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## Tēnā koutou katoa

It has been an incredibly busy start to the year for our team here at Te Aho o Te Kahu.

I am excited to share this update of our recent work with you all. As you read through you will see how much of what we do is collaborative.

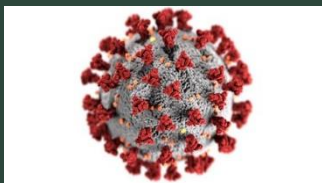
**Whiria te tangata**, weaving the people together.

We are connecting with organisations, services, communities, clinicians and whānau to improve the lives of those affected by cancer.

Our name Te Aho o Te Kahu means 'the central thread of the cloak' and like the Aho (central thread) we are bringing together those involved in care across the cancer continuum.

Ngā manaakitanga

Di



## COVID vaccine advice for cancer patients

This is top of mind for everyone currently and we know whānau living with cancer will be anxious about whether

they should be vaccinated, and when and where they will be able to receive the vaccine.

We are currently working with international cancer colleagues to review the evidence and we will shortly be providing FAQs for whānau living with cancer and for clinicians.

What I will say, in the meantime, is all the best evidence points to the vaccine being safe and effective for the vast majority of people living with cancer.

## **New funding to help drive equitable lung cancer outcomes**

Te Aho o Te Kahu, along with the Health Research Council of New Zealand and the Ministry of Health have this week released a Request For Proposals (RFP) for research addressing one or more equity-centred cancer research priorities:

- Lung cancer screening
- Clinical lung cancer research
- Innovative approaches to delivering cancer care
- Patient experience across the cancer journey for Māori and Pacific peoples.

This exciting development makes a total funding pool of \$6.2 million is available for research across all four research priorities. [More information can be found here.](#)



## Hearing the voice of whānau Māori

Te Aho o Te Kahu is collaborating with a wide range of stakeholders to hold a series of 15 Māori Cancer Community Hui around the country to help improve Māori cancer outcomes across the continuum of care.

Led by Fletcher Beazley, Manager for Whānau-centred Care, with support from national and local Māori Cancer leaders such as Tumu Whakarae, Hei Āhuru Mōwai and Haapai te Hauora, the theme of the 15 hui is whānau-centred cancer care.

These hui allow us to hear the voice of whānau Māori, co-design kaupapa Māori cancer solutions alongside whānau, collaborate with a wide range of stakeholders and create a mechanism to support the delivery of cancer actions from prevention to palliation.

The [first hui](#), held in New Plymouth last week, was attended by over 240 people and was a big success. We are looking forward to the remaining [hui scheduled from now until July](#).



## National chemotherapy library now live

The [Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapy Regimen Library \(SRL\)](#), New Zealand's national chemotherapy regimen library website, went live on World Cancer Day, February 4. This library supports equitable chemotherapy and serves as a basis for the capture and meaningful analysis of national data.

By the end of 2021 we expect national regimens for all major cancer types across medical oncology and malignant haematology will be hosted on the SRL. The benefits of this work include improved equity, consistency and clinical quality of chemotherapy treatments, and ultimately, improved outcomes for people with cancer. I would like to acknowledge the incredible collaborative effort from so many across the sector in bringing this work together.

Find out more about our [Anti-Cancer Therapy – Nationally Organised Workstreams \(ACT-NOW\) Programme](#).



## Cancer Report

In early February we released our inaugural report [The State of Cancer in New Zealand 2020, He Pūrongo Mate Pukupuku o Aotearoa 2020](#).

This report provides an overview of cancer and cancer care in New Zealand. It outlines the trends in cancer incidence, survival and mortality and identifies where emerging and persistent issues and inequities exist along the cancer pathway.

The report is a snapshot of a point in time - it does not make recommendations. It provides a baseline that can be used to measure the effectiveness of cancer control programmes, identify work priorities, coordinate effective collaborations, develop future programmes and inform funding proposals.

Te Aho o Te Kahu collaborated with many clinicians, organisations and services across the cancer continuum to create this report. I am hugely appreciative of the hard work put in by so many people and I thank all those involved.

## Meeting of Consumer Reference Group

I was pleased to be able to attend our second Consumer Reference Group virtual meeting on February 4.

There were very constructive and helpful discussions from the group on a range of issues, particularly focused on cancer services planning, and the ACT-NOW project.

I feel fortunate to have such an engaged and experienced group of people to provide advice from a lived perspective.



## Regional focus

### Te Manawa Taki Key Support Person project

This co-design project is centred on increasing awareness of the key support person role at Waikato District Health Board (DHB) and ensuring patients are aware of their right to have someone with them to provide support.

Te Manawa Taki Regional Hub has been providing project management expertise for this project (and several others in the region) to coordinate, facilitate and support the regional Health Quality and Safety Commission (HQSC) patient co-design process.

Image: Sue Hayward (Director of Nursing, Waikato DHB) giving the Key Support Person Project Team their certificates from the Health Quality and Safety Commission (HQSC).

## Puhoro Māori Cancer Internship project

It is great to see the [Puhoro Māori Cancer Internship project](#) up and running. This project was initiated and funded by the Central Cancer Network (now the Central Hub of Te Aho o Te Kahu) over a year ago but was unfortunately delayed by COVID.

This internship gives Māori students valuable experience and insight into cancer careers across the continuum of care. This exciting project is delivered in partnership with Massey University's Puhoro programme.

## In Brief:

Te Aho o Te Kahu appearance at the Health Select Committee Review: [Health Select Committee - Home | Facebook](#) (February 10 – from 1hr 34mins in).

The [End of Life Choice Act](#) comes into force in November this year. The Ministry of Health is currently surveying the health and disability workforce to better understand their views. [This survey is optional and closes on 28 February.](#)

Oncology Journal Club podcast: [Prof. Diana Sarfat, Disparity in the Pacific Region](#) and [UICC Facebook Live discussion](#) on the State of Cancer in New Zealand Report.



Te Aho o Te Kahu

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