

# Briefing to the Minister



## Publication of Te Rau Tira Wellbeing Outcomes Report 2021

<b>Date due to MO:</b>	19 November 2021	<b>Action required:</b>	FYI
<b>Security level:</b>	IN CONFIDENCE	<b>Briefing number:</b>	BN2021-007
<b>To:</b>	Hon Andrew Little, Minister of Health		
<b>Copy to:</b>	Hon Minister Peeni Henare, Associate Minister of Health (Māori Health), Hon Minister Aupito William Sio, Associate Minister of Health (Pacific Health)		

### Contact for telephone discussion

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### Signed:



Karen Orsborn  
**Chief Executive**  
**Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission**

Hon Andrew Little  
**Minister of Health**

### Minister's Office:

Comment:

## Purpose

1. The Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission's **Te Rau Tira Wellbeing Outcomes Report 2021** (Te Rau Tira) is now complete and is scheduled to be published early December 2021. This briefing summarises its key findings and recommendations.
2. A copy of Te Rau Tira is attached at Appendix 1.

## Key points

3. Te Rau Tira is a scene-setting report. It describes how the Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission (the Commission) thinks about and measures wellbeing for all communities in Aotearoa New Zealand against agreed indicators and illustrates how wellbeing is not experienced equitably by our priority populations.
4. Te Rau Tira uses the **He Ara Oranga Wellbeing Outcomes Framework** – a view of wellbeing understood through 12 domains, each supplemented by descriptions of what good wellbeing will look like in the future. Through these domains, it provides a view of what good wellbeing looks like from a **Te Ao Māori perspective** and a **Shared perspective**, for everyone in Aotearoa.
5. The report largely draws on existing public datasets to measure wellbeing against the framework, with recent research and analysis to show wellbeing for sub-populations, and where Covid-19 has been seen to amplify inequities in wellbeing for marginalised communities. It uses personas (crafted stories) to reflect the multifaceted aspects of wellbeing and identity.
6. There is a positive story of the growth of Māori collective strength, and wellbeing / oranga - while at the same time, there continues to be a disproportionate number of Māori individuals and whānau who are not doing well and are experiencing poor wellbeing across multiple dimensions.
7. Communities in Aotearoa tend to experience good wellbeing, most of the time – however, we know a concerningly large minority experiences persistently poor wellbeing.
8. The need to listen to and work alongside people with highest need and those disproportionately experiencing inequity, is made apparent by our report.
9. The report gives us a platform on which to record progress – or comment on departures from expected progress over time. The Commission will use the He Ara Oranga Wellbeing Outcomes Framework to monitor and report on changes in wellbeing.

10. Better quality data is required to properly understand wellbeing. In particular, information to understand the Te Ao Māori view, and to understand the needs of specific communities (such as rainbow communities and veterans) where data is extremely limited and de-prioritised for collection by the system.
11. In summary, we note that it will take time for investment in wellbeing across the many key indicators identified to lift outcomes and ensure support contributes to positive wellbeing for marginalised communities.
12. The Commission has identified that further focused work is needed on:
  - a. developing and delivering a plan under Kia Manawanui, which reflects the needs and aspirations of marginalised communities
  - b. high trust and collaborative work with communities and providers
  - c. simplified access to Government support for marginalised communities
  - d. coordinated cross-government engagement with communities
  - e. better data collection, and alignment between collections and wellbeing outcomes.
13. A focus on housing, young people, Māori, and the impacts of Covid-19 across intersecting populations will inform the Commission's work programme for the 2022 / 23 year and may include commissioning of further analysis where information gaps exist.

## Recommendations

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission recommends that you:

- a. **note** the attached report: **Te Rau Tira Wellbeing Outcomes Report 2021**
- b. **note** the Commission intends to proactively release this briefing as part of our proactive release policy
- c. **note** the attached communications to be released alongside the report.

## Attachments

- Attachment 1: **Te Rau Tira Wellbeing Outcomes Report 2021**
- Attachment 2: Communications Plan key messages

## Outline

14. The report's title "**Te Rau Tira**" – is about the many or a large group travelling on the route or path to wellbeing. It indicates heroic attributes and movement of a large group travelling with a purpose.
15. The report describes the framework we use to articulate what wellbeing means and should be for the people of Aotearoa: **He Ara Oranga Wellbeing Outcomes Framework**. The framework applies 12 domains – measures of wellbeing and describes what good looks like from both a Te Ao Māori perspective and a shared perspective for everyone in Aotearoa.
16. The report relies on two social surveys the General Social Survey and Te Kupenga for many indicators to explain measures and attributes of wellbeing. These sources provide a 2018 view of wellbeing; a baseline before the impacts of He Ara Oranga, the Wellbeing Budget, and Covid-19 can be observed.
17. In this way, the data shows the 'old normal' our existing systems have got us. We have incorporated existing research and analysis to highlight the experience of marginalised communities, and the observed impacts of Covid-19 on wellbeing. Constructed 'personas' connect with readers at an emotional level about how wellbeing can be improved. They aim to show the complex lives and facets of wellbeing for people in Aotearoa.
18. The Wellbeing report provides a set of recommendations and focus areas for the Commission, as outlined under 'key points' above. The Commission welcomes your comments on the report's findings and recommendations as set out below.

