Ake works within kaupapa Māori. This means it centres Māori ways of knowing, being and doing, recognises diverse Māori identities and realities, and is whānau-centred. Kaupapa Māori nourishes cultural, academic, social, emotional and spiritual development. Whakapiki Ake interventions aim to build relationships, knowledge, strategies and skills that will support the self-esteem, self-confidence, self-determination, and well-being of rangatahi as Māori and enable their academic success.

The places

Whakapiki Ake works with/in mainstream secondary schools across much of the North Island and also engages with some wharekura.

The interventions

Led by the Whakapiki Ake Development Manager, since 2012 staff and academic leaders have developed an evidence-informed, integrated, and comprehensive recruitment pipeline model. This pipeline model extends from Year 9 through to the first-year of tertiary study, with support to graduation. Through this pipeline, Whakapiki Ake offers a suite of interventions to support rangatahi to discover, explore and pursue pathways to careers in health. Interventions aim to support rangatahi connectedness and wellbeing through whanaungatanga that strengthens relationships with whānau and builds supportive, sustainable connections with peers/student cohorts. Cohort relationships foster the collective determination, perseverance, and courage to move forward together. Interventions also focus on growing awareness and understanding of different forms of racism as well as developing strategies that build resilience.

Interventions include school and university visits, various academic enrichment opportunities, individualised advice, support and planning, contact with tuākana role-models, cultural growth and leadership development activities, social media and whānau engagement as well as assistance with university applications, pastoral care, and some financial support.

The people

With institutional support from the University of Auckland, Professor Papaarangi Reid (Te Rarawa) and Associate Professor Elana Curtis (Ngāti Rongomai, Ngāti Pikiao, Te Arawa) provide Indigenous and intellectual leadership, governance oversight, strategic direction and moral support for Whakapiki Ake.

Three staff are currently responsible for programme delivery. Their work is multi-layered, multi-focussed, relationship-based and time-intensive. Kanewa Stokes (Ngāti Porou, Te Whānau-a-Apanui) is the Development Manager. She has led and continues to lead programme innovation and development, along with other responsibilities. Her commitment to excellence has earned several awards. She works alongside Kaimahi / Recruitment Officers Liz Peretira (Waikato/Ngāti Mahuta) and Te Whatumanawa Ngatai Tangirua (Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāruahine, Ngāti Raukawa, Tainui/Waikato). The team is based in Auckland but staff travel to other locations for school visits and community-based workshops.

Tuākana (senior students) are hired as learning facilitators for particular Whakapiki Ake activities and serve as role-models to teina (younger students).

Kaumātua Rawiri Wharemate (Ngāpuhi, Ngātiwai, Kawerau-ā-Maki, Ngāi Te Rangi) and Dolly Paul (Tainui) offer a culturally grounding and positive presence. They provide wise counsel and cultural guidance to staff, students and others involved in Whakapiki Ake. Whaea Julie Wade (Tainui) is the Community and Cultural Liaison for Te Kupenga



Hauora Māori. She assists the Kaumātua and supports Whakapiki Ake in a myriad of ways including campus-based events.

The University of Auckland

Through Te Kupenga Hauora Māori, the University provides the institutional and academic home for Whakapiki Ake. It approves and accepts the contract from the Ministry of Health and is ultimately responsible for delivery. The Whakapiki Ake Development Manager is responsible for reporting to the Ministry. Academic and professional staff across the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, as well as other service units in the University, actively support programme delivery.

The collaborators

Whakapiki Ake has developed collaborations to support programme delivery and partner recruitment goals for health workforce development. In addition to secondary schools and wharekura, stakeholders include the Ministry of Health, marae/iwi organisations, Te Wānanga o Awanuiarangi, regional Māori health services, District Health Boards, St Johns, other recruitment programmes (such as Kia Ora Hauora, WhyOra, Te Puna Waiora), as well as Whakapiki Ake and MAPAS tuākana. In addition to Te Kupenga Hauora Māori, Whakapiki Ake also engages with collaborators across the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences.

