

He Kete Whaiora Evaluation

December 2024

Acknowledgements

We extend our appreciation and thanks to the tāngata whaiora who generously shared their experiences and insights with us. Their stories served as an inspiration for what is possible and probable when tāngata whaiora can stand in their rangatiratanga and self-determine their pathways to healing and ora hingaaro.

Appreciation and gratitude also to all the partners for welcoming us in to your organisations and for your support to connect with tāngata whaiora. We also thank you for your valuable insights, and the gems you shared with us for future improvements.

To Hauora Māori Services Directorate, thank you for the korowai you provided throughout the evaluation, and the insights you shared that supported us to do the evaluation.

The quote below is from one of the partners

“That's why we have this kōrero though, and this is why we do the evaluations to do things better. To never... to never stay still, be static, but always use the lessons from our tupuna to inform us how we can preserve this next generation and aspire hope within... and to encourage the system to do what is right and do it in the right way, so that we can see those shifts and changes for our whānau and the next generation.” – Partner

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Executive summary

This report presents the findings for the He Kete Whaiora kaupapa to demonstrate the effectiveness of the cultural packages and the support tāngata whaiora received to strengthen their cultural identity and knowledge of tikanga Māori; enhanced connectedness, resilience, self-identity and quality of life.

In 2023, Hauora Māori Services – Te Whatu Ora established the He Kete Whaiora cultural packages. Five Hauora Māori partners were identified to deliver 80 cultural packages of support (16 per service) between 1 April 2023 to 30 June 2024 with a maximum value of \$5,000 each to tāngata whaiora accessing secondary mental health services. A twenty percent (\$20k) management levy was also included to support partners to develop the system and processes needed for the effective delivery of the contracts.

Insights and information to inform this evaluation were gathered from

- Semi-structured interviews with eleven tāngata whaiora and six kaimahi
- Quarterly reports provided by the five hauora Māori partners
- 2 collective hui with all the providers
- Regular hui with Hauora Māori services – Te Whatu Ora

Key outcomes from the evaluation included:

- Increased access for tāngata whaiora to healing approaches grounded in te ao Māori that improved mental, physical, spiritual and whānau wellbeing
- Increased engagement in wānanga and te ao Māori kaupapa that enabled tāngata whaiora to develop peer to peer relationships and increased their confidence in their cultural identity and knowledge of tikanga Māori
- Tāngata whaiora received 1:1 support and resources to achieve their goals that reconnected them to te ao Māori and enabled them to self-determine strategies and solutions to healing and to maintain ora ngā hinengaro
- Increased independence, meaning and purpose in the lives of tāngata whaiora

The evaluation also demonstrated opportunities for improvement in the implementation of the cultural packages. This included;

- improved communication between the funder and partners about the purpose and expectations of the cultural packages including the boundaries and limitations for their use. The partners will also need to ensure that kaimahi are informed and that they understand the purpose and expectations for the use of the cultural packages.
- improved communication between the partners and tāngata whaiora to ensure tāngata whaiora fully understand the purpose of the cultural packages and that they have the time to discuss the process and options for their use.

This report also provides next steps and recommendations based on insights and kōrero from tāngata whaiora, partners and the funder. These included improvements to the implementation of the He Kete Whaiora kaupapa to better align with the intent and purpose of the cultural packages and the development of outcomes measures that are designed with tāngata whaiora and partners.

Background

Hauora Māori services – Te Whatu Ora (“funder”) established the He Kete Whaiora cultural packages in 2023 to better meet the needs of tāngata whaiora¹ Māori who accessed specialist mental health and addiction services. The intent and purpose of the cultural packages was to support tāngata whaiora to explore self-determined solutions and strategies through te ao Māori that enable healing² and to maintain oranga hinengaro.

The cultural packages are intended to enhance people’s skills and provide the support that will strengthen their identity and knowledge of tikanga Māori, enhancing connectedness, resilience, self-identity and quality of life.

Five specialist mental health and addiction services (“providers”) were commissioned to deliver a minimum of 16 cultural packages with a maximum value of \$5,000 for each tāngata whaiora. The contracts also included a 20% management levy (\$20k) to implement the systems and processes needed for effective delivery of the contract.

The contract term was from 1 April 2023 to 30 June 2024 and partners were required to:

- Assess the ability and needs of tāngata whaiora to determine the required services and/or supports and appropriate service components
- Assist tāngata whaiora to whakawhanaungatanga/reintegrate into their community
- Maintain cultural links - particularly with their own papakāinga, marae and other Māori linkages

All partners were required to send information to the funder on a quarterly basis and provide a final narrative report on successful initiatives and learnings. Both quantitative and qualitative information was requested in the quarterly reports.

- Quantitative information to include the number of packages of care plans developed, issued and completed and the value of the funds provided and their

¹Some partners preferred to use other terminology to describe the people they supported including tākata whaiora, tāngata Motuhake and whānau. For the purpose of this evaluation we have used tangata whaiora, tāngata whaiora

² Healing from acute distress, substance or gambling harm, addiction and trauma

use. Demographic information including gender, domicile status, mental health diagnosis (mild, moderate and severe), age, and ethnicity.

- Qualitative information to include brief commentary about the use of funds, key achievements, service delivery issues/challenges to deliverables and outcomes, and any service improvements or ideas.

