

Whakamōhiotanga whānui | Overall summary

Purpose and context

The purpose of this paper is to examine equity issues in the provision of kaupapa Māori mental health and addiction services. We do this through presenting Māori perspectives on the current landscape of kaupapa Māori services and on what equitable services would look like. We also give an overview of the investment in and access to kaupapa Māori mental health and addiction services.

The context for this paper is the higher prevalence of Māori mental health needs relative to other ethnic groups and the Crown failure to address Māori health inequities. While the Government has made commitments to address Māori health inequities and there have been shifts towards equity, much more needs to be done.

The current landscape

We heard of a persistent lack of recognition and respect for mātauranga Māori. This was reflected in the funding and contracting of kaupapa Māori services which were commonly considered to restrict referral pathways and services offered.

Changes to achieve equity

We heard – again – that whānau must determine and lead their own pathways to pae ora, mauri ora, and whānau ora. Contracts can and must enable kaupapa Māori services to work in kaupapa Māori ways. Further improvement within the current system includes monitoring service delivery for Māori with a focus on progress towards equity. More widely, systemic change is required to address structural factors that contribute to inequity.

Investment and access

Over the last five years (2017/18 to 2021/22) there has been an increase in the total investment in mental health and addiction services and in kaupapa Māori mental health and addiction services. However, the annual proportion of the total mental health and addiction spending going to kaupapa Māori services has stayed at around 10 to 11 per cent over the last 5 years. Each year over the last five years, less than a third of Māori who access specialist mental health and addiction services have had access to kaupapa Māori services.

The Government's recent decision to commit 20 per cent of the Access and Choice

programme's funding to kaupapa Māori services is a positive step forward. However, more investment is needed in kaupapa Māori services to lift the annual proportion of spending from 11 per cent, and closer to the level invested through the Access and Choice programme. This would contribute to all Māori having the choice of accessing kaupapa Māori services.

The changes we want to see

- Increased investment in kaupapa Māori services to address inequities in the funding model, including an equitable allocation of any new mental health and addictions investment to kaupapa Māori services.
- The use of commissioning approaches that recognise mana motuhake and tino rangatiratanga and enable Māori providers to design and provide services appropriate to their communities.
- Priority given to commissioning a comprehensive mental health and addiction prevalence survey.