“The real business of this programme is supporting students to be themselves, as Māori, and to uncover their karanga tapu mō kai (speciality or gift) so they can help others in whatever field of health they choose. This process creates a legacy that builds integrity over time, enabling rangatahi to confidently say, “I know who I am. This is the path I want to take.” Whakapiki Ake goes above and beyond to support the coming generation to believe in themselves, so they can play a role in the future of Aotearoa as kaitiaki willing to exercise kaitiakitanga (spiritual stewardship) in the field of health.”

Whakapiki Ake Kaumātua
Rawiri Wharemate and Dolly Paul



How well Whakapiki Ake works

The evaluation demonstrates that Whakapiki Ake is an innovative, highly regarded, high performing Māori student recruitment programme contributing to increasing numbers of Māori students and graduates in the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences. Early exposure opportunities, other critical interventions and clear academic and health career pathways support Māori students to enter and thrive at university. Whakapiki Ake also has significant positive impact on whānau, communities, schools, wharekura, the university, and the health sector. There was strong agreement among students, whānau and stakeholders about what they value most about Whakapiki Ake and why. Comments convey a high level of satisfaction with the programme and identified possible improvements.

Key outcomes – pipeline

Whakapiki Ake creates a way to access and engage rangatahi so that more Māori students can consider a health career. Critically important, kaupapa Māori supports whānau moving forward together. Wide-ranging and uplifting exposure opportunities have an eye-opening effect, awakening rangatahi and whānau to new possibilities for their future. Positively influencing the life trajectory of one rangatahi uplifts the whole whānau and grows aspirations in communities and across generations.

Whakapiki Ake catalyses student interests and aspirations, introduces rangatahi to new and exciting academic and career pathways, and offers access to the campus so students can experience first-hand what university is like. Students also gain hands-on experience of different health career options.

Whakapiki Ake has a positive impact on student cultural growth and identity, confidence, self-esteem, self-respect and self-belief. Students also develop life-skills and strong, enduring relationships within/ across cohorts and with university staff.

Increased knowledge of NCEA, health career options and academic pathways not only benefits the student but also opens up horizons for the whole whānau. Through their engagement with Whakapiki Ake, whānau build knowledge, skills, connections,

confidence, agency, and aspirations. Witnessing their students go through university is uplifting for them and their communities.

Rangatahi achieve academic success and top achieving students are now setting higher goals. Rangatahi gain entry into first-year tertiary study towards health professional careers. For some students, a positive outcome may be the realisation that university or a health career is not for them. Whakapiki Ake maintains an open-door approach in case students change their minds or need support to find their next step.

The growth in Māori students across the university years is life-changing on many levels and is attributed to their journey through the programme. Personal growth and student support networks expand through their engagement with MAPAS. Acting as tuākana, Māori students become powerful Whakapiki Ake role-models who demystify the university journey for rangatahi following in their footsteps and their whānau.

With the support of Whakapiki Ake and other Vision 20:20 programmes, Māori students in the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences gain qualifications for health professional careers and leave university aspiring to make a difference for Māori in their chosen health career.



Key outcomes – infrastructure

Whakapiki Ake has developed necessary infrastructure to support programme delivery. A functioning database was developed and has been refined over time. Whakapiki Ake now has well-developed offerings across all school years as well as highly effective transitioning opportunities. These pipeline opportunities produce powerful flow-on effects for schools, building a student culture of engagement, learning and achievement.

“The growth in Māori students is life-changing on many levels.”

Te Whatumanawa Ngatai Tangirua
Whakapiki Ake Kaimahi

Research, evaluation, reflective practice, openness to change and a learning culture are now well-embedded in and are hallmarks of Whakapiki Ake. An extensive literature review identified the six principles that underpin Whakapiki Ake. Along with ongoing evaluation, a significant and growing body of academic research informs programme decision making, incremental changes and any innovations.

Internal (UoA) and external stakeholders expressed a deep appreciation and growing understanding of Whakapiki Ake. All agreed their awareness of and engagement with rangatahi and Māori students has been significantly enhanced through their involvement with Whakapiki Ake. Non-Māori lecturers/teachers highlighted transformative impacts on their own learning, teaching and engagements with Māori.

