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Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government



MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Summary—Te Mana Ola: The Pacific Health Strategy 2023

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Summary—Te Mana Ola: The Pacific Health Strategy 2023

Purpose

Te Mana Ola is the first-ever Pacific Health Strategy. It sets out the long-term priorities for Pacific health and wellbeing over the next 10 years.

Te Mana Ola was developed with the support of a Pacific Health Strategy Advisory Group and engagement with Pacific communities and health care workers throughout the country.

It builds on Ola Manuia: Interim Pacific Health Plan July 2022-June 2024 (Ola Manuia) and contributes to the All-of-Government Pacific Wellbeing Strategy (led by the Ministry for Pacific Peoples).

Te Mana Ola is a term gifted to the Pacific Health Strategy by members of the Tokelau community in Aotearoa. The word "Mana" is commonly used throughout Polynesia and is defined as "divine power". "Ola" means "life". Together, they culminate in the definition "to live powerfully".

Vision

Te Mana Ola is focused on ensuring all Pacific peoples, wherever they live and whatever their ethnicity, socioeconomic or disability status, can enjoy the best possible health and wellbeing.

Background

Pacific peoples in Aotearoa are diverse in their identities, geographical locations and languages. In 2022, there were more than 450,000 people in Aotearoa who identified with at least one Pacific ethnicity (9% of the total population). The median age of Pacific peoples is 23 years and this youthfulness is seen as a strength by communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought many challenges, but also highlighted the resiliency of Pacific peoples and the important role of natural support systems in communities. Pacific providers and communities played a crucial part in the response to COVID-19. They also provided important support following the adverse weather events that occurred throughout the country in 2023. These responses provide a solid platform to build on the strengths of Pacific communities.

Pacific perspectives of health are holistic, encompassing the physical, mental, spiritual, social and economic wellbeing of the collective. This is described in Te Mana Ola using the Soalaupule Ecosystem Framework (the "Framework"). The Framework highlights the importance of collectivism and natural supports within Pacific communities. It recognises that when decisions are made, everyone who needs to be involved is consulted, and the final decision is based on consensus. At the core of the Framework are the Pacific values of family, collectivism,

consensus, reciprocity, respect, spirituality, love and culture, which are seen throughout the ecosystem.

Health inequities for Pacific peoples and families are well-documented across different life stages. Life expectancy for Pacific peoples is five and a half years lower than for Europeans. Pacific women are less likely than other women to receive high-quality maternity care and this has been linked to an increased risk for both pregnant women and their babies. Pacific children and adults also experience higher rates of preventable illnesses and hospitalisations. These, and other health inequities, are linked to differences in access to high-quality health care and the socioeconomic factors of health, which limit opportunities for Pacific peoples to achieve the best possible health for themselves and their families.

Less well-documented are health outcomes and information about health care access, experience and quality of care for tagata sa'ilimalo (Pacific people with disabilities, their families and carers).

What people told us

An extensive engagement process was held in March and April 2023, which included more than 40 fono (meetings) with Pacific communities and health care providers throughout Aotearoa. These fono included diverse perspectives, including many voices that have not been given prominence in the current health system. We heard from Pacific peoples living in urban and rural areas of

Aotearoa, tagata sa'ilimalo, youth, older people, people identifying as part of Pasifika rainbow+ communities, people with lived experience of mental health and addictions, families living with and looking after people with chronic illnesses, health care workers, educators, researchers and people working in government and non-governmental organisations.

Pacific peoples told us that keeping people well, preventing illness before it happens and treating disease early was important. They also stressed the importance of healthy neighbourhoods. People were concerned about increasing the availability of affordable, healthy food, limiting the availability of tobacco, vaping, alcohol and fast food, and ensuring that everyone, including tagata sa'ilimalo, are able to access safe spaces for regular physical activity. People also told us they wanted to see a particular focus on women and children, recognising the youthfulness of Pacific populations and the importance of ensuring the future Pacific workforce is healthy and well. Pacific communities want to partner with health providers and organisations in prevention, health promotion and treatment efforts.

Pacific peoples reported that current health services do not meet their health and wellbeing needs. They want services that view health holistically and cater to the needs of everyone in their family. People also told us they find the current health system hard to access, complicated and difficult to understand.

Pacific health care workers and providers are deeply valued. However, there are currently inadequate numbers of Pacific people working in the health system and many people are exhausted from the stresses of the pandemic. Pacific health care workers want to feel valued for their clinical, cultural and language skills, and to have opportunities to grow and progress in their work, including in leadership roles.

Priority areas

Te Mana Ola's five key priority areas are:

Priority 1: Population health.

The health system works with communities and government and non-government agencies to build, maintain and enable strong foundations for Pacific health and wellbeing.

This means working closely with communities to be well and stay well. It includes supporting initiatives that ensure all families can live in warm, dry houses and in healthy neighbourhoods where there is easy access to healthy, affordable food and safe spaces for everyone, including tagata sa'ilimalo, to exercise regularly. It also includes supporting communities and increasing Pacific voices on limiting the availability of fast food, cigarettes, vapes, alcohol and gambling.

Priority 2: Prioritising disease prevention, health promotion and good health and wellbeing at all ages and stages of life.

This includes services that are holistic, centred around families and address all aspects of health, including social and financial supports. It also means a focus on the health of women and children, ensuring that children get the best start in life and young people can learn and achieve to their full potential. It also includes supporting people with chronic conditions and their families to receive the best possible care and feel confident in managing their conditions and accessing services when needed.

Priority 3: Better understanding the needs of Pacific peoples and communities and supporting them in their health and wellbeing.

This includes meaningful engagement with families and communities, ensuring that we increase and embed the diverse voices of Pacific peoples across Aotearoa to ensure health services meet their needs. It also includes ensuring we have regular, accurate data for designing health policies and services and robust research, which is driven by Pacific families and communities, to keep improving the health system.

Priority 4: Ensuring that Pacific peoples receive high-quality services, wherever they live.

This priority recognises and aims to eliminate the many barriers to care that people experience, such as cost, transport, opening hours and location. It aims to ensure that health services are accessible for everyone, including tagata sa'ilimalo, and that people understand the full range of supports and services that are available. Support for effective communication, including easy-to-understand language and terminology, interpreters and accessible formats, are part of this priority.

It includes recognising and eliminating all forms of racism and discrimination (such as gender bias, ableism, ageism, homophobia and transphobia) in the health system. There is also a focus on increasing the number and support for by-Pacific for-Pacific services (including community-led solutions and ensuring all Pacific communities, including those living in rural areas, have the option of accessing Pacific providers).

Priority 5: Growing and supporting strong Pacific health leadership and a resilient Pacific health workforce.

This recognises Pacific peoples' desire to see themselves reflected in the health care workforce and the valuable contribution made by Pacific health care workers. Focus

areas include increasing the number of Pacific health care workers through training and recruitment of more regulated health care workers (for example, doctors, nurses, pharmacists) and non-regulated health care workers (for example, community support workers, health care assistants and carers). This includes opportunities for tagata sa'ilimalo and people with lived experience of mental health and addictions to formally enter the health workforce.

It also includes valuing Pacific health care workers already in the system, ensuring they have opportunities to work at the top of their scope of practice as well as take up leadership roles within the health system.

The full version of the strategy can be found here: **Te Mana Ola: The Pacific Health Strategy | Ministry of Health NZ** (www.health.govt.nz/publication/te-mana-ola-pacific-health-strategy)

End of Summary—Te Mana Ola: The Pacific Health Strategy 2023