Partners were also invited to share video footage and other digital content that demonstrated any outcomes. A guideline of the expected outcomes detailed in the contract is provided below:

- Number of tāngata whaiora managed and supported by the service in the reporting period
- Enhance the ability of tāngata whaiora to manage their own illness
- Enhance the ability of tāngata whaiora to map, process, activate and achieve life goals
- Enhance the ability of tāngata whaiora to develop a positive view of self, problem solving skills, and meaningful relationships with whānau and other people

Ultimately the specified goal of He Kete Whaiora was to enhance people's skills and provide the support that would strengthen their cultural identity and knowledge of tikanga Māori, enhancing connectedness, resilience, self-identity and quality of life.

Introduction

In April 2024 Take Notice (Māori lived experience led organisation) were commissioned by the funder to produce a comprehensive evaluation report of the He Kete Whaiora kaupapa.

The evaluation goal was to privilege the voices of tāngata whaiora with the use of their insights and kōrero to demonstrate the impact and value of the cultural packages and support they received through He Kete Whaiora.

Tūtohi 1- Evaluation Objective and Questions

Evaluation Objectives	Evaluation Questions
1. To describe how Hauora Māori partners have implemented the cultural packages	<p>1a How have the services identified tāngata whaiora for the packages of care?</p> <p>1b How have kaimahi supported tāngata whaiora to self determine their aspirations and connect with te ao Māori?</p>

	1c How is the process kaimahi undertake with tāngata whaiora enabling them to explore, and engage in the options available that align to their aspirations?
2. To identify the impact and value of the cultural packages for tāngata whaora to enable healing and development of strategies and solutions to maintain oranga hinengaro through te ao Māori approaches	2a What is effect on strengthened cultural identity and knowledge of tikanga Māori from the cultural packages?

The Most Significant Change methodology³ was proposed as the ideal methodology to privilege the voices of tāngata whaiora by selecting individual stories to demonstrate the changes experienced as a result of the cultural packages. However, initial findings indicated that it would be more appropriate to conduct a thematic analysis as each service utilised different methods in their delivery approach.

Method

An evaluator with lived experience conducted semi-structured interviews with eleven tāngata whaiora and six kaimahi including registered health professionals, one of whom was a psychologist contracted by one of the partners. Additional information and context were also gathered from quarterly reports, two hui with all the partners and regular fortnightly hui with the funder.

Hui with tāngata whaiora and partners were recorded and transcribed. A thematic analysis was conducted to identify recurring themes that described the effect of the cultural packages in strengthening cultural identity and knowledge of tikanga Māori; enhancing connectedness, resilience, self-identity and quality of life. These were categorised under subheadings according to the delivery approach implemented by the partner, either individual or wānanga and group activities

Information provided about the implementation of He Kete Whaiora was also analysed to understand the selection process and how tāngata whaiora were supported to explore options and strategies through te ao Māori to enable healing and maintain oranga hinengaro.

³ The Most Significant Change methodology is a form of participatory monitoring and evaluation. It can be used to provide data on impact and outcomes to assess the performance of the programme as a whole.

All identifiable information has been anonymised to protect the identities of tāngata whaiora and the partners. This includes the term ‘partner’ being assigned to quotes attributed to the psychologist.

Limitations:

The variances across organisations with the implementation of He Kete Whaiora meant that quantitative data was not able to be aggregated and analysed. Individual data received from some partners was unable to be reconciled with the demographic data also provided. For example, the total number of tāngata whaiora supported with cultural packages did not match the details for gender or diagnosis

Findings

The findings from the evaluation are described below in three sections.

- **Section 1 – The Journey of tāngata whaiora**
This section describes the experience of tāngata whaiora prior to receiving support from the cultural packages. It also describes how the partners implemented the cultural packages in their services.
- **Section 2 – The impact and value of the cultural packages**
This section describes the delivery of the cultural packages and the impact and value for tāngata whaiora in strengthening cultural identity and knowledge of tikanga Māori, enhancing connectedness, resilience, self-identity and quality of life.
- **Section 3 – Partner and funder insights**
This section describes insights from partners and the funder and includes opportunities for improvement to inform future service planning and delivery.

Section 1 – The Journey of tāngata whaiora

The key focus of the evaluation was to privilege the voices of tāngata whaiora and their experiences of mental distress and addiction to understand the effectiveness of the cultural packages.

All tāngata whaiora that were interviewed expressed their gratitude for the opportunities and resources provided through He Kete Whaiora cultural packages. They described the relationships they had with the partners as integral to the positive outcomes they experienced.

“It’s amazing to know that there are people out there pushing for us, you know, because half of us as tāngata are willing to give up and go back to the drug life, yeah, because it was easy and it’s simpler.” – Tangata whaiora

“It’s not really about the pūtea, which helps in the long run, but it’s about making the journey and the support. That was the first thing that I seen, not the money,” – Tangata whaiora

“You know the drug life, the gang life, the authority of being president was me. That was me. You know, when you’ve been born, born and raised in that era when your family are all patched... I don’t know how much more I can praise them [partner], because, if it weren’t for them, I was looking at death.” – Tangata whaiora

Tāngata whaiora shared insights about their journey’s and some of the challenges they had experienced in expressing their cultural identity, disconnection from whānau, and the barriers they faced that impacted their oranga hinengaro. The majority of tāngata whaiora shared that they had been disconnected from their taha Māori. Some reported that they had never had the opportunity to explore what it meant for them to be Māori due to moving overseas, loss of whānau members, disconnection through whāngai, and being “told” not to engage in te ao Māori.

