

Briefing

COVID-19 Insights Paper for publication: Exercising of rangatiratanga during the COVID-19 pandemic

Date due to MO:	02/05/2023	Action required by:	11/05/2023
Security level:	UNCLASSIFIED	Briefing number:	BN2023-014
To:	Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall, Minister of Health		
Copy to:	Hon Peeni Henare, Associate Minister of Health (Māori Health) Hon Barbara Edmonds, Associate Minister of Health (Pacific Peoples) [REDACTED]		

Contact for Telephone Discussion

Name	Position
Karen Orsborn	Chief Executive
Matthew Bloomer	Acting Director Wellbeing System Leadership

Minister's Office to Complete

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approved | <input type="checkbox"/> Decline | <input type="checkbox"/> Noted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs change | <input type="checkbox"/> Seen | <input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by event |
| <input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's note | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn | |

Comment:

COVID-19 Insights Paper for publication: Exercising of rangatiratanga during the COVID-19 pandemic

Security level:	UNCLASSIFIED	Date:	2/05/2023
To:	Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall, Minister of Health		

Purpose

1. On 11 May 2023, Te Hiringa Mahara intends to publish the attached paper outlining Māori expressions of tino rangatiratanga through the pandemic.

Executive Summary

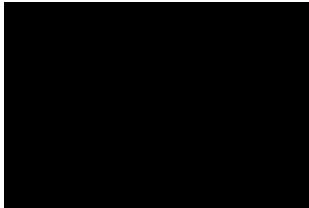
2. On 11 May 2023, we will publish 'Exercising of rangatiratanga during the COVID-19 pandemic', the sixth of eight COVID-19 insights reports. This paper outlines how Māori, across Aotearoa, exercised tino rangatiratanga through the pandemic, to support wellbeing of their communities.
3. In short, Māori exercising tino rangatiratanga throughout the pandemic shows that Māori have the knowledge and skills to support the wellbeing of their whānau and communities:
 - Exercising tino rangatiratanga is both a contributor to a range of wellbeing outcomes, and a positive part of wellbeing in itself, for iwi, hapū, and whānau.
 - Māori didn't just respond to the pandemic, they built on a lot of work already done in a way that: was grounded in tikanga Māori and mātauranga Māori; built on established networks and relationships; and was agile and adaptive.
 - Māori-led initiatives shared information and resources; protected the health and wellbeing of communities; and supported connection with individuals and whānau, and with culture and knowledge.
 - Exercising tino rangatiratanga throughout the pandemic shows that rangatiratanga is still practiced today - Māori know what to do, and need support and resources to deliver for their communities.
4. A media release and LinkedIn post will be made alongside publication. Te Hiringa Mahara will respond to media interest; no specific media appearances are planned.
5. The paper and a high-level communications plan are attached, for your information. The media release, key messages, and a Q&A will be shared with your office before the publication date.

Recommendations

We recommend you:

- a) **note**, on 11 May 2023, subject to minor editing changes, Te Hiringa Mahara will publish the attached report on *Expressions of rangatiratanga during the COVID-19 pandemic* **Yes / No**

- b) **note** we intend to release this briefing under our proactive release policy **Yes / No**



Karen Orsborn
Chief Executive
Date: 2/05/2023

Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall
Minister of Health
Date:



COVID-19 Insights Paper for publication: Exercising of rangatiratanga during the COVID-19 pandemic

Background

6. As noted in previous briefings [BN2023-012, and others], we have published five of eight insights reports to be produced as part of our Covid-19 Impacts Insights Programme.
7. The programme provides short, accessible, focused reports in an agile way. It cannot provide a comprehensive view of the impacts of Covid-19; it provides key insights on wellbeing areas or populations of focus.
8. This sixth report in the series draws academic and 'grey' literature, and engagement with communities and leaders, to describe and learn from Māori exercising tino rangatiratanga through the pandemic.

Summary of findings

9. For Māori, wellbeing is collective, and exercising tino rangatiratanga is both a contributor to a range of wellbeing outcomes, and a positive part of wellbeing in itself, for iwi, hapū, and whanau.
10. Māori, particularly through these collectives, have been exercising tino rangatiratanga in the face of challenges throughout their history. Recognising this history, Māori identified flaws or gaps in the nation-wide pandemic responses, from the beginning.
11. In the face of COVID-19, Māori didn't just respond, they built on a lot of work already done in a way that was grounded in tikanga Māori and mātauranga Māori; built on established networks and relationships; and was agile and adaptive.
 - Marae across Aotearoa developed pandemic plans that adapted tikanga and kawa. This was seen in hapū and marae committees temporarily closing their marae; in new approaches to tangihanga, despite the huge personal and spiritual impacts this had; and in many changes to the way people interacted in face-to-face settings, to prevent the spread of disease.
 - Almost 50 roadside checkpoints were developed, resourced and led by Māori, staffed by volunteers, and often operated with co-operation of NZ Police. The checkpoints provided an additional layer of protection for entire communities, including Māori and non-Māori. Checkpoints also were invaluable for communicating information and contributing to a sense of trust between government agencies and community.
 - As the pandemic progressed, Māori responses also evolved, demonstrating tino rangatiratanga through identifying and managing risk unique to their own

communities. Māori-led actions continued to protect the community, such as through establishing Te Roopū Whakakaupapa Urutā; advocating, promoting and actively supporting COVID-19 vaccinations; and opting to keep kohanga reo closed, to continue protection of their communities. Through Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies, Māori were engaged and able to guide the allocation of Government funding, made available to support Māori.

- Many hapu, iwi, marae, and Māori organisations and community groups organised and delivered resources to members of the community. Many initiatives were supported by Māori and non-Māori businesses, and priority was given to vulnerable members of the community. The distribution of resources to whānau was made possible by the rapid mobilisation and leverage of existing networks, to identify where the areas of need were, and to access and distribute resources.
- Māori networks played a critical role in conveying COVID-19 related information to communities throughout and beyond the lockdown period. This included ensuring access to the government public health messages, and prioritising reaching parts of the community that can be hard to reach.
- Māori innovated through the use of online spaces and digital technology, to build and maintain connections, share knowledge and support. Digital platforms provided a way for people to keep busy, to learn different skills, to connect with others or for pleasure and amusement. Online innovations enabled Māori to maintain whanaungatanga through the promotion of specifically Māori material.

12. Exercising of tino rangatiratanga throughout the pandemic shows that rangatiratanga was never lost and is still practiced today. Māori know what to do, and need support and resources to deliver for their communities. In this way, the pandemic responses have shone a light on how Aotearoa can support health and wellbeing outcomes in a future pandemic, and support wellbeing more generally.

- Iwi and Māori communities should be recognised as self-reliant and strong in the face of myriad adversities, not vulnerable. To recognise and release these strengths, and to uphold its Te Tiriti obligations, Government needs to deliver systemic and structural changes that mitigate against existing inequities and institutional racism that underpin many Māori disparities in health and wellbeing.
- Tino rangatiratanga should be recognised, respected, and supported. The Crown has a duty to protect tino rangatiratanga, and to do so, should recognise and honour tino rangatiratanga across policy and practice, and ensure that Māori have the resource and mandate to enable rangatiratanga to be enacted.
- Opportunities to build true partnership abound, and the Crown and its representatives will need to trust and be trustworthy in their approaches. To support health and wellbeing outcomes, Government must ensure that specific Māori needs are addressed, and deliver this by partnering with Māori, listening to Māori, and supporting Māori to do what they know is right.
- High quality research and data will support iwi and Māori responses, and will help build the trust needed for partnership. Incomplete data makes it challenging for Māori organisations and providers to understand how their communities are affected, and help guide responses.

Communications Plan

13. A high-level communications plan is attached for your information. Key points are:
 - A media release will support publication of the reports, and a LinkedIn post will be made alongside publication.
 - Te Hiringa Mahara will front any media interest. No media appearances are planned, but Te Hiringa Mahara Director Māori Maraea Johns will be the primary spokesperson for any media interest. She will be supported by Chief Executive Karen Orsborn, as required.

Next Steps

14. The media release, key messages, and a Q&A will be shared with your office before the publication date.
15. Subject to minor editorial changes, on 11 May 2023, the report will be published to the Te Hiringa Mahara website, the media release will be sent to news media, and an announcement posted to LinkedIn.
16. The paper's summary pages, including high-level recommendations, will also be translated into te reo Māori for publication as an accompanying document.

