



Public Health Association
of New Zealand
Kāhui Hauora Tūmatanui
o Aotearoa

From
vulnerable
to
vibrant

TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES IN PUBLIC HEALTH

PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION (PHANZ) CONFERENCE 2024

INSIGHTS REPORT

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FOREWORD

Kei ngā pā kai ahi huri noa, tēna koutou katoa,

“He aha te mea nui o tēnei ao, he tangata, he tangata.” Looking back on our recent conference, these words ring true. The statements from the keynote speakers and conversations among the attendees made it clear that the heartbeat of our world lies within the people – the people working in the public health sector who are trying to make a difference for those they serve.

As we gathered, diverse voices came together, sharing ideas and building connections. From leaders to frontline workers across various communities, each person contributed something unique.

Our goal was simple – to create a space where everyone felt valued and inspired, a place to ‘fill their cup’, and I’m proud to say we achieved just that.

Looking forward, let’s advance our progress and commit to listening, learning, and collaborating for positive change. It’s important to remember that people and our collective efforts are crucial in addressing our challenges.

‘Vulnerable to Vibrant’ sets the scene for us to transform adversity into vibrant opportunities.

Naku iti nei,

Dr Cadence Kaumoana

Chief Executive of the Public Health Association of New Zealand

INTRODUCTION

The Public Health Association of New Zealand (PHANZ) Conference 2024 unfolded over three transformative days, drawing together a diverse group of over 200 individuals. Under the theme “From Vulnerable to Vibrant: Transformative Approaches in Public Health,” attendees eagerly arrived with a collective commitment to shaping the future of public health in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

This event became a platform for honest discussions, enlightening presentations, and collaborative exchanges, all aimed at charting the course for a healthier, more equitable society. Against the backdrop of an evolving health landscape, attendees looked at existing and new interventions, investment strategies, policy frameworks, and community-driven initiatives, and each intended to create positive change and drive communities towards vibrancy across the board of public health.

Keynote speaker Sir Collin Tukuitonga captured the essence of the conference ethos, reminding the sector that “Public Health isn’t just about a set of actions—it reflects our shared values and community collaboration.” He emphasised, “Despite any perceived challenges to our profession’s image, we are a collective of remarkable individuals capable of achieving great impact. We must work together and commit to consistently doing what’s right, uplifting ourselves and those we serve.”

After almost six years since the last gathering, this event reminded us of what we’ve achieved and what’s left to do. It allowed us to start fresh and discuss how to continue serving our communities better.

Despite any perceived challenges to our profession’s image, we are a collective of remarkable individuals capable of achieving great impact. We must work together and commit to consistently doing what’s right, uplifting ourselves and those we serve.



The Public Health Association created not only the in-person conference but also a series of supplementary events spanning the entire week:

- Monday, April 8, a webinar acknowledged Global Public Health Week. It covered topics ranging from addressing long-term Covid to co-designing solutions for non-communicable diseases, emphasising culturally appropriate practices and community-based interventions.
- Tuesday, April 9, another webinar was held, focussing on promoting cultural humanity, accessibility, equity, inclusion, and self-care strategies, particularly those that address poverty, inequity, and healthcare accessibility for marginalised communities.
- Wednesday, April 10, hosted a wānanga for the Māori Public Health workforce to inspire and network. At the same time, the Pacific Fono convened to recognise and address the unique challenges faced by the Pacific workforce.
- Thursday, April 11, marked a full day of discussions with sector leaders, indicating a strong desire among the workforce to shape a new future. The evening celebrated organisations and groups championing public sector work at the PHANZ awards ceremony.
- Friday, April 12, attendees continued to fill their kete with inspiring knowledge from keynote speakers, data analysts, and panel discussions.

The full schedule for the week can be found in the Appendix.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the PHANZ Conference, we examined New Zealand's public health landscape in depth, uncovering challenges and opportunities for transformative change.

Despite ongoing health research efforts, the conference shed light on the inequities, especially among Māori and Pacific communities

In response to these challenges, sector leaders echoed the need for a multidisciplinary approach and a resilient workforce capable of navigating complex health issues, particularly during times of real need.

There was a consensus on the disproportionately low investment in public health, emphasising the importance of increased funding and the necessity of demonstrating the broader societal value of public health initiatives.

Leadership was a focal point, with speakers and attendees calling for honesty,

accountability, and a commitment to upholding Te Tiriti, including addressing systemic racism.

Empowering communities and embracing grassroots solutions emerged as key strategies, with a strong call to devolve leadership to those communities' leaders.

A holistic approach to public health was advocated, emphasising the importance of addressing the underlying determinants of health, with a particular focus on mental wellness and social cohesion.

Speakers highlighted the significance of storytelling as a tool for advocating change, urging new ways to bring public health to decision-making tables.

Ultimately, driving positive change in public health requires persistence, courage, and resilience from the entire health and social ecosystem.

BACKGROUND

The Public Health Association of New Zealand aims to host an annual conference to bring together the public health sector, including health professionals, researchers, policymakers, and community advocates. The conference was created to provide a space where the public health sector workforce can share transformational practices and feel heard and valued by having robust discussions on pressing public health issues.



This year's conference focused on prioritising Māori and Pacific voices and inclusivity, inviting Ethnic and Migrant communities to share perspectives on health equity and systemic change.

Clear aims guided this year's conference:

- To have voices of health leadership to ensure effective communication of government priorities across the sector.
- To ensure Māori and Pacific community representation was seen and heard across all conference discussions, a commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and honouring the va between tangata whenua and tangata moana.
- Providing diversity and inclusivity with the Asian and migrant communities to ensure representation of voice in public health practice and policy.
- Having the voices and perspectives of leadership figures for frontline workers in practical and relevant discussions is important.
- Recognising the work of individuals and groups in driving progress in public health.
- Building connections and partnerships across the sector to address complex public health challenges.
- Growing and empowering leadership.
- Providing time and space for the Māori and Pacific workforces to wānanga and talanoa in a culturally safe way and to hear and respond to leadership, empowerment and transformational practice messages.