“I always knew I was the black sheep, literally, and always had that passion (for te ao Māori) but never had the opportunity. My adopted mother never allowed me to take te reo Māori in school because she didn’t believe that it would get me anywhere with work or anything like that.” – Tangata whaiora

“I think I was in both worlds at the time, the pākehā world and Māori, but we sort of dipped off from Māori side because our parents didn’t want to give it to us as children. So, we just...they just sent us through the pākehā school system.” - Tangata whaiora

Several tāngata whaiora talked about the stigma they experienced from “being too white” and of feeling whakamā to express their cultural identity and to kōrero te reo Māori. They shared that a lack of confidence in their cultural identity was a key factor that contributed to their lack of engagement in te ao Māori.

“A lot of the heritage, the culture of Māori, was taken from me in the sense I wasn’t knowledgeable, like when we go through school and things like that, things are taught to you. So, I mean, it was still in my whare, but it wasn’t out in

the world for me, and it was hard because my skin is so white you know...for people to understand me.” - Tangata whaiora

“It's kind of funny, it's like, I don't know, I just...because of my anxiety and my vulnerability and stuff I'm scared that if I make an attempt, like I know quite a bit of Māori, but I'm too scared to actually speak it” – Tangata whaiora

Partners shared that the majority of tāngata whaiora in their services had experienced significant trauma in their lives. Trauma was often described as intergenerational and for some tāngata whaiora they had also experienced cumulative trauma from previous engagement with other services. This meant that partners were cognisant of their “starting point” and there were initial steps needed before tāngata whaiora felt ready to reconnect with their whānau, their whakapapa and their whenua.

“You know, there is this real difference and where whānau are starting at and that's often what's not recognised as the starting point, because some are coming with significant trauma.” - Provider

“Some of the tāngata that I spoke to, they've gone away from that [te ao Māori] due to their traumas in the past. So, they've just buried it in a way.” - Partner

“You know, there's a lot of pain, there's a lot of trauma that people are still holding on to in that sense [cultural].” - Partner

Some of the tāngata whaiora shared that they had been in services for a long period of time including inpatient settings and other non-government services and that it was only when they connected to “this” organisation their quality of life had improved. Others shared that they had reached out for support and that this had been the catalyst for change in their life.

“I've never ever been to the point that I've been almost catatonic, and I was like that for days where I thought very seriously about ending my own life, and that happened for a whole year. I just wanted to drive into the bush and never come back, you know. And I still sort of like, I'm getting better.” - Tangata whaiora

“Then I was also thinking to myself... man, I've really got to get my shit together. I really have to get my shit together, because I've got a whole whānau I've got to look after, and I started realising that more and more... So that's when I first started reaching out for the help.” - Tangata whaiora

Partners were asked to report information about the mental health diagnosis of tāngata whaiora. These were split into four categories mild, moderate, severe and

undisclosed/unknown. For this information to be of value in future service planning and delivery it will be important to understand how these categories are defined. For example:

- Is it an arbitrary measure based solely on types of diagnosis or,
- Is it used a self-reported measure for tāngata whaiora to describe the disabling effect of the mental distress they experience at any given time

There is an opportunity to discuss this measure with tāngata whaiora and partners to ascertain if it would be useful for demonstrating the effectiveness of the cultural packages in the reduction of any disabling effects of mental distress.

Implementation of He Kete Whaiora cultural packages

We asked tāngata whaiora and partners about the selection process for the cultural packages and how tāngata whaiora were supported to explore te ao Māori options and approaches to strengthen cultural identity and enhance knowledge of tikanga Māori.

Some partners reported that tāngata whaiora were selected after a team discussion. Others shared that they made their assessments based on the criteria and their knowledge of tāngata whaiora and their readiness to reconnect with whānau, whenua and whakapapa. They assessed their readiness by identifying where tāngata whaiora were at in their healing journey to ensure that the cultural packages would be of benefit to them.

“What have they been doing along their pathway of healing, and how is this pūtea going to enhance their mātauranga, enhance their skill sets, enhance their tools in their kete, and enhance their ability to be able to connect and utilise ngā mōmo mea te ao Māori.” - Partner

“We then looked at where they are in their journey to determine whether or not the financial support will be of benefit to them.” - Partner

For some tāngata whaiora that had been engaged with the service for a long time partners saw the cultural packages as an opportunity to extend their services and eliminate some of the barriers that that often restricted their independence.

“That's how we identify, look these, these ones have been here way too long, you know, not to say they don't still need the support, but it's about building their independence.” - Partner

“I said to her [kaimahi], ‘Look, it's about reconnection for our whānau, it's about te ao Māori. it's about tikanga Māori. We want them to stand in their rangatiratanga and unapologetically be themselves.’” – Partner

Some tāngata whaiora disengaged from the services due to relocation whilst being supported with cultural packages. The remaining funds were reallocated to support other tāngata whaiora.

All of the tāngata whaiora expressed gratitude for the cultural packages. However, several shared that they didn't know why they had been selected and that they were unclear about the intent and purpose of the fund.

