

Te Rau Tira – Wellbeing Outcomes Report 2021

Summary

Flourishing together – this is our vision for wellbeing in Aotearoa. We at the Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission have the role of monitoring and advocating for improved wellbeing for people in Aotearoa, and the He Ara Oranga Wellbeing Outcomes Framework provides the basis for doing that.

Our framework looks at wellbeing through 12 domains: six from a Te Ao Māori perspective and six from a shared perspective, for everyone in Aotearoa.

Through data and stories from across the motu, this report highlights where wellbeing is good, and where it is not. The Māori perspective reveals a growing cultural and collective strength that can enable Māori to determine their own future. The shared perspective show that, for many of us, Aotearoa is a great place to live, but we see large differences in wellbeing for marginalised populations. We know already that the burden of disease and the wider wellbeing effects of COVID-19 are being felt more heavily by some groups. These effects will become even more apparent over time.

Using data from 2018, we show what ‘the old normal’ has meant for people’s wellbeing. The available data has limitations in its availability, timeliness and quality, so is not a complete picture. Rather, it provides a starting point to pursue the ‘new normal’ we want for Aotearoa.

We can already see that more needs to be done, and done differently, to improve wellbeing. We would like to see, and will support, improvements that:

- cement gains the country has made through its COVID-19 response by adopting high-trust and collaborative community approaches
- 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
- 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
- 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)
- align the He Ara Oranga Wellbeing Outcomes Framework more closely with other agencies’ social wellbeing surveys to improve the consistency of reporting, and of indicators and stewardship of policy.

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

- advocate for marginalised populations that would benefit most from improvements to mental health, addiction and wellbeing systems, including, as a first priority, conducting research into, and offering advice on, the wellbeing of Māori and young people to inform work by government agencies
- 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
- collate, develop and share guidance on the barriers to improved wellbeing and conduct research and provide advice on the factors that can lift wellbeing for marginalised populations.

Lifting wellbeing requires a shift in public policy that reflects what wellbeing really means for communities in Aotearoa. Greater wellbeing for all will require concerted action across government, the private sector and communities. It will take time for any investment in wellbeing to flow through to communities, and for this to be reflected in the data. We hope our insights into wellbeing provide useful guidance to those setting and implementing public policy about where to direct investment.