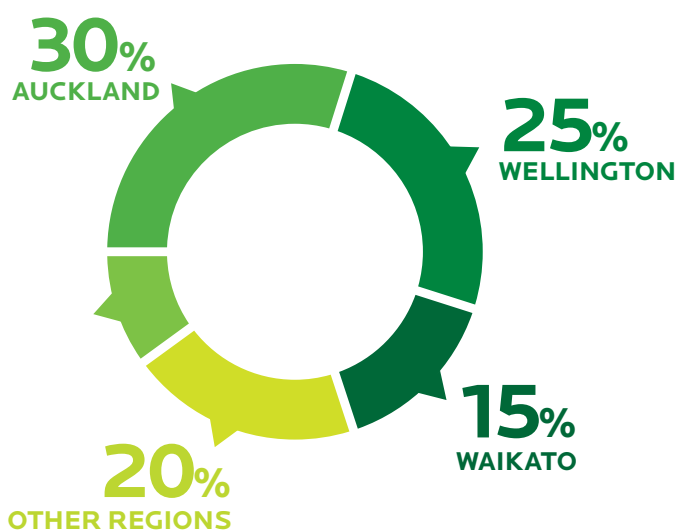
2.1 CONFERENCE DEMOGRAPHICS OVERVIEW

This section provides a snapshot of the 200+ varied participants who attended the PHANZ conference 2024.

Who attended?



Where they came from?



Cultural gatherings



WHAT DOES THIS TELL US?

The data indicates that the conference was strongly represented in various sectors, with Auckland and Wellington as key locations.

It also showed a close collaboration between academics and healthcare, showing an interdisciplinary approach within public health roles

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WEEK'S EVENTS

A SNAPSHOT OF THE PRE-EVENTS ONLINE

Two online webinars were organised before the main PHANZ Conference to set the tone for important discussions and insights. These webinars allowed people unable to attend the in-person meetings to be part of the discussions, offering a glimpse into the key topics that would be further explored during the main event. This report provides a high-level overview of the online webinars.



GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK WEBINAR

Monday 8 April

This webinar brought together experts and sector stakeholders to discuss critical issues shaping public health strategies and interventions. Sessions covered diverse topics such as the enduring impact of COVID-19, transformative approaches to public health, co-designing solutions for non-communicable diseases, Māori and Pacific birthing practices, and local public health projects.

ONLINE WEBINAR

Tuesday 9 April

This webinar brought together experts and sector stakeholders to discuss critical issues shaping public health strategies and interventions. Sessions covered diverse topics such as the enduring impact of COVID-19, transformative approaches to public health, co-designing solutions for non-communicable diseases, Māori and Pacific birthing practices, and local public health projects.

MĀORI AND PACIFIC WORKFORCE VIEWS

Below is a summary of discussions from the Māori and Pacific workforce gatherings. The Māori wānanga and Pacific Fono were held simultaneously, each following its own cultural protocols and agenda.

Both groups found common ground in addressing health inequities and sharing cultural intelligence and whakapapa as they delved into unconventional topics like maramataka (Māori lunar calendar) and the stars, expanding their perspectives.

4.1 KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE MĀORI WĀNANGA

Holistic health approaches:

Presentations emphasised holistic approaches to 'ora' and health, addressing physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing. Stress management and trauma healing techniques were shared to provide the workforce with practical tools to share with staff and the communities they deal with.

Addressing systemic challenges:

Discussions on racism, bias, and discrimination underscored the need for systemic change within the health sector, advocating for equity and empowerment.

Personal and professional development:

Participants reflected on personal growth and cultural rediscovery, recognising the significance of indigenous knowledge and practices in their professional and personal lives.



4.2 MĀORI WĀNANGA – A SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS



Stacey McGregor and Sharon Shea from Manawaroa, an organisation focused on oranga-centred learning and support, shared insights into their programmes to uplift mauri and mana. Their workshop offered practical tools for managing stress and trauma in the workplace, at home, and within communities, benefiting attendees and their organisations.



The session also discussed harmful behaviour patterns and the importance of tackling racism, bias, and discrimination in healthcare. It emphasised equity and Māori rights as tangata whenua, highlighting challenges in expressing and justifying them.



Rikki Soloman, a maramataka expert and doctoral scholar from NKOTM Limited, discussed strategies and holistic approaches to hauora, reminding the room about the interconnectedness of rangi (sky), whenua (land), and moana (ocean). The workshop was seen as an opportunity for emotional healing and a renewed commitment to advocating for indigenous rights and wellbeing.

4.3 KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE PACIFIC FONO

Workforce attractiveness:

Making the public health workforce more attractive was a key focus. Discussions acknowledged the shortage of workers and highlighted challenges like the age gap and respect dynamics between Pacific elders and younger generations. They stressed the importance of considering these factors when creating health solutions for Pacific communities.

GP shortage:

Attendees discussed the harmful effects of the shortage of General Practitioners (GPs) on Pacific peoples' healthcare access. Overcrowded clinics often turn people away, forcing them to seek medical help elsewhere or travel long distances. There was a unanimous agreement that this issue greatly affects healthcare accessibility for Pacific communities.

Readiness and Purpose:

Questions arose about the healthcare sector's readiness and purpose in addressing challenges faced by Pacific communities. Attendees debated the effectiveness of current systems and the readiness of the workforce. While acknowledging the complexity of immediate fixes, there was a shared belief in the importance of confronting these issues and seeking practical solutions.



4.4 PACIFIC FONO – A SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

The Pacific Fono centred on themes critical to the Pacific public health sector.