“Very sort of thrown back that we were chosen to be candidates, and also very very grateful, because it was actually at a very financially paramount time. So yeah, those funds actually were a saving grace” - Tangata whaiora

“So, he was like ‘well I've only got a week to do this, so here's what you need to do, you need to get all this in today’. So, we're sitting there going, but I don't understand what you want me to say here or there. So, it was a very forced process” - Tangata whaiora

Some tāngata whaiora said that the cultural packages would have had greater benefit if there had been more time to discuss options so they could make informed decisions and be supported to “plan things out”. They felt this would have prevented them from any regrets once they had thought more about the options and opportunities that would have enhanced their connection to whakapapa and whenua.

“So, to come up with where we sort of come out at the end was kind of awesome, but at other times we sort of go ‘oh, I should have done this’, because it was such a rough process, we didn't have sort of a lot of time to sort of sit back and really calculate what would be benefit, totally beneficial for the... for us as a whānau.” - Tangata whaiora

“And then I had another idea the other day, and I was like ‘damn, I should have gone there’, which was the travel up to Waitangi...yeah, Waitangi, because now my journey into te ao Māori discovering, you know, my Māori heritage, and [I'm] very passionate about it.” - Tangata whaiora

One tāngata whaiora shared that they felt their own values of manaaki and awhi were compromised in the process as there was a rush to “spend the pūtea” which didn't allow for considered planning.

“If we had've had more preparation some of that pūtea could have been pushed in to certain areas that I could have had with my family, but what I found was that things had to be brought there and then.” - Tangata whaiora

“Being told oh here, here is the rest of your thing [cultural package], but it wasn't really focused on anything good. I can actually put myself down for a lot of that, because I didn't even think about it properly, it was sort of available and it was 'yeaaaah let's go.'” - Tangata whaiora

Tāngata whaiora and partners shared about the value of their relationships when it came to making decisions on the use of the cultural packages. Some tāngata whaiora felt more confident to trust the guidance and advice of kaimahi about the best use for the cultural package.

“I guess, because I was so free and easy about it, it was just developing those plans that I trusted and believed in that were going to work for me, and it did it. You know, I trusted [kaimahi] as well, developing those pathways for me, because whatever he had put in place for me a year prior to that, it worked. So, I knew that the intentions were good so there wasn't really anything that I was like, hey, I want this, or I want that.” - Tangata whaiora

This created a challenge for some providers, as they felt there was a misalignment with the intent of the fund if they made decisions on behalf of tāngata whaiora. At the same time, they also acknowledged the “disabling effect of the system” and how this had impacted on the confidence of tāngata whaiora to stand in their rangatiratanga.

“We don't want to hold that decision because what if we go and spend the pūtea on something and then we realise it wasn't something that good or something we should do, you know what I mean? So, it can be like a real burden and a real responsibility.” - Partner

“We're already having these conversations as part of our whānau led assessment in terms of outcomes and goals in you know, the ultimate space that rangatiratanga you know, we're already having these very granular conversations with whānau, and like most of them said to me 'oh, we trust you, we'll just do what you want us to do'. Like, yeah, okay, it doesn't work like that.” – Partner

“So that landed us in some really interesting spaces in terms of when I think about our whanaunga in particular who've been in the system longitudinally for decades....and then, you know, being used to not having those choices and not being able to make decisions for themselves, and then also that disconnection back with their own whānau, their own whenua, their own whakapapa.” - Partner

These insights highlight the need to ensure tāngata whaiora are supported to understand the intent and purpose of the cultural packages and that there is the time and support to explore options before decisions are made.

Section 2 – The value and impact of the cultural packages

This section is made up of two parts to describe the impact and value of the cultural packages.

- Part one discusses the programmes and initiatives that were delivered to groups of tāngata whaiora
- Part two discusses the programmes and resources that were delivered through a tailored approach to individuals. It contains three subsections to describe some of these approaches.

Both parts and each subsection contain a summary of the key outcomes.

Part 1 - Group wānanga and programmes

Cultural packages were used to extend the programmes partners were able to offer tāngata whaiora to include visits to local marae, and wānanga that enhanced their skills and knowledge in te ao Māori.

Tāngata whaiora spoke about the manaaki they experienced when they visited marae and that the activities they were involved in had increased their knowledge and understanding of tikanga Māori. One shared that the opportunity to go to marae for the first time had equipped them with the knowledge they needed when they attended a tangihana a few months later. For another it was the opportunity to reconnect with their own marae.

“[it was] a dedicated space and time to learn about te ao Māori including a hīkoi up a local maunga to hear more about it. We were collected each day and funding used to provide kaumatua who had the knowledge of mau rākau, patu, taiaha, meremere and access to harakeke, kawakawa and other rongoā.” -
Tāngata whaiora

“We went over on the van and we were whaikorero’ed on and karanga’ed on to the marae and we spoke about the marae and the people there, and they cooked us a lovely meal and that...and we got to use the whare tipuna to sleep in, and we enjoyed ourselves around the countryside and that... really nice people.” -
Tāngata whaiora

“When we turned up there everything came back. That first day we done protocol, we went through pōhiri, we went through the steps of walking into the marae from the get go, the reason for whaikōrero, and then the whole story behind a marae, and everything like that”. - Tāngata whaiora

Partners shared that although some tāngata whaiora had not been able to connect with their own marae, they were more confident in their cultural identity and had been supported to identify their turangawaewae. They spoke about the peer-to-peer connections tāngata whaiora had developed because of the cultural packages and that it reaffirmed their belief in “the power of connecting back to whakapapa”.