## Findings

19. The Māori perspective shows a growing story of cultural and collective strength that should enable Māori to better determine their own future. In doing so, it highlights where supporting Māori may improve future outcomes.
20. The shared perspective shows that most people report good or very good wellbeing, across a range of measures and perspectives.
21. However, these data show us that Māori do not experience the same rights to freedom, wellbeing, safety, and prosperity as the rest the population. On average, Māori report experiencing lower levels of trust in others, poorer financial wellbeing, more racial discrimination, and lower levels of mental wellbeing. In the face of that, Māori report average life satisfaction only slightly lower than the general population.
22. Poorer wellbeing across many domains can be seen in the experience of Pacific peoples, former refugees and migrants, veterans, disabled people, prisoners,

people in rainbow communities, people in rural communities, older people, young people, children in state care, children experiencing adverse events, and people with lived experience of mental distress or addiction (or both), and the whānau, families, and people who support them.

23. Noteworthy is our country's performance under Covid-19. In 2020, Aotearoa was one of only three countries (of 37 upper-middle and high-income countries studied) where life expectancy increased. However, the impacts have fallen unevenly across groups of people. We intend to monitor this and report what our communities are telling us about their experiences as marginalised communities seeking to participate in society and how this is hampered by the pandemic (over and above existing barriers to usual participation).

### **Te Rau Tira includes advice for government**

24. The Commission would like to see and will support improvements that:

- a. develop and deliver a plan under Kia Manawanui, which reflects the needs and aspirations of marginalised communities
- b. cement gains the country has made through its COVID-19 response by adopting high-trust and collaborative community approaches
- c. simplify access to support offered by government agencies through a trauma-informed approach to customer service that makes interactions easier for people and brings services together
- d. co-ordinate cross-government engagement with communities to facilitate an inclusive, holistic approach to consultation that avoids consultation fatigue and is backed up by concrete responses to communities' concerns
- e. collect and make available quality data more frequently (a change that should also apply to Te Kupenga, a world-leading source of information for monitoring the wellbeing of Māori from a Māori perspective)
- f. better align the He Ara Oranga Wellbeing Outcomes Framework and other agencies' social wellbeing surveys to improve the consistency of reporting, and of indicators and stewardship of policy.

25. To improve the wellbeing of all in Aotearoa, we will also:

- a. advocate for marginalised communities that would benefit most from improvements to mental health and wellbeing systems, including, as a first priority, conducting analysis into, and offering advice on, the wellbeing of Māori and young people to inform work by government agencies

- b. advocate for action on the social and systemic factors that improve wellbeing as well as mental health and addiction services for those in need, including by partnering with agencies at all levels, and developing advice to improve the role of housing in wellbeing
- c. collate, develop, and share guidance on the barriers to improved wellbeing and provide advice on the factors that can lift wellbeing for marginalised people.

### Related ongoing work

26. The Commission will encourage other agencies to adopt and use the framework. In this way, wellbeing measures will become more consistently applied over time and gain credibility across government agencies. This will be supported by information on the creation of the framework and its interaction with other agencies' own frameworks.
27. We expect to publish two data and analytical reports that informed Te Rau Tira. We commissioned [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to undertake analytical research on:
- a. quantifying wellbeing through our framework and producing a useable data set for analysis [REDACTED] and
  - b. identifying the factors that appear to influence wellbeing through our framework [REDACTED]
28. These reports will enable researchers to draw conclusions from the information presented and analysed. The data are a useful resource, and we will make it available.
29. We note that currency of data sources has been an issue. We welcome proposed national surveys such as the Disability Survey by Stats NZ in 2023 as an important contributor to maintaining accessible large scale / representative population data necessary for service planning and monitoring of marginalised communities. The Commission has engaged actively with Stats NZ on the proposed survey design.

### Consultation

30. The Ministry of Health (the Ministry) has been consulted on the draft report. The feedback was positive, and their comments have been incorporated, where possible. Some feedback (relating to use, detail, and availability of data) will be addressed through the publication of our data reports (as above) or will be considered for future iterations of the Te Rau Tira report, as data become available.

31. External peer reviewers provided feedback on the draft report.

**Next steps**

32. The Commission has attached a communications plan as Appendix 2. Our media release will be provided to your office ahead of publication.

33. The Commission welcomes your comments on the report and recommendations that feed into our work programme for the 2022 / 23 year.

34. The Commission will publish the report in early December 2021.

**ENDS**