Tagaloa Dr Junior Ulu led discussions on Pacific leadership and resilience. Attendees explored community bonds, cultural strength, and ways to nurture leadership in Pacific communities.



In the second session, facilitated by Api Poutasi and Dr Aumea Herman, Pacific leadership and development themes were further explored. Participants discussed health priorities, strategies for tackling health challenges, and the role of leadership in improving health outcomes in Pacific communities.



Conversations centred on establishing Pacific networks to address health issues, including communicable and non-communicable diseases. Dr Aumea Herman emphasised the importance of setting priorities and managing expectations in health interventions.

OVERARCHING KEY THEMES

FROM THE PUBLIC HEALTH CONFERENCE

The following themes provide an overarching view of what was captured from presentations, discussions, and questions during the conference.

1 Recognising Inequities and Challenges

Despite efforts by Pacific and Māori communities, persistent inequities remain, especially highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic. This emphasises the need for targeted interventions and systemic changes to address health disparities effectively.

2 Need for Diverse Workforce and Resilience

There was a strong call for a multidisciplinary workforce to help tackle the complex public health challenges. Speakers highlighted the importance of resilience and adaptability, especially during crises, emphasising the importance of equipping the workforce with diverse skills and expertise.

3 Challenges in Funding and Policy

Despite its critical role, public health receives a small share of total health spending. Speakers and attendees advocated for increased investment, stressing the importance of demonstrating the broader societal value of public health initiatives beyond economic benefits to influence policy effectively.

4 Leadership and Integrity

Effective leadership in public health was portrayed as requiring integrity, courage, and accountability. Upholding principles of equity, particularly through honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi and combating racism, was highlighted as essential for transformative leadership approaches.

5 Community Empowerment and Grassroots Solutions

A recurring theme was the importance of empowering marginalised communities through community-led approaches and tribal self-governance. Collaboration with policymakers and local leadership emerged as vital for building sustainable change from the ground up.

6 Holistic Approach and Mental Health Focus

Panelists and speakers stressed the need for a holistic approach to public health that encompasses physical, mental, and social well-being. They emphasised the importance of comprehensive, community-centred solutions for effectively addressing interconnected health issues.

7 Effective Communication and Advocacy

Communication and storytelling were critical tools for advocating public health priorities and engaging stakeholders. Speakers emphasised the power of framing messages in a compelling narrative to mobilise support and drive meaningful change.

8 Commitment to Change

Speakers and attendees shared a commitment to driving positive change in public health despite challenges. Persistence, courage, and resilience were emphasised as essential qualities for advancing public health agendas effectively.

PUBLIC HEALTH CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS DAY ONE

The following summarises discussions across the two-day main event, giving nuanced perspectives from the keynote speakers' presentations, panel discussions, and some audience reflections.



The Public Health Association CEO, Dr Cadence Kaumoana, kicked off the busy conference, reminding attendees of the theme and encouraging them to find opportunities and challenges. She stressed the importance of shifting away from deficit views,...

Our people are not vulnerable, they are vibrant - so we should rise above to build that vibrancy, especially in difficult times.

LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVES



Sir Collin Tukuitonga addressed the urgency of chronic inequities within Māori and Pacific communities. He emphasised the need for collective action and a resilient, multi-disciplinary public health workforce.



Dr Nick Chamberlain echoed Sir Collin's sentiments, stressing the importance of local connections and community empowerment in driving meaningful change.

Where are we now? There's a lot of research done by Pacific and Māori, but we haven't actually done anything. There are still chronic inequities.

- Sir Collin Tuku'itonga

CHANGING OUR NARRATIVE



Dr Andrew Old, Deputy Director General of the Public Health Agency, emphasised the importance of non-profit organisations in public health despite the challenges they face due to limited budgets. He highlighted their essential role in public health initiatives and acknowledged the sector's concerns due to the evolving health landscape. He also emphasised the close connection between health and politics, stressing the significance of persuasive arguments in driving change.

It's about reshaping our narrative – the message alone isn't enough; who delivers it matters. If we persist with the same message and methods, we risk being overlooked. It's time to recalibrate our storytelling approach to ensure our voices are heard.

– Dr Andrew Old

TRAUMA AND HEALING



Professor Leonie Pihama's insights delved into the intergenerational trauma experienced by Māori communities and the importance of Tiriti-based relationships in healing and reconciliation. She highlighted the need to challenge existing narratives and adopt culturally responsive approaches in public health interventions.

The perpetrator of violence on our whānau – is the state.

– Professor Leonie Pihama

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

A panel discussion on the future of public health in New Zealand covered important themes and hopes. Public health experts on the panel discussed local and regional issues, inviting the audience to participate and offer solutions.



From Left: Dr Kelly Feng, CEO Asian Family Services, Dr Liz Mato, GM Le Va, Jacqui Harema, CEO Hāpai te Hauora, Prof. Michael Baker, Riki Niania, CEO Te Rau Ora, Dr Heather Came, MNZM



Jacqui Harema advocated for embracing local and regional solutions, emphasising the importance of devolved solutions that empower communities.

We need community-driven approaches underpinned by Te Tiriti principles, allowing communities to determine their own aspirations.

- Jacqui Harema



Professor Michael Baker envisioned a thriving treaty-aligned sector with cohesive values, emphasising the importance of collaboration and communication.

I'd like to see a unified sector that delivers expert outcomes and works together effectively.

- Professor Michael Baker

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (CONT.)



Riki Nia Nia highlighted the significance of Māori leadership in public health.

I think the answer for Māori health lies within tribal self-governance. We need the right Māori leadership to address health disparities and resonate with Māori communities.

- Riki Nia Nia



Dr Heather Came emphasised the need to evaluate the sector's relationship with the taiao and advocated for decolonisation.