“It's about connecting with each other and having...you know, talking about stories and they shared, ‘oh, you know, my dad used to do this [prepare hangi] when we were young, and I did this’. I just sat there and watched, just listening to their story, sharing stories while doing that was quite interesting as well. Yeah, there's some of them never done it before, you know. So, it was the first time for them. It's beautiful”. - Partner

“And that encouragement that they are now giving each other to continue on in their journey. I mean, that's the mana that this pūtea has helped these wāhine and tāne with. It's, it's been phenomenal, and it's very emotional for me.” – Partner

One partner also put together gift packs to celebrate Matariki. These served as a reminder of the significance of the event and contained resources that tāngata whaiora could use to maintain their ora ngā hinengaro.

“They were the things that really stood out for me, because then I'd see our whanau with them, with the rongoā, with some of the balms in their room using them [and I would say] ‘so what are you doing? [their response] the cheek bones. Oh, okay, so that's what you were using it for. Oh, when I was little, mom used to do that. Oh, okay, so they, they, their reconnection is still there, but it's not there...but from their past that's still there, but it's actually reconnecting in a way that's actually meaningful, so it's been cool.” - Partner

“Because we celebrated [Matariki] every year, and that's our big event as an organisation there were some lovely gift baskets. They had a whole heap of different goods in them. Some of them still wear that stuff to the day because for them it is ‘oh man, I have never had anything like this’ But when you scratch a little bit deeper than that, that connection to, that yearning that reminds them of home, has been pivotal Others, not so much.” – Partner

Tāngata whaiora expressed a sense of pride and achievement from the skills and knowledge they had gained through wānanga that included making rongoā, korowai, tukutuku panels, flax weaving and working collectively to prepare and cook hangi.

“Yeah, they [tukutuku panels] were excellent with the flax and carved and painted. They look really nice, and they were framed and all that. From harakeke flax, woven through the different wood panel you have an art display of a picture on the panel board. No, really good aye, you could... you could even sell them in the shops they were that good.” – Tāngata whaiora

“I went to a rongoā class. I'm still going to that rongoā class, and it's going to be happening on the night. So, it's quite good, and we went out to the [reserve], and we do... and that's like a place of healing and you can pick kawakawa leaves off, and I learned how to make the pani moisturiser and the wai rākau and it was really interesting.” – Tāngata whaiora

Some tāngata whaiora and partners reported increased independence and capability to self-determine their own wellbeing, manage day to day life and to source their own transport to continue with wānanga and programmes in the community. One partner shared that many of the tāngata whaiora they supported ‘would not be in the space’ they are now if it had not been for the cultural packages.

“I feel really good about myself, because [provider] and [provider] understand where people like me come from, you know what I mean, and now, for about a few weeks now, I haven't been on med support anymore. Now I'm taking my own medication, which is quite good.” – Tangata whaiora

“I can speak to people now. I never used to be able to I was really whakamā not being able to talk. Nowadays, I communicate with everyone at... all the time, and do things like go out and be active, interactive.” – Tāngata whaiora

“It makes me more confident each week, and I build myself up to keeping clean and dressing better and speaking to people better and trying to enjoy them.” – Tangata whaiora

“They're like ‘oh, I went out to town, I went shopping by myself, you know, I went to the movies by myself’. You know, just things that they could do by themselves, independently, you know, even taking their own medication on their own without having the support from our services, and we also support with self-care. I mean personal care, they now do that themselves as well. So, yeah, that... all that has shifted.” – Partner

Most of the tāngata whaiora shared that the support from the cultural packages had enhanced their connection to te ao Māori. They described this as healing and that the skills and knowledge that had gained from the wānanga supported them to maintain oranga hinengaro.

“Māori is, is what's making me well and that... with Māoritanga, and waiata's and just wairua healing and that.” – Tangata whaiora

“They guided me to a different way, rather than my own initiative, and showing me good skills... and yeah that made me well, that made me better spiritually.” – Tangata whaiora

“My mood is better, I can talk longer, I can... like I can do the work, the mahi that they tell me to do and I won't, like fail. I love going to those programmes, they really help. My hinengaro is alright, my tinana, my wairua. I used to not be able to speak, then they got me standing up saying my pepeha, doing practice rounds of pōwhiri.” – Tangata whaiora

Providers also shared that they had noticed a visible difference in the confidence of tāngata whaiora from engagement in wānanga and the skills and knowledge they had acquired.

“Mana, it's like a light. It's just a whole bright light around them. You know, before when, when I met them. It was a bit, you know, dim, but now you see, and you can feel it, and you can see it in their expressions when they, you know, talk back to me.” – Partner

As a result of the wānanga they had attended, reconnection and improved relationships with whānau were also reported by some tāngata whaiora.

“We found out, like with this wānanga, I found out that I related to a couple of people here from [rohe], you know. So that's also reconnecting us back to our whanaunga, you know, this whole wānanga, this whole thing. It's just, it's amazing. It's amazing.” – Tangata whaiora

“I used to have really, like, anger issues with mum and my brother and my sister. Now, [because of] doing learning and taking part in everything has changed my relationship with my mum. She's a lot nicer, and so am I. We always, we always talk, we have a good relationship, a healthy relationship now.” – Tangata whaiora

Although we didn't speak directly with whānau members we heard from providers that whānau had shared with them that they had observed a difference in their whānau member with the support from the cultural packages.