Whakapiki Ake has forged strong connections within the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences and with other UoA services to enable wrap around support for students. High functioning collaborations extend beyond the university and are crucial to engaging students in regional areas. Whakapiki Ake works very effectively to transition and connect students to Vision 20:20 programmes and introduce them to the wider University.

What stakeholders value most

University contributors (professional and teaching staff), collaboration partners and Whakapiki Ake team members involved in the evaluation highlighted the essence of Whakapiki Ake when describing what they value most.

They value what they learn through their engagements with Whakapiki Ake and the diverse, enduring and supportive relationships (among students, across and within the University as well as with whānau and other organisations) that thrive throughout the programme. They value the tangible outcomes – seeing Māori students’ progress through the programme and become health professionals who are committed to serving Māori whānau and communities within varying health settings. They highlighted the positive changes in the education and health systems through increased Māori presence and success. They also drew attention to the kaupapa Māori positioning of Whakapiki Ake that puts whānau at the centre and activates core Māori values that make the whole programme work.

A snapshot of numbers

- 2337 students engaged in Whakapiki Ake from 2012–2019, with 40% from low decile schools (1–3) and nearly 75% female.
- Over 10,000 Year 9–11 students have attended Hui-ā-Kura since 2014 to 2019.
- 709 rangatahi have attended Hui-ā-Rohe from 2014 to 2019.
- 589 Year 10 and 11 rangatahi attended Te Whē from 2014 to 2019.
- Around 80% of students attending MASH and COACH (catering for 60 rangatahi each since 2014) were from medium to low decile schools.
- Nearly 600 students (256 in Year 12 and 329 in Year 13) attended Study Wānanga from 2012 to 2019.
- Study Wānanga students were from all North Island DHBs, with Auckland (n=68) and Waikato (n=53) the most well-represented and Hutt District (n=2), Whanganui (n=1) and Wairarapa (n=1) the least represented.
- Just over 1200 students in the Whakapiki Ake cohort (n=1207) finished school in 2011 to 2018.
- Whakapiki Ake rangatahi who finished school in 2011–2018 earned on average 63.6 Level 3 NCEA credits in science rich subjects including an average of: 19.6 Level 3 Biology credits, 20.4 Level 3 Chemistry credits; 19.8 Level 3 Physics credits.
- Data modelling shows that early exposure interventions provide a scaffold for rangatahi that helps ensure their attendance at transitioning interventions that then lead to positive Level 3 NCEA outcomes and attaining University of Auckland entry outcomes.
- The odds of a Whakapiki Ake student who attended COACH enrolling in the UoA in the year after Year 13 were, on average, 2.5 times higher than a Whakapiki Ake student who did not attend COACH. The odds of a Whakapiki Ake student who attended Study Wānanga enrolling in University of Auckland in the year after Year 13 are, on average, 3.3 times higher than a Whakapiki Ake student who did not attend Study Wānanga.
- Half of the rangatahi from the Whakapiki Ake cohort enrolled at a New Zealand university after finishing high school from 2012 to 2018.
- 43–69 rangatahi were given assistance to complete UoA applications in the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences between 2016 to 2019, each year.
- Of those rangatahi who were engaged with WAP in Year 13, 10% enrolled in the UoA CertHSc in the following year and of these, nearly two-thirds (61.5%) went on to enroll in a UoA Bachelors in the year after completing the CertHSc, while 35 of these students (20.1%) enrolled into UoA degree level study at some later date.
- Of the 255 rangatahi who enrolled in a UoA Bachelors' degree in the year after they finished Year 13, most (84.3%) enrolled in programmes in the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences.
- On average, students' GPA increased 0.4 points for every additional UoA (Vision 20:20) intervention they attended.
- Of Whakapiki Students who completed school in 2012–2018 and went on to UoA, 84 completed Bachelor degrees and 108 are currently completing/active in their Bachelors. Other Whakapiki Ake graduates finished school before 2012 or missed Year 13.
- Of these, 13 completed their MBChB degrees and 46 are active; one completed their BOptom degree; two completed their BPharm degree and two are active; 6 students completed a BNurs and four remain active; 11 completed a BHSc and 16 are active; two completed other FMHS programmes or conjoint programmes and two are active; 20 completed their BSc (in. conjoint) and 38 are active; and 29 completed other Bachelor degrees at UoA.
- 397 WAP students from 2012 to 2018 enrolled into a Bachelor degree at another university with most enrolling as school leavers following completion of their Year 13.



Student and whānau perceptions of Whakapiki Ake

A recent Masters-level kaupapa Māori research project recorded the perceptions of fourteen students (in Year 13) and 11 whānau members participating in Whakapiki Ake (Bryers, 2019). The research shows that Whakapiki Ake does more than recruit students to university, it enables their cultural, social and academic growth as well as reducing barriers to tertiary study and providing resources to support tertiary success.

Highlighting the importance of whakawhanaungatanga, students and whānau valued strong and sustaining relationships within and across student cohorts, which they said reduced social isolation by creating connections and a sense of whānau with others who have similar aspirations (p. 77). Whānau benefitted by creating their own connections across cohorts, becoming ‘one whānau’ on the tertiary education journey (p. 77). They also valued the way interventions connected up and encouraged Māori students to join Whakapiki Ake.

Students and whānau valued growth in cultural identity and knowledge (Bryers, 2019, p.78). Interventions supported students to learn and embrace tikanga Māori, such as pepeha, which led to increased confidence, a sense of belonging, and

whakawhanaungatanga – “important identity markers for Māori” (p. 78). Students at different locations on their cultural journey felt accepted for who they are as Māori and encouraged to deepen their understanding of their identity (p.78).

Students described how Whakapiki Ake increased their self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-determination, inspiring a positive, motivated, goal-oriented outlook (Bryers, 2019, p. 79). Whānau also appreciated that interventions supported students to develop resilience strategies when encountering racism and growing confidence through leadership roles (p.79).

Whānau reported that being involved with Whakapiki Ake also nourished their cultural growth, built their knowledge of health

inequities and tertiary education, and increased their confidence to go on the journey with their student (p.81).

Students and whānau thought Whakapiki Ake was a well-developed, efficient and structured programme. They suggested some improvements including more advance planning to help whānau to prioritise and participate. Whānau also wanted “better translation from the guys at Whakapiki Ake” to better understand “what the kids are doing” (p. 81).

The perspectives of rangatahi and whānau in this research mirror those recorded in the digital stories created as part of the evaluation as well as the stakeholder perceptions in the evaluation.



They've [Whakapiki Ake] inspired us and the whole whānau to be part of this journey with them, that it's not them walking alone. Much more focus in terms of what they're doing. Feeling better about self which flows on to being better kids within the family.

(Whānau)

"Throughout high school, to applying for university, Whakapiki Ake has helped me define what I wish to aim for in life and directed me so that I pursue that specifically.

(Student)

Looking back

Strengths and challenges

The evaluation highlighted significant strengths. These include the longevity of Whakapiki Ake, its kaupapa Māori positioning, new possibilities opening up across the pipeline, effective engagement with students, whānau, teachers and university staff, and strong peer-to-peer and tuākana-teina relationships.

Other strengths derive from being situated in the University environment. Whakapiki Ake has easy access to information, people and other student services as well as a high performing team that demonstrates strategic, academic, cultural and shared leadership. The Whakapiki Ake Development Manager has provided innovative, caring leadership over many years, is greatly appreciated by stakeholders and has won awards for her commitment to excellence.

The evaluation also highlighted a range of challenges impacting on programme delivery. These include: various issues arising when engaging with mainstream schools and wharekura, a science curriculum that centres Western knowledges and ignores mātauranga Māori, significant and diverse pressures on Māori students, teaching challenges, ensuring whānau are well-informed about Whakapiki Ake interventions and academic pathways, operating a Māori recruitment programme within large Pākehā institutions as well as Whakapiki Ake staff workloads, current funding arrangements, and pandemic disruptions. There's an awareness of needing to focus more on early exposure opportunities as well as find ways to increase engagement with marae/iwi.

Some of these challenges draw attention to the context in which Whakapiki Ake operates. Others reflect a dynamic and innovate programme actively engaging with programme participants and partners. Others reflect the challenge of balancing capability, capacity, and available human and physical resources, among other factors.





Looking forward Possible improvements

An outstanding feature of Whakapiki Ake is its deep commitment to ongoing innovation alongside an openness to practical improvements that help to ease the way for rangatahi and whānau to engage in the programme. Diverse stakeholders communicated a shared vision of helping rangatahi find their place within a university health sciences programme that can support their aspirations for a career in health.

The evaluation generated promising and practical ideas for programme improvements, growth and innovation. These include: new strategies and additional support required to enable Whakapiki Ake to reach more rangatahi in schools and wharekura, and to offer new or expanded interventions; ways that institutions can better support kaupapa Māori recruitment programmes; ways to enhance teaching/learning experiences; and improvements to current data collection, management, evaluation and reporting.

Whakapiki Ake stories



“I was the first person in my whānau to go to university, so it was a big step going to Auckland and understanding the expectations. It can be quite overwhelming, especially for students from small towns, coming into a big institution and suddenly be surrounded by thousands of people or going into a lecture theatre that can seat hundreds.

Having opportunities through COACH and MASH to come to the university and get a sense of the physical environment was a great help. I learnt to map out where I needed to be, how to get there and the time it took. It really helped to have a little bit of familiarity.

Through COACH and MASH, we met lecturers from the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences and staff from the Certificate programme. We met up with them again in our degree programmes. We also learned a lot from other high school teachers who offer different kinds of study support.

Whakapiki Ake asks, “What are your core values? What is your main purpose? What is your why? Why do you enjoy that?” My ‘why’ was my Mum. She was my inspiration and my biggest role model. She has the biggest heart and wanted to look after as many people as possible. My ‘why’ led me to my population health pathway. My awareness of that possibility came through Whakapiki Ake.

I developed close friendships through Whakapiki Ake and those people are still my friends today. Some have gone down different pathways, but we’re all working in the health sector. We’ve all been able to go off into our little streams and still come together and bounce ideas off each other, from our different perspectives within the health system. Our cohort shows that Whakapiki Ake isn’t just a route into medicine; students are widely dispersed into a range of different pathways.

Although I am Māori, I wasn’t raised within that Māori world. While I had some exposure to te ao Māori along the way, it was through Whakapiki Ake I learnt valuable cultural knowledge and the importance of those core values; it’s something I will always treasure.”

Arianna Rangi, BHSc Graduate

“I had a student three years ago who was trying to piece together her passions and being involved in Whakapiki Ake helped her to not only become confident and proud in her cultural identity but also to see that she could go to university and do a conjoint degree with a double major in marine science and Māori studies. I see students opening up pathways that will enable them to succeed in the sciences and become proud of their cultural heritage as Māori. That’s the goal, and I saw those successes...”

Joseph Tini, High School Teacher

“Some students have probably been to an optometrist before but never realized they could become one. The experience opens up that possibility and suddenly they realise, ‘Okay, so if I study A, B and C,’ then I could become that person.”

Ehsan Vaghefi, Senior Lecturer in Optometry and Vision Science, University of Auckland

“When Whakapiki Ake do wānanga at Waipapa Marae, I try to go to tautoko their pōwhiri or pop in for dinner. Older students go along as tuākana. Those encounters are definitely the start of that relationship with those students. Later they’ll say, ‘I’ve seen you at a wānanga we did with Whakapiki Ake,’ and they may not know me fully but a familiar face makes the university a little less daunting.”

Wills Nepia, former MAPAS team leader, now a Professional Teaching Fellow on the Certificate in Health Sciences, University of Auckland

“I work for a national Māori health workforce development programme and organise a hospital-based, early exposure to health programme for interested students identified through Whakapiki Ake school visits. The learning is interactive and fun; rangatahi do things like hold a pig’s heart! Kids are kids; they want to feel, touch and see for themselves. Working together [with Whakapiki Ake staff] makes our mahi so much easier for both of us, and we just love it. For our organisation, it’s about getting more Māori into the DHB system and supporting Māori into the health workforce.”