We must listen to communities and tap into their knowledge to drive effective public health strategies.

- Dr Heather Came



Dr Kelly Feng highlighted the inequities faced by Asian and migrant communities, calling for a more holistic and diverse approach to public health.

I'd like to see more support put into addressing issues such as gambling harm and child sexual abuse within communities.

- Dr Kelly Feng

BUILDING VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

In a panel discussion focusing on transformative models for supporting whānau communities and populations, distinguished experts shared their insights and experiences, highlighting the intersection of education, research, and health. They discussed what has worked, what still needs to happen, and how to move forward effectively.



From Left: Dr Suneela Mehta, Professor Mera Penehira, Markerita Poutasi, Emma Rawson-Te Patu.



Dr. Suneela Mehta, a Public Health Medicine Specialist at the University of Auckland, discussed her work focusing on the health needs of ethnic, migrant, and former refugee communities in New Zealand. Suneela's extensive experience includes leading studies examining ethnic health needs and outcomes over the past 15 years.

BUILDING VIBRANT COMMUNITIES (CONT.)



Professor Mera Penehira, Head of Indigenous Graduate Studies at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, provided kōrero on Māori conceptualisations of wellbeing, emphasising the interconnectedness of health, environment, education, and law/tikanga through the stages of being.



Markerita Poutasi, from Te Whatu Ora – Pacific Health, highlighted her focus on transforming health structures to reflect Te Tiriti principles in action and equity. With expertise in change leadership and Pacific health equity, Markerita spoke about the importance of designing new models of care with communities and promoting equity leadership.



Emma Rawson-Te Patu, President-Elect of the World Federation of Public Health Associations, shared her efforts in promoting Tiriti alignment and developing frameworks for dismantling institutional racism in public health. Emma's vision includes establishing a global framework for transformational public health founded on Indigenous knowledge and human rights. As part of her new role, Emma aims to establish a permanent indigenous seat on the WFPHA and facilitate the broader understanding of decolonising public health initiatives.

PUBLIC HEALTH CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS DAY TWO

THE POWER OF DATA



Dr Gary Jackson, Director of Population Health Gain at Te Whatu Ora, provided a comprehensive overview of New Zealand's health landscape, focusing on disparities among Māori, Pacific, and Indian populations. He highlighted the shifting dynamics of health risk factors, particularly the rise of excess body weight as a primary contributor to health loss, disproportionately affecting Māori and Pacific communities. Audience members expressed concern about the language used in data analysis, urging a more thoughtful and culturally sensitive approach.



Dr Corina Grey, Deputy Secretary of Data & Insights at the Ministry of Pacific Peoples, emphasised the crucial role of data in achieving equity in public health within the Te Tiriti o Waitangi framework. She stressed the importance of understanding cultures through data and advocated for inclusive workforce planning and tailored services based on geographic clustering. Dr Grey addressed the deficit-focused nature of data collection and received positive feedback for her approach to presenting the Pacific communities' status narrative, emphasising the need for more honest and representative data collection processes.

A PANEL DISCUSSION ON TRANSFORMATIVE MODELS

The panel delved into transformative models and effective strategies for achieving equity in public health. Each panel member offered unique insights and experiences, sharing innovative approaches and successful initiatives.



From Left: Marty Rogers, Te Whatu Ora, Mapihi Raharuhi, Director of Innovation and Transformation at IGNAR, Panel Chair: Katherine Clarke, Director Health Promotion, Jacinta Fa'alili-Fidow, Director of Strategy at Moana Connect.



Mapihi Raharuhi shared a Te Arawa proactive stance in finding solutions for their community, using whakapapa to understand their history and develop education and health strategies. She emphasised the need for trust in Māori and cultural intelligence.

We should not wait for anyone to give us solutions for our people. The first intake of Kohanga students are now in their 40s, so our leaders knew what they were doing back then. We need to strategise with a forward-thinking mindset.

- Mapihi Raharuhi



Marty Rogers emphasised personal responsibility for transformation, urging individuals to agitate the system and drive real change. She challenged the status quo and stressed the need for action to address inequities in public health.

If we continue to do the same thing, we will get the same outcome.

- Marty Rogers

NAVIGATING THE IMPACT OF REPEALED SMOKE-FREE LAWS



Professor Richard Edwards from Otago University shared critical insights into tobacco and vaping policies, particularly in response to the recent government decision to scrap smoke-free laws. He highlighted the potential impact of this decision and emphasised the importance of addressing systematic factors and educating policymakers about the realities of tobacco control efforts.

He expressed concern about the repeal's implications, emphasising the need for continued advocacy and education to maintain progress in tobacco control.

A PANEL DISCUSSION ON ADDRESSING TOBACCO AND VAPING ISSUES



From Left: Rachel Karalus, CEP K'aute Pasifika, Api Poutasi, Director of Pacific Public Health, Rebecca Ruwhiu-Collins, Te Aka Whai Ora, Ben Youdan, Director ASH 2025.

The panel of experts centred on transformative approaches to addressing tobacco and vaping issues.



Rachel Karalus emphasised the importance of cultural context, especially for Pacific peoples, and voiced that our [Pacific] people do not participate in being heard. Trust – needs to be sorted before we can nail equity.

Devolution of control, devolution of decision making, trusting communities. Covid was a good example of what high trust relationships should look like

- Rachel Karalus

A PANEL DISCUSSION ON ADDRESSING TOBACCO AND VAPING ISSUES (CONT.)



Api Poutasi spoke about the importance of equitable treatment for everyone based on their needs, emphasising the need for equity in practice and a holistic, strengths-based approach to health and smoking.



Rebecca Ruwhiu-Collins stressed the importance of culturally responsive services and community involvement in decision-making. She emphasised the need for accessible services tailored to the needs of Māori communities.

Māori need to be at the decision-making table.

- Rebecca Ruwhiu-Collins



Ben Youdan underscored the need to involve people affected by smoking in decision-making processes and create safe spaces for them to participate in conversations. He advocated for a shift towards more flexible, de-medicalised service delivery models.

How much have we done to people rather than with people?"

- Ben Youdan



KAI SECURITY AND SYSTEMS CHANGE IN PRACTICE

Professor Boyd Swinburn, an expert in medical epidemiology and biostatistics at the University of Auckland, presented virtually and offered valuable insights into systems thinking and practice in population health.

His research and leadership views emphasised the importance of adopting a systems approach to address complex issues in population health. He highlighted kai security as a pressing concern, emphasising that current food systems are inadequate for addressing the needs of contemporary society. He suggested that traditional approaches to food security are insufficient in the 21st century, indicating a need for innovative strategies that address systemic challenges within the food system.



ORANGA HINENGARO

Hayden Wano, Chair of Te Hiringa Mahara, provides leadership perspectives on Oranga Hinengaro (mental wellbeing) and public health priorities, emphasising the need to challenge the status quo and address pressing issues in mental health.

His frontline experience meant he understood the importance of engaging directly with communities to understand their needs and challenges.

Wano expressed the importance of targeting policy and funding towards outcomes and results rather than administrative processes. He advocated for a shift towards more holistic approaches to mental health care, recognising that traditional acute services may not adequately address individuals' complex needs.

Wano acknowledged the challenges marginalised communities face, such as the rainbow community, and emphasised the need for targeted support and inclusive policies. He recognised the importance of reaching out to rangatahi and ensuring their involvement in mental health initiatives.

Mental Health stats are unsurprising, and they've been increasing under our noses. We need to ensure they are not surprises.
- Hayden Wano



DARING TO BE DIFFERENT – INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP

In her presentation on the future of public health leadership and workforce development, Riana Manuel, CEO of Te Aka Whai Ora, emphasised the importance of innovative leadership, characterised by daring to be different and showing courage. As the last speaker of the conference, she succinctly summed up what the sector needed to hear, “Innovative leadership – daring to be different, showing courage.”

Drawing inspiration from Kingi Tawhiao and his experiences, she emphasises the importance of leadership that acknowledges historical injustices and strives to rectify past wrongs, particularly within the health sector.

“For Tawhiao, many things happened to him during his absence – people and land were taken. In the context of health, that’s what leadership should look like.”

She paid tribute to frontline workers and community members, recognising their invaluable contributions to public health efforts. “I want to honour our frontline people, our staff, our whanau – these are the shoulders we stand on. They work so hard!”

“Make mokopuna decisions.” This powerful statement encapsulates Manuel’s call for leaders to make decisions prioritising future generations’ wellbeing. She urged decision-makers to consider the long-term impact of their actions and ensure that they benefit future generations.

Manuel’s leadership insights reminded the audience of the importance of innovative approaches, historical awareness, community engagement, and a focus on intergenerational wellbeing in shaping the future of public health leadership and workforce development.

Innovative leadership – daring to be different, showing courage.

– Riana Manuel

2024 PUBLIC HEALTH AWARDS

Each year, the Public Health Association of New Zealand (PHANZ) acknowledges the contributions of individuals and groups to public health action through its four Public Health Awards. These awards celebrate excellence and innovation in addressing the diverse health challenges facing communities across Aotearoa.

TE AKA WHAI ORA PUBLIC HEALTH CHAMPION AWARD



Te Aka Whai Ora, led by CEO Riana Manuel, has reshaped Māori public health. Despite its short tenure, it navigated post-COVID challenges, strengthened Iwi-Māori collaborations, and promoted traditional Māori practices.

MĀORI ADVISORY GROUP – LIGGINS INSTITUTE

TŪ RANGATIRA MO TE ORA AWARD



The Māori Advisory Group at the Liggins Institute was recognised for its leadership in hauora development. Integrating te Ao Māori principles into research and embodying values like manaakitanga and whānaungatanga advances the health and well-being of Māori communities.

HAWKES BAY PACIFIC TEAM – TE WHATU ORA

PASIFIKA PUBLIC HEALTH AWARD



The Hawke's Bay Pacific Health Team was recognised for its leadership in Pacific community health, particularly during crises like Cyclone Gabrielle.

CENTRE FOR ASIAN AND ETHNIC MINORITY HEALTH RESEARCH AND EVALUATION (CAHRE)

ASIAN AND ETHNIC PEOPLES PUBLIC HEALTH AWARD



CAHRE at the University of Auckland has been key in advancing health equity for Asian and ethnic minority groups. Through leading research and advocacy efforts, they have shaped policy, driven social change, and elevated the dialogue on ethnic minority health issues.

GAP ANALYSIS

Based on key insights from discussions spanning various sessions at the conference, the following gap analysis identifies critical areas for improvement within the healthcare sector:

1 Equity in healthcare delivery

While discussions occurred about the urgent need to address chronic inequities within Māori, Pacific, and other marginalised communities, little time was devoted to discussing tangible actions and effective strategies.

2 Cultural competency and community engagement

Discussions made it clear that the healthcare sector's ability to engage with and respond to diverse cultural needs effectively is lacking. While there were calls for community-driven approaches and culturally responsive services, there seems to be a lack of concrete strategies for integrating traditional knowledge and practices into healthcare delivery and ensuring meaningful community involvement in decision-making processes.

3 Mental Health representation

Discussions recognised a need for enhanced representation and consideration of mental health within the Rainbow community. A participant emphasised the importance of inclusive mental health policies and services that address the specific needs and challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals, and the audience supported the comments.

4 Data collection and representation

While there were discussions about the importance of data in driving equity-focused public health initiatives, there appeared to be some sensitivities in collecting and representing accurate, representative data. Concerns were raised about the deficit-focused nature of data collection and the need for more culturally sensitive approaches to data analysis and presentation.

5 Leadership and advocacy

While there were calls for innovative leadership and courage in addressing public health challenges, there appeared to be a gap in translating these aspirations into actionable strategies. There is a need for more effective advocacy efforts and leadership initiatives that prioritise the needs of future generations and address systemic issues within the healthcare sector.

6 Workforce development and training

There appeared to be a gap in workforce development and training programmes that equipped healthcare professionals with the necessary skills and competencies to address complex public health challenges. More comprehensive training programmes incorporating cultural competency, community engagement, and systems thinking into healthcare delivery are needed.

9.1 CONFERENCE EVALUATION

Feedback provided by conference attendees informs this evaluation. Over 50 responses were received from the conference participants, approximately a 25% return rate. The overall satisfaction rate was 4.4/5, with an average excellence rating of 88%.

1 Appreciation for the diversity of speakers

Attendees appreciated the diverse speakers and perspectives presented at the conference, particularly those that challenged current systems and worldviews. However, there were calls for more practical takeaways and examples of successful approaches.

2 More community representation

Some attendees felt that the speakers lacked community representation, emphasising the importance of hearing directly from communities and grassroots workers. They expressed a need for more diverse voices and perspectives, including those from marginalised groups such as the rainbow community and various ethnicities.

3 Call for gender diversity

While acknowledging the value of Māori perspectives, attendees called for more gender diversity among speakers. They emphasised the importance of ensuring representation across gender lines to reflect the diversity of the public health sector.

4 Engagement and interaction

Attendees appreciated interactive elements in sessions and desired more opportunities for audience interaction, such as Q&A sessions and breakout discussions. They valued engaging with speakers and fellow attendees to exchange ideas and experiences.

5 A desire for practical examples and success stories

Attendees expressed a want for more practical examples and success stories to inspire and guide their work in public health. They hoped for more tangible examples of successful initiatives that could be applied in their contexts.

9.2 CONFERENCE LOGISTICS AND ORGANISATION

6 Positive registration experience (4.2/5):

Overall, attendees reported a positive experience with the registration process, finding it easy to navigate and complete. However, there were some suggestions for improvement, particularly around communication and accessibility.

7 Mixed feedback on venue and facilities (4.3/5):

Feedback on the conference venue and facilities was mixed, with some attendees praising the comfort and amenities provided while others raised concerns about accessibility, parking, and room layout.

8 Appreciation for dietary options (3.8/5):

Attendees appreciated the variety of dietary options provided and offered suggestions for improvement, such as offering more hot and healthy food choices.

9 Positive feedback on logistical issues and communication (4.6/5):

Attendees generally did not report significant logistical issues and found the organisers' communication clear and helpful. The role of the MC received particular praise for contributing to a smooth and engaging conference experience.

CONCLUSION



The annual gathering of the New Zealand public health sector united a community driven by a shared vision for a healthier future. The conference was a powerful reminder of the importance of collective action and shared values in tackling public health challenges.

Under the theme “From Vulnerable to Vibrant,” Sir Collin Tukuitonga resonated with the attendees, reminding them that public health is more than just actions—it reflects our shared values. His call to “consistently do what’s right” echoed throughout the conference, inspiring us to uplift ourselves and the communities we serve.

As we reflect on this conference’s impact, it becomes clear why continuing such gatherings is crucial. These moments of collaboration and inspiration are not short-lived, they lay the groundwork for ongoing mahi towards a healthier, more equitable society.

APPENDICES

11.1 FULL PROGRAMME OF PHANZ WEEK EVENTS



GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK WEBINAR
Public Health Association of NZ



Sharon Shea
CEO (Shea Associates)



Kylie McKee
Co-ordinator



Naft Fayers
CEO (Fayers Health)



Pat Salmon
Co-ordinator



Gail Dunstan
Co-ordinator



Dr Ramal Aulikai
Co-ordinator



Dr Marcus Tamara
Co-ordinator

Program Schedule Monday 8 April

Chair	Guest	KAUPAPA	Session
Sharon Shea	Jenene & Ngipera	Long Covid	9:00am – 9:45am
Naft Fayers	Jenny Firmin	Transformative Approaches to Public Health	10:00am – 10:45am
Dr Ramal Aulikai	Dr Balakrishnan Naik, Anjali Bhatia & Michael Kravchenko	Codesigning Transformative Solutions for Tackling Stroke and Other Non-Communicable Diseases	9:00am – 9:45am
Patrick Salmon	Kelly Spriggs	Hapu Māori	10:00pm – 10:45pm
Kylie McKee	Dr Nick Lovendige-Easther	Local Public Health Project	1:00pm – 1:45pm

Program Schedule Tuesday 9 April

Chair	Guest	KAUPAPA	Session
Tamara Sedgwick	Lara Bowring	The Cultural Humility Series	9:00am – 9:45am
Dr Marcus Tamara	Tracey Wilson-Hutchins	Accessibility, Equity & Inclusion in Public Health	9:00am – 9:45am
Naft Fayers	Rebecca Ruthven-Collins, Pac Ora Manager (Addictions)	Self-care and Strategies of Resilience in the transition process	10:00pm – 10:45pm
Gail Dunstan	LL Colonialism Nelson	LL Colonial Kaupapa	10:00pm – 10:45pm
Nivedita Sharma	Pat Ballard (Chairperson, TASC Australia), Vivik Siv, Chairperson TASC New Zealand & Muikean-Care Trust NZ	Pauna, Well-being Services & Support for people living with Thalassemia and Sickle cell anemia in NZ and Australia	1:00pm – 2:45pm
Tamara Sedgwick	Tessa Shirley, Leanne Tamihana, Alpha Stone, Rebecca Paterson	Safe Atoms	1:00pm – 1:45pm