“And just hearing him come home and share what he's been doing has been really good, you know, happy that he knows she knows that he's doing something, to better himself and just to stop him from isolating and talking to his voices” – Partner

One partner also shared that the knowledge and skills tāngata whaiora had gained would also be of benefit to their whānau, hapū and Iwi for generations to come.

“Because it wasn't handed down to them [mātauranga Māori] doesn't mean that they can't learn through these wānanga, and then they break that intergenerational cycle of being able to say, actually, no, it stops here with me, and I'm going to learn this mātauranga, and I'm going to share it with my whānau whānau, and my hāpori, and my whakapapa.” - Partner

Summary:

The kōrero from tāngata whaiora and partners demonstrated a positive effect from use of the cultural packages to deliver group activities such as wānanga, marae visits and to celebrate significant cultural events. Key outcomes included:

- Increased knowledge of te ao Māori and skills that they could use in their everyday lives to maintain oranga hinengaro
- Increased sense of belonging and connection within their communities
- Strengthened cultural identity and peer-to-peer connections from engagement in wānanga, marae visits and cultural events of significance
- Increased independence and the confidence to determine their own wellbeing strategies
- Reconnection to whānau and improved relationships
- Increased knowledge and understanding of tikanga Māori
- Intergenerational healing and oranga hinengaro

Part 2 – Individual and tailored cultural packages

Cultural packages were used to develop individual and tailored plans with tāngata whaiora based on their aspirations and to provide support and resources that enabled them to stand in their rangatiratanga.

The cultural packages were also used to support tāngata whaiora with travel funds and koha for marae so they could attend tangihanga. Partners shared that this was an

opportunity to reconnect for some and that for most tāngata whaiora, it was a positive experience.

Narratives shared by partners described the impact for one tangata whaiora who was supported to return home for ten days to reconnect with their whenua and their whānau.

“[name] came to understand that these moments where like pearls, the realisation that her wairua needed this saturation of culture and whānau in order to feel connected, reflected and complete was a huge revelation. [name] confirmed for herself that her life satisfaction was underpinned by being submerged in her culture and surrounded by her whānau. More so, that her daughter was being deprived of it all and she hadn’t even realised the importance until now.” – Provider

Some tāngata whaiora were supported to eliminate barriers that had a negative impact on their confidence, independence and daily functioning including mobility challenges. For one tāngata whaiora this included the purchase of a mobility scooter that supported them to reintegrate into the community and increase their sense of manaakitanga. Their increased independence also meant they were able to strengthen relationships with whānau.

The cultural packages were also used to provide makeovers, gym memberships, music equipment and vouchers to attend the movies and purchase resources. One provider shared that the use of vouchers had uplifted the wairua of tāngata whaiora and that their belief in themselves and their self-worth increased. This was particularly important over the holiday season as it helped to reconnect tāngata whaiora with positive memories from their childhood.

Several tāngata whaiora became visibly emotional talking about their journeys and the support they had received from the cultural packages. It meant they could once again do things that they found healing in, and that in turn improved their oranga hinengaro. One tāngata whaiora shared that it ‘felt good’ to be able to experience these opportunities, with others also saying that being able to purchase the things they needed had increased their employment opportunities. They expressed that they now felt more positive about the future.

“So just everything that has been gifted to me has been for the bigger picture, and I’m living that now. So, I’m reaping the rewards from that today, and it’s just... man, I hope other people can be thinking and feeling the same way, and supported the same that I have, because I’m living a good life now. It’s a good life. I’m on track, and I’m gonna do well” – Tāngata whaiora

One tāngata whaiora described the 200km hīkoi they had embarked on from their home to the urupa where their loved one was laid to rest. They wanted to honour their memory and to inspire their tamariki and mokopuna by role modelling positive pathways to wellbeing. They talked about the valuable experience they had, with time to themselves to think and contemplate their next steps. They saw the journey as a positive experience that would strengthen their connection with whānau, hapū and iwi who supported them on the hīkoi.

“Now I'm doing this thing, and, you know, I get offers from family “Oh, I want to meet up with you, and I'll walk with you”, and they did. So, you know, it's the connection I actually get from my immediate family for doing it....and I think if I didn't have the other part of it to help, like the pūtea side of it I probably wouldn't even be there.” – Tāngata whaiora

The cultural packages were also used to support tāngata whaiora with aspirations and to self-determine strategies and solutions to healing and oranga hinengaro described in more detail below. These included learning te reo Māori, providing a safe and secure home environment and access to healing practices such as romiromi and psychological support.

Learning te reo Māori

Several tāngata whaiora were supported with resources to learn te reo Māori including headphones, desks, chairs and tablets, alongside of 1:1 support from kaimahi in their home. They shared that the opportunity to learn te reo Māori in their own homes alleviated the anxiety they experienced in large groups and enabled them to study at the pace that suited them.