Te Ringamau Tane, Toi Whai Rawa Project Coordinator, Bay of Plenty District Health Board

“I first connected with Kanewa Stokes, the Whakapiki Ake Development Manager, 10 years ago. She didn’t know that Halls existed and I had no idea what Whakapiki Ake offered. I said, “We’ve got accommodation on campus and your students could live with us. We can work with you to support them.” Since then, we’ve supported student recruitment into the university, housed many Whakapiki Ake students and provided housing for whānau visits and graduation dinners. A Whakapiki Ake team member will get in touch with us if they notice a student is a bit low to see if our staff have noticed anything. So, by working together, we can develop more of ‘a-360-view’, not just a classroom or nine-to-five perspective.”

Jacob Waitere, Head of Operations – Accommodation, University of Auckland



What makes the difference in delivering Whakapiki Ake outcomes – an independent view

The core of Whakapiki Ake is te ao Māori and its foundation is whānau. Whakapiki Ake and whānau work together to support rangatahi to be themselves as Māori and to discover their purpose. Māori ways of knowing, being and doing support relational connections, holistic wellbeing and all-round achievement. Whakapiki Ake focuses on the aspirations and outcomes that matter to Māori students, whānau and communities, guiding rangatahi into a health sciences programme at the University of Auckland (or another pathway) that best suits them.

High-level, long-term government, university and faculty strategic commitments to Māori student recruitment, retention and completion help to create the conditions for Māori students to enter and thrive in the university.

Whakapiki Ake academic leaders, staff, and cultural advisers offer high-calibre, shared, and caring leadership that builds confidence and demonstrates the benefits of a 'by Māori, for Māori' approach.

As an evidence-based programme, Whakapiki Ake responds effectively to systemic tertiary education and health workforce inequities. The pipeline model offers carefully crafted interventions that actively engage, awaken and excite rangatahi.

Whakapiki Ake invite rangatahi and whānau to go on a journey together. Staff go the extra mile so rangatahi can focus on their mahi with the support they need. Staff take action to ease the way for whānau to fully engage.

Being nestled within Vision 20:20 allows eligible students to either enrol in the CertHSc or pursue direct entry into a degree, as well as participate in the enriching opportunities through MAPAS. Students and their whānau remain within a strong support structure until graduation, making friends for life.

Ongoing and rigorous evaluation and research reflects an openness to change, a commitment to good/best practice and an innovative, agile, responsive approach.

Whakapiki Ake is all about relationships that value people and foster collaboration, *for a purpose*: growing Māori health professionals with the long-term outcome of better health for Māori.

A productive partnership with government acts as a critical enabler. Long-term Ministry of Health funding is crucial to the survival, growth and success of Whakapiki Ake.



“Like the pōwhiri, you can’t just have the karanga, you have to have every facet for it to be tika, so for it to work for us as Māori, you have to do it all. Whakapiki Ake is always aiming to do it all.”

Liz Peretira, Whakapiki Ake Kaimahi





Where to from here?

Given that tertiary education, health care, and health workforce inequities disproportionality impact Māori and that Whakapiki Ake is a high performing programme helping to address these inequities, the government should now review and increase the funding for Whakapiki Ake.

Recommendations

Recommendations for the Ministry of Health are to:

1. Provide sustainable, full cost funding for Whakapiki Ake, to demonstrate a long-term government commitment.
2. Increase the scope of and funding for Whakapiki Ake, to reach more Māori students.
3. Support Whakapiki Ake to develop an iwi engagement strategy, to build Māori health workforce development.

Recommendations for the Whakapiki Ake team and the University of Auckland are to:

4. Continue programme enhancements, in light of the new stakeholder suggestions.
5. Strengthen engagement, marketing, and partnerships, to enhance engagement with rangatahi, whānau, mainstream schools and wharekura.
6. Review data collection, use, tracking and management, to ensure that permissions for data collection and use are secured, and that student enrolment in academic institutions other than the University of Auckland can be tracked.
7. Support academic leadership, research, and writing, to ensure that Whakapiki Ake remains an evidence-based, outcomes-focused, kaupapa Māori recruitment programme.

Last words

Whakapiki Ake has developed from embryonic beginnings into the comprehensive kaupapa Māori programme that it is today. That development has happened in a most respectful way that upholds our tikanga. The integrity of the mana of each student is profoundly important, as is the integrity of the mana of the programme.

The whole Whakapiki Ake team have invested themselves in the programme – emotionally, spiritually, academically and professionally. Their leadership displays aroha, which at its best is not talked about but practised.

The whanaungatanga and manaakitanga of Whakapiki Ake is so uplifting that everyone who experiences it, benefits. Regardless of the health pathway they choose, students and graduates remain Piki Ake whānau forever. Whanaungatanga connections are a rich legacy of the programme, continuing to nourish our mokopuna as they move forward in their chosen health field.

There’s always room for improvement and Whakapiki Ake needs funding to constantly refine its programme, extend its outreach, and develop

sufficient infrastructure that will allow it to move forward. An evaluation shows if something is working or not, where you can move to or move away from, with a focus on moving forward. This evaluation shows that what Whakapiki Ake is doing is working, it’s worthwhile and important.

Whakapiki Ake is an authentic kaupapa. It is doing exactly what our tupuna asked us to do: To go and seek out the next generation, offer them opportunities that will educate them and, as you participate, add your tangata whenua-ness to the whole process. Their responsibility is to choose the path they will take, guided by the core values of who they are and the unique gifts they have to offer. That is kaitiakitanga at work.

We hope Whakapiki Ake will grow, so that more Māori students can participate, succeed academically, and dedicate their lives as health professionals to improving Māori wellbeing.

Whakapiki Ake Kaumātua
Rawiri Wharemate and Dolly Paul



Matua Rawiri Wharemate – He Poroporoaki
23 January 1951 – 25 June 2021

I katakata katoa rā ngā Pūriri o Tautoro i te ngarohanga o Matua Rawiri Wharemate ki roto ōna tūpuna mātua i te urupā o te Hunga iti, i te raorao o Tautoro. I papā te whatitiri, i hikohiko te uira, i rū te whenua i te aroha mō te matua nei i ngaro atu i a tātou i ngā whā wiki kua pahure ake nei.

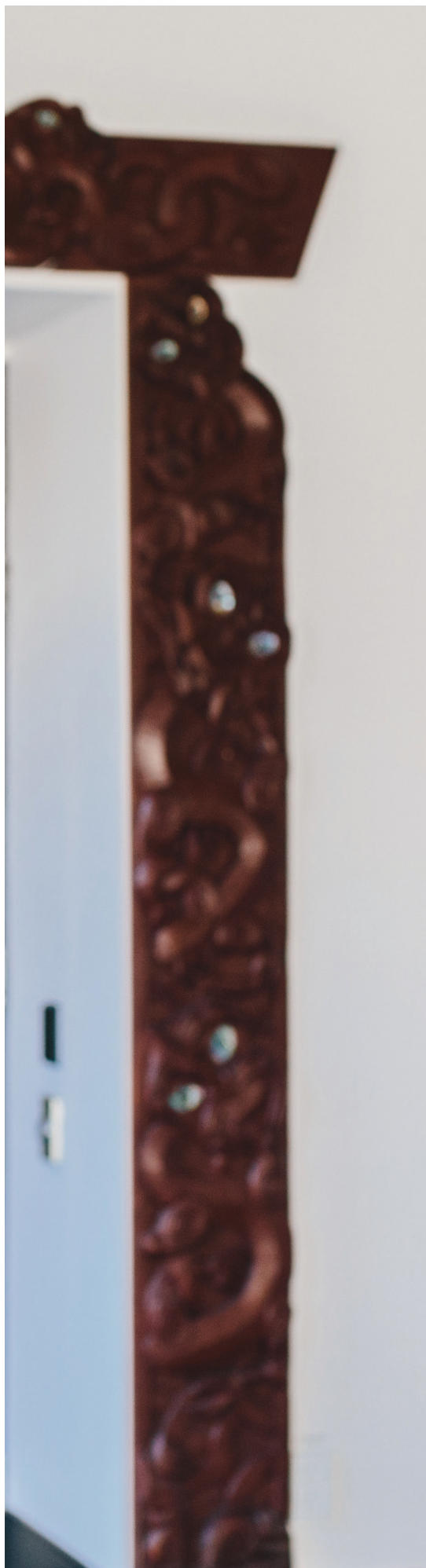
He kaumātua a Rāwiri, i aroha nuitia rā e ōna iwi, hapū maha, e tōna whānau, e tōna hāhi Moromona, e Waipapa Taumata Rau, e ngā rōpū, kāhui, kura maha, nānā i ārahi, nānā i napinapi.

He toka tūmoana i ngā moana pōkākā, he tīrama i ngā pō pōkerekere. E te Matua e Rāwiri, e tangi mapu ana te whānau o Waipapa Taumata Rau, o Te Kupenga Hauora Māori. Kua mokemoke tō marae o Waipapa, kua pau te orooro o tō reo ki roto Tāne-nui-a-Rangi whare.

E kore e tineia te muramura o te kāpura o tōu aroha ki te tangata. Noho wairua atu ki roto te iwi nui, ō tupuna, ō mātua, te hunga hakapono, te hunga kua poto ki te pō.

Waiho mātou kia noho maarika i te mahara reka ki a koe me ō tini mahi.





About the evaluation

The evaluation of Whakapiki Ake took a '360' view of the programme, focussing on diverse stakeholder perceptions. Guided by kaupapa Māori, the evaluation sought to centre Māori ways of working, experiences, aspirations and outcomes. The evaluation team worked with Whakapiki Ake leaders to codesign the evaluation and document the programme's theory of change and programme logic. The evaluation provided an opportunity to critically reflect on Whakapiki Ake in the context of current challenges and to collate evidence that can inform future funding and programme planning.

The evaluation generated new qualitative data by doing in-depth interviews with internal (University of Auckland) and external stakeholders. Most of the 13 stakeholders interviewed have been involved in Whakapiki for eight or more years. Since 2012, the Whakapiki Ake team has produced data and research that complements this evaluation. Those findings were included as part of this multi-methods evaluation. A separate digital storywork component of the evaluation produced a new Whakapiki Ake website aimed at rangatahi and whānau. This new engagement tool includes powerful Whakapiki Ake stories of two students and two graduates as well as rich whānau insights (see www.whakapikiake.com).

Quantitative data was used to assess Whakapiki Ake's reach, trends, and outcomes. Qualitative data was used to trace Whakapiki Ake's development, research foundations, approach, and operations as well as to assess outcomes, value, effectiveness, and future possibilities. Background information was sourced, and critical insights gleaned, from a separate Whakapiki Ake self-review project.

Vision 20:20, as it was originally conceived, aimed to achieve a health workforce that was 10 percent Māori and Pacific by 2020. This evaluation, along with another more broadly focussed Vision 20:20 review being funded through the University of Auckland, will help to inform its future directions beyond 2020.

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About the authors

Frances Hancock (Irish Pākehā) has a PhD in education from the University of Auckland, where she is an Honorary Academic. She is a critical researcher, evaluation and engagement specialist.

Fiona Cram (Ngāti Pahauwera) has a PhD in social and developmental psychology from the University of Otago. She is a kaupapa Māori researcher and evaluation specialist.

Photography

We thank Qiane Matata-Sipu for her beautiful photography (excluding images on pp. 9 & 11).

He mihi aroha

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For more information

Associate Professor Elana Curtis (Te Arawa)

Director, Vision 20:20

Te Kupenga Hauora Māori

Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences

University of Auckland

M +64 21 671 292

E e.curtis@auckland.ac.nz

Kanewa Stokes (Ngāti Porou)

Whakapiki Ake Developmental Manager

M +64 27 291 2990

E k.stokes@auckland.ac.nz

Whakapiki Ake

www.whakapikiake.com