MAORI WANANGA WEDNESDAY 10 APRIL 2024

Time	Session	Kaupapa	Speaker(s)
9:00am	Welcome	Introductions	Adrian Te Patu
10:15am	Morning Tea		
10:30am	Session #1	Oranga me te Hauora	Stacey McGregor Sharon Shea
12:15pm	Lunch		
1:00pm	Session #2	Healing and Wellbeing	Rikki Solomon
2:45pm	Afternoon Tea		
3:00pm	Wrap-Up	Insights and feedback	Adrian Te Patu

PACIFIC FONO WEDNESDAY 10 APRIL 2024

Time	Session	Kaupapa	Speaker(s)
9:00am	Welcome	Introductions	Riki Nofola'akifolau
10:15am	Morning Tea		
10:30am	Session #1	Pacific leadership and resilience	Dr Tagaloa Junior Ulu Markerita Poutasi
12:15pm	Lunch		
1:00pm	Session #2	Pacific leadership and development	Api Poutasi Dr Aumea Herman
2:45pm	Afternoon Tea		
3:00pm	Wrap-Up	Insights and feedback	Riki Nofola'akifolau

DAY 1 THURSDAY 11 APRIL 2024

“The direction of Public Health in Aotearoa, New Zealand: Policy, Strategy, Priorities and Aspirations.”

Session Type	Start Time	Duration	Kaupapa	Speaker(s)
Registration	8:00am		Registration / help desk opens	
	8:45am	15 mins	Whakataua	Mana Whenua
Mihi from the PHANZ CEO & Conference MC	9:00am	5 mins	Welcome	Dr Cadence Kaumoana - Chief Executive Officer, PHANZ Lesalealepule Edward Cowley - Conference MC
Opening Keynote: Overview of Public Health	9:05am	45 mins	Leadership Views: Vision for the future state of public health in Aotearoa New Zealand	Sir Collin Tukutonga - Associate Professor University of Auckland
Presentation	9:50am	40 mins	Agency Views: Te Whatu Ora priorities, aspirations, and views on the future state of public health delivery in Aotearoa New Zealand. Where to from here?	Dr Nick Chamberlain - National Director, National Public Health Service, Te Whatu Ora
Morning Tea	10:30am	30 mins		
Presentation	11:00am	40 mins	Agency Views: Manatū Hauora priorities, aspirations, and views on the future state of public health in Aotearoa New Zealand. Where to from here?	Dr Andrew Old - Deputy Director General, Public Health Agency
Presentation	11:40am	40 mins	Leadership Views: PHACs views about priorities, aspirations, and the future state of public health in Aotearoa New Zealand. Where to from here?	Kevin Hague - Chair, Public Health Advisory Committee.
Lunch	12:20pm	50 mins		
Panel Session	1:15pm	70 mins	Sector Views: Priorities, aspirations, and the future state of public health in Aotearoa New Zealand. Where to from here?	Panel Chair: Nari Faiers, Co-Chair PHANZ Member: Jacqui Harema, CEO, Hapai te Hauora Member: Michael Baker - Professor, Otago University Member: Dr Liz Muri, General Manager, Le Va Member: Riki Waihia, CEO, Te Rau Ora Member: Dr Heather Came, MNZM Member: Dr Kelly Peng, CEO, Asian Family Services
Kaupapa Mōrii Keynote	2:20pm	40 mins	Research Views: The kaupapa of trauma, healing, and its relationship to enduring public health and wellbeing/oranga.	Professor Leonie Pihama - Associate Professor, University of Auckland
Afternoon Tea	3:00pm	30 mins		
Panel Session	3:30pm	45 mins	Practitioner Views: Transformative models to support whānau, communities and populations to be vibrant. What works, why and how.	Panel Chair: Marcus Tamaira Member: Emma Rawson-Te Pahi, President Elect, WFPMA Member: Prof. Mera Penehira, Head of Indigenous Graduate Studies, Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiāraangi Member: Marikerita Poutasi, National Director of Pacific Health, Te Whatu Ora Member: Dr Somena Mehta, Public Health Physician, Honorary Senior Research Fellow, School of Population Health, University of Auckland
Wrap-Up	4:15pm	15 mins	Summary and introduction to the Public Health Awards	Dr Cadence Kaumoana - Chief Executive Officer, PHANZ
Awards	6:00pm		Public Health Awards dinner and celebrations begin	

DAY 2 FRIDAY 12 APRIL 2024

“What works to move from Vulnerable to Vibrant”

Session Type	Start Time	Duration	Kaupapa	Speaker
Registration	8:30am		Registration / help desk opens	
Mihi from the Chair	9:00am	5 min	Welcome and scene setting for the day	Dr Cadence Kaumoana - Chief Executive Officer, PHANZ
Opening Keynote: Overview of Public Health Data	9:05am	40 mins	Research Views/Leadership Views: Health Gain Opportunities for Te Whatu Ora in 2024	Dr Gary Jackson - Director of Population Health Gain, Te Whatu Ora Dr Corina Grey - Deputy Secretary, Data & Insights, Ministry of Pacific Peoples
Panel Session	9:45am	45 mins	Practitioner Views: Transformative models/what works to achieve Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Equity in public health	Panel Chair: Kathrine Clarke, Director, Health Promotion, Te Whatu Ora Member: Jacinta Fa'ali'i-Fidow, Director Strategy, Moana Connect Member: Magihi Rahanui, Director, Innovation and Transformation, IGMAH Consultants Member: Marty Rogers, Te Whatu Ora
Morning Tea	10:30am	30 mins		
Presentation	11:00am	40 mins	Research Views: Tobacco and Vaping: policy, priorities, and what works	Dr Andrew Waa, Associate Professor, Department of Public Health, Otago University Professor Richard Edwards, Department of Public Health, Otago University
Panel Session	11:40am	50 mins	Practitioner Views: Transformative approaches to tackle Tobacco and Vaping issues. What works. Practitioner insights.	Panel Chair: PHANZ Committee Member Member: Rachel Karara, CEO, K'auae Pasifika Member: Ben Youdan, Director, ASH 2025 Member: Dr Api Poutasi, Director of Pacific Public Health, Te Whatu Ora
Lunch	12:30pm	45 mins		
Presentation	1:15pm	30 mins	Research/Leadership/Practitioner Views: Systems thinking and practice in population health – kai security and systems change in practice	Professor Boyd Swinburn - Medical Epidemiology & Biostatistics, University of Auckland
Presentation	1:45pm	30 mins	Leadership Views: Oranga Hinengaro & Public Health – priorities and aspirations	Hayden Wano - Chair, Te Hirianga Mahara
Keynote	2:15pm	30 mins	Leadership Views – The Future of a Well and Innovative Public Health/Health Sector Workforce: Challenges & Opportunities	Niana Manuel – Chief Executive Officer, Te Aka Whai Ora
Wrap-Up	2:45pm	15 mins	Conference summary	Dr Cadence Kaumoana - Chief Executive Officer, PHANZ
Whakamutunga	3:00pm	15 mins	Closing and farewell	PHANZ

11.2 ATTENDEE FEEDBACK DATA LIST

Following is the set of questions provided for attendee feedback. However, the report will not disclose the full data collected from respondents to ensure anonymity and privacy. This decision is made to uphold confidentiality and respect the privacy of our attendees.

- 1 How did you hear about the conference?
- 2 Was the registration process easy to navigate?
- 3 How relevant and informative did you find the content of the sessions?
- 4 Were the speakers engaging and knowledgeable about their topics?
- 5 Which sessions did you find most valuable, and why?
- 6 Were there any topics you felt were missing or underrepresented at the conference?
- 7 How would you rate the venue location in terms of accessibility and convenience?
- 8 Was the conference venue comfortable and accommodating (e.g., seating, temperature, restrooms)?
- 9 Were the signage and directions within the venue clear and helpful?
- 10 How satisfied were you with the quality and variety of food and beverages provided?
- 11 Were there adequate options for dietary restrictions (e.g., vegan, gluten-free)?
- 12 Was the scheduling of breaks and meals convenient for you?
- 13 How well do you think the event was organised?
- 14 Were any logistical issues that impacted your experience (e.g., registration, session scheduling, audio-visual equipment)?
- 15 How effective was the communication from the organisers before and during the conference?
- 16 What was your overall satisfaction with the conference?
- 17 Please provide any additional feedback you may have. For example, what did you like most about the conference? What areas do you think could be improved for future conferences? Would you attend this conference again or recommend it to others? Do you have any other comments or suggestions?
- 18 OPTIONAL - If you wish to be contacted about feedback, please provide your email address here.

The following list shows the organisations that attended and participated in virtual and in-person events across the week.

Alcohol Healthwatch	Pacific Island Community Trust Bay of Plenty
ASH	PHA Wellington Branch
Asian Family Services	PreventS-MD (AUT Ventures Spin off)
ASPIRE Aotearoa Research Centre	Public Health Advisory Committee
Associate Professor in Health Psychology,	Purapura Whetu
Auckland PHO	Shea, Pita & Associates
Auckland University of Technology	Te Aka Whai Ora
Aurecon	Te Amokura Consultants
AUT North Campus	Te Ara Mātauranga LTD
AUT University, Department of Preventative & Social Medicine	Te Herenga Waka
Bay of Plenty DHB	Te Hiringa Mahara
Coastal Medical Ltd	Te Niwha
Diabetes NZ	Te Piki Oranga
Hāpai Te Hauora	Te Pou
Hauora Māori Services	Te Rau Ora
Hauora Māori Services National Office	Te Rōpū Rangahau Hauora A Eru Pōmare, ASPIRE Aotearoa, University of Otago
Health New Zealand	Te Toka Tumai, Whatua Ora
Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora	Te Wahatu Ora Waikato
Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora Nelson/ Marlborough	Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi
Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora Waikato	Te Whatu Ora
Health Promotion Forum of New Zealand	Te Whatu Ora - Commissioning
Heather Came & Associates	Te Whatu Ora - National Public Health Service
Hutt Valley DHB	Te whatu ora -Health nz
IGNAR Consultants	Te whatu ora -Pacific public health
Inspiring LTD	Te whatu Ora Bowel Screening
K'aute Pasifika Trust	Te Whatu Ora NPHS
Kia Ora Hauora	Te Whatu Ora Pacific Health H S S Hawkes Bay
Le Va	Te Whatu Ora Te Matau A Māui
Manukahu Associates	Te Whatu Ora Waikato
MAS	The Asian Network Inc. (TANI)
MAS Foundation	Toi Tangata
Massey University	Toi Te Ora
National public Health service	Toitu te Ao Ltd
Member of Parliament	Tū Tama Wāhine o Taranaki
Ministry for Pacific Peoples	Tui Ora
Ministry of Health	University of Auckland
Ministry of Health, Public Health Agency	University of Auckland Waipapa Taumata Rau
Moana Connect	University of Otago
Napier City Council	University of Otago, Wellington
National Public Health Service	University of Waikato
National Public Health Service - Northern Region	Victoria University of Wellington
National Public Health Service - Southern	Village Collective
National Public Health Service, Te Whatu Ora	Waikato Public Health Service
New Plymouth Injury Safe	Waitemata Health NZ
NKOTM LTD	Whānau Āwhina Plunket
NPHS - Southern	Wise Group
	World Federation of Public Health Associations



Public Health Association
of New Zealand
Kāhui Hauora Tūmatanui
o Aotearoa

For any queries related to this report
please contact
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