“Because I get anxieties when I'm around a lot of people, and it just, I get panic attacks... I've got PRN [medication to use when necessary] for it, but I'm trying to stay away from the PRN because it makes it worse. I think it makes, I feel like it makes it worse.” – Tāngata whaiora

“And they wanted to reconnect once they got a grip of it, and all it took was just us guiding them through or taking time to read it to them so that they were able to understand and answer. They had all of the answers, they just needed guidance to get them... get it out of them.” – Provider

One tāngata whaiora shared that had we have met with them before they had completed the programme, they would not have said much as they had no confidence. They shared that they were now more confident to kōrero with people and it was evident they felt proud to express their cultural identity.

“It boosted my confidence, being a Māori and not knowing any of the Māori language and knowledge [before].” – Tāngata whaiora

“So happy, and I feel better..a bit better learning Māori... a bit of Māori... and hopefully some other Māori stuff too.” – Tāngata whaiora

“I love getting things right when I’m speaking to someone, and knowing the Māori side of it is much more fluent and easier.” – Tāngata whaiora

Tāngata whaiora shared that being able to speak te reo Māori had also had a positive effect on their oranga hinengaro and their relationships with whānau. One tāngata whaiora shared that prior to learning te reo Māori they felt whakamā that they were the only one in their whānau that didn’t speak the language. As a result of the support, they were able to kōrero more with their whānau and that had encouraged them to keep learning.

“I wasn’t speaking at all; I was just angry. As you can see, I’m pretty calm now and it wasn’t the meds that calmed me down, it was the Māori environment because I got a little [te reo] Māori I want to retain it, it reminds me of how I used to be with my uncles and aunties and stuff like that.” – Tāngata whaiora

“[Waiata] brings back memories of how to...how to avoid mental being, so mentally drained or mentally ill. Some of the words made me remember how the words I would speak would be useful in resisting mental illness away from me and my spirit.” – Tāngata whaiora

“I’m starting to think properly, starting to react more quicker, be more alert, getting up in the mornings.” – Tāngata whaiora

“It’s just so incredible because I’ve done so much internal work, yeah, that I’m myself again. I can control myself emotionally, and I can hold myself really well.” – Tāngata whaiora

Kaimahi provided intentional support and encouragement to navigate the online environment, understand the pātai and to maintain motivation by encouraging tāngata whaiora to make informed decisions about their coursework schedules. Partners also spoke about the privilege of being able to walk the journey with tāngata whaiora and that it had changed the way they engaged with them.

“I have to reflect on that, because there are times where I think on their behalf, or where I speak on their behalf without consulting or understanding them at all,

and just because they don't speak doesn't mean that they can't speak... and so I'm very grateful for the space that I was able to share with them.” – Partner

“There was parts there where they [said they were] finished, I'm like ‘okay, we'll come back another day and finish’. Now, [I say] ‘you said you were going to the end of this page, so are you going to keep going, or are we going to not keep going? This is your choice, but are you going to make it to your own checkpoint? Because you set that’. Whereas I never would have pushed them prior.” – Partner

These foundational steps in learning te reo Māori strengthen cultural identity and were described by partners as the start in the journey of tāngata whaiora to “understand they are rangatira” and that they “never lost their rangatiratanga”.

“They went from having their hoodies on and not being able to physically see their face, and we would talk to them and they were giving us nods and shakes of their head to now whenever they see us and we're at kaupapa, or we go over to visit them, they will come over and acknowledge us, or yell out to us and come over and give us a high five and, you know, have a chat to us.” - Partner

Summary

Key outcomes demonstrated the profound impact on both tāngata whaiora and partners that included:

- Strengthened cultural identity and confidence to kōrero in both te reo Māori and te reo pākehā
- Improved relationships and engagement with whānau
- Increased desire to explore more knowledge and skills that are grounded in te ao Māori
- Reconnection to the healing innate within te ao Māori and the development of strategies and solutions to maintain ora ngā hinengaro
- Reciprocal learning opportunities and value for tāngata whaiora and providers

Safe and secure home environment

Cultural packages were used to support tāngata whaiora to address a need or challenge in their home environment that negatively impacted their ora ngā hinengaro. This included the resources required to make repairs to their property, so that the environment was safe and secure for their whānau and pets, and purchases of gardening equipment.

One tangata whaiora talked about the impact on their whānau and ora ngā hinengaro when “their whare tapa whā was not balanced”. They were supported to make essential repairs to their whare and surrounding areas.

“If your whare..this is one thing that I hear quite often, and especially through my psychologist, but she goes, if your whare is not functioning well then that means your whānau is not functioning well, which means you're not functioning well. Then how can you possibly do work on yourself? and you know your te whare tapa whā is not balanced.” – Tāngata whaiora

They and other tāngata whaiora shared the relief they experienced when they had a warm and safe home for the whānau and of knowing that their pets were also in a secure environment.

“Now that everything's secured and warm and dry, because we consider our whare like the marae for our kids to come to in the holidays, you know, come for Christmas. Our house is the whare, and so, you know, we've got moko's an that, so we wanted to make sure that we maintain that, and that's really important to us to maintain the whānau, the whānaungatanga with the kids. Even though they're sprawled out all over the motu, they know that they've always got home to come back to.” – Tāngata whaiora

“My anxiety is really, really bad. I have really bad anxiety since the breakdown. I had anxiety before, but it's worse now, but I kept having dreams of [dog] being... like running across the road and getting killed and... and she's, she's, I don't know what I do without her with, you know, my animals are everything.” – Tāngata whaiora

“It's just really sort of made things a lot more harmony...harmonious, because there's less stress of ‘where are we gonna, you know, come up with this money to try and secure our property, because it was, it was kind of a continuous thing.” – Tāngata whaiora

One also shared that they were able to purchase gardening tools and implements that they could use to build their dream garden as a sanctuary for their whānau.

“We got like stuff that we can use around the garden, because we want to make the garden our place... so have our century garden and stuff like that, where we can go sit down and sort of have a moment by ourselves or together, or as a whānau sort of thing. So, we can all rejoin.” – Tāngata whaiora

Gardening was described as healing for several tāngata whaiora. They shared that there was a negative impact on their overall wellbeing when they were unable to maintain their gardens due to pain they experienced from physical challenges. Resources were purchased to make it easier for them to tend to their gardens, enabling them to reduce stress and maintain their wellbeing.

“Because that's my healing, yeah. And that's when they got some funding for the power tools which make my life.” – Tāngata whaiora

“It takes all your stress away, like you could be, like stressed to the max, and you go out and garden for half an hour or so and that just so relaxing..like I use it too because I get really bad anxiety and so for me just even going out there in my recovery mode and pulling out a weed here and there.” – Tāngata whaiora

As a result of the cultural package one tāngata whaiora had their garden featured in a magazine, demonstrating the increased confidence, meaning and purpose they felt.

“I like to touch people's souls when they come through [my garden]. I like them to... and nearly everybody does, you know, if they're in touch with their wairua. If they're in touch with themselves they will feel that love, that aroha, when they go to through my garden they will feel, feel it and... and because I have poured everything into it.” – Tāngata whaiora

“I think I'm on the right track, on the right journey. It does heal me, and I've been so grateful for that funding, because it's just made it easier for that to happen.” – Tāngata whaiora

They shared that the resources purchased had enabled them to present their garden at its best, and of the joy they experienced when others were also able to enjoy the space.

“...and we also had the opportunity of going to visit that garden last year as part of one of our wellness packages for our tāngata whaiora” – Provider

One tāngata whaiora used their garden to provide kai for some of their neighbours demonstrating manaakitanga.

“Well, that's what I do with the vege garden at home. I grow more than what we need and just give the neighbours. Like I've got a neighbour, and as much as she could do with the help, she doesn't like asking for it. So, I just grow extra veges, and I've got to know what the kids eat and what they don't eat, and it's like ‘kids you want this’. They take tomatoes over to their mum, or some carrots or some strawberries or cucumbers or potatoes. [They] take them inside for mum to cook up, she can't say no to it then. She'll come out, [and] she's like ‘oh thank you’.” – Tāngata whaiora

They also shared the vision they had to build a community garden to provide a source of fresh vegetables, and to create connections and reduce social isolation.

“I want to make raised garden beds so, like our elders can go in and pick stuff and don't need to be bending over. Yeah, it's at their level so there's less falls. I just

want to make it as safe as possible so they can feel safe walking through here as well.” – Tāngata whaiora

Although it wasn't a clear finding that resulted from use of the cultural packages, tāngata whaiora also spoke of the desire to explore their cultural identity. They talked about learning te reo Māori and exploring rongoā Māori and whakapapa.

Summary

Key outcomes described by tāngata whaiora included:

- A safe and secure home environment that reduced stress and enhanced oranga hinengaro
- Increased confidence and self-worth from the regained sense of meaning and purpose in their lives
- Increased opportunities to engage in strategies that are healing and maintain oranga hinengaro
- Increased connection to whānau and the community
- A sense of pride in their achievements and the opportunity to celebrate them with their whānau and the community

Access to healing practices

As described in section one, many tāngata whaiora had experienced trauma, and as a result they were often hesitant to engage in te ao Māori. Some were also reluctant to reconnect with whānau and explore their whakapapa. Therefore, understanding and addressing the trauma tāngata whaiora were living with was expressed by partners as integral to strengthened cultural identity and engagement in te ao Māori.

Partners talked about the healing practices tāngata whaiora were able to access through the support of the cultural packages. This included access to romiromi, mirimiri, gym and talking therapies grounded in a by Māori for Māori approach so that tāngata whaiora didn't experience additional trauma. The healing practices that the cultural packages enabled are described in more detail below.

Talking therapies

Access to talking therapies enabled tāngata whaiora to express any whakamā they experienced about their cultural identity and the impact this may have had on their connection to their whānau and sense of belonging. It was emphasised by partners that these approaches needed to be grounded in te ao Māori.

“This is what this pūtea has afforded these wāhine, to help them to stand in their rangatiratanga and to release a lot of the trauma that sometimes [comes from] the very services that are put into place by the kāwanatanga i.e. counselling.

However, counselling without a framework of te ao Māori, which then creates, actually more trauma.” – Partner

“[From] being quite hesitant at the start... again, I think a bit of this cultural identity piece of being whakamā and having these boundaries in place, you know, not just in a mental health sense where they're at, but in a cultural sense, and [I] have seen huge shifts.” - Partner

“Making the goal of working towards getting out in the community and gradually doing that so that their anxiety is settled. The other side of that has been about unpacking what it feels like to... for them to be Māori in the world of te ao Māori and what that is like for them. So, unravelling and unpacking it a little bit and bringing that shame to light a little bit, holding space for that.” - Partner

Sharing their experiences of feeling whakamā in a supportive environment encouraged tāngