

Tēnā koutou katoa

The recent appearance of Matariki in the night sky marks a time for reflection and an opportunity to articulate our aspirations for the future.

It is fitting therefore, that this update looks back at our engagement over the last few months and looks forward to the work we are doing to ensure excellence in cancer care is woven into the design of the new health and disability system.

Ngā manaakitanga

Di



Te Aho o Te Kahu Engagement

Across the agency, we recognise the importance of connection. Since our last update in May:

I have travelled around the motu to visit the dedicated people working across DHB cancer services. I have met with clinicians, allied staff and management at Northland, Waikato, Southern, Midcentral, Whanganui and Taranaki DHBs. These visits have proven very valuable to connect Te Aho o Te Kahu to the work being done 'at the coalface' and to bring into focus the challenges and opportunities existing in each region.

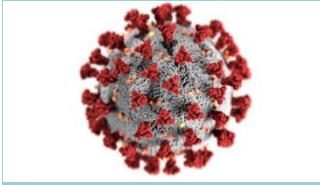
In June, I met with the [Advisory Council of Te Aho o Te Kahu](#). Council members fed into our work on cancer services planning and our strategic communication priorities. They

were provided updates and gave feedback on projects across our work programme. I really appreciate the time put in by all Council members and Te Aho o Te Kahu staff that made this such a valuable session, thank you.

Our [consumer reference group, He Ara Tāngata](#), met in May to finalise their Terms of Reference and to gain visibility across our work programme. Since then [He Ara Tāngata members](#) have been contributing to our cancer services planning work which will feed into the Health and Disability System Reforms (HDSR). I would like to extend my thanks to He Ara Tāngata for sharing their lived experience of cancer with us.

The [Māori Cancer Community Hui](#) got underway in February this year in Taranaki. Since then we have heard the voice of whānau Māori in eleven other locations including most recently: Kaikohe, Auckland, Blenheim, Christchurch and Invercargill. Each hui is a massive collaborative undertaking, with our Whānau-centred Care team and Regional Hubs working alongside DHBs, providers, iwi and whānau Māori to create a meaningful and relevant event for that region. The rich kōrero from the hui will be woven into our work to improve cancer care for whānau Māori. I am very grateful to all who have contributed to the success of the hui, thank you.

Last week I attended the launch of the permanent PRRT cancer treatment service in Auckland. This is an example of collaboration at its best - with Auckland DHB, Ministry of Health, University of Auckland, the Unicorn Foundation NZ and Te Aho o Te Kahu all working together to get this service off the ground. Listening to whānau living with neuroendocrine cancer talking about this life-saving service was very humbling. Te Aho o Te Kahu is proud to have played a role in the establishment of this service.



COVID-19

We have recently updated our advice for clinicians on COVID-19 vaccines and cancer. The advice still supports people with cancer receiving the COVID-19 vaccine and provides guidance around optimal timing to administer the vaccine for those receiving active treatment. You can find the most recent version of the advice and FAQs for people with cancer [here](#).

Te Aho o Te Kahu has recently published a [paper on the New Zealand Aotearoa experience of COVID-19 and cancer](#) in the Lancet Regional Health – Western Pacific Journal. The paper also gets a mention in a recent [Māori Health Review](#).



Health and Disability System Reforms Opportunity - Cancer Services Planning Project

While much works well and the cancer health workforce constantly shows incredible commitment to ensure the wellbeing of their patients, there are challenges in ensuring people get the care they need at the time that they need it. The current health and disability system reforms provide us with a rare opportunity to consider new ways of operating and delivering care in the health system.

Whilst keeping a watchful eye on ensuring cancer services are supported during the reform process, we are prioritising work within Te Aho o Te Kahu to leverage this opportunity for change. To do this in a structured way, we have set up a Cancer Services Planning project to provide evidence-based guidance

and recommendations to the future health care commissioning entities on how cancer treatment services in Aotearoa/New Zealand could be improved. Te Aho o Te Kahu is working alongside the HDSR Transition Unit to ensure this work aligns with the reform process more generally.

Scope

- The project scope centres on how to best organise and distribute cancer treatment and support services to achieve optimal and equitable cancer outcomes and whānau experience. The project focuses on services traditionally based in the secondary and tertiary care sector.
- This work is progressing alongside other complementary projects that are specifically looking at the role of primary care in cancer more broadly, cancer prevention and quality indicators.
- Work on this project began in October last year and continues at pace with support from over 20 staff from across Te Aho o Te Kahu.
- There are six workstreams focusing on key treatment modalities (surgery, radiation oncology, systemic treatments), and clinical services like radiology and pathology. We also have a workstream specifically focused on equity, and another focused on supportive care, allied health and other whānau-centred services that are so important for patient pathways and the delivery of equitable cancer care.
- Each workstream will consider relevant research, literature and targeted stakeholder engagement to recommend

models for improved distribution and organisation of cancer treatment services.

- These recommendations will provide a high-level vision of how cancer treatment services can be integrated, organised and distributed in a way that puts whānau at the centre, located as close to where people live as possible, while still being safe, equitable, effective and sustainable.
- The project has allocated equity champions within each workstream to identify and respond to current and potential equity impacts, and to ensure we are working in a manner that respects and is consistent with Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles. We are working closely with Hei Āhuru Mōwai, Māori Cancer Leadership, on this approach.
- He Ara Tāngata (our Consumer Reference Group) and Hei Āhuru Mōwai members are directly supporting each workstream, and we have also heard the rich kōrero from our series of Māori Cancer Community Hui that have been taking place across the motu since February.

Stakeholder engagement

- We are engaging broadly across the sector but in a focused manner to inform this work. Key groups we are talking with include Hei Āhuru Mōwai, Pacific Expert Advisory Group, RACS, NZNO Cancer Nurses College, DHB staff, Ministry of Health Directorates and many other individual members of the cancer sector.
- We're also engaging clinicians through Te Aho o Te Kahu Clinical Assembly, Medical Oncology, Haematology, Radiation Oncology and tumour stream working groups.

- Advice from these stakeholders has had significant impact on the shape of this work, and we will continue to engage with these groups and other stakeholders as the project progresses.

Project deliverable

- The project will deliver strategic guidance on recommended approaches to strengthen our cancer services with the view to create whānau-centred, equitable, high-quality and sustainable cancer services into the future.
- We anticipate our recommendations will transition into future detailed work that will include further extensive engagement, co-design and implementation processes, led by Health New Zealand and the Māori Health Authority, and informed and closely monitored by Te Aho o Te Kahu.

How to engage with us

If you are interested in talking with the project team about this work, please contact our project leads Jane Dancer (Jane.Dancer@teaho.govt.nz) or Helen Stobba (Helen.Stobba@teaho.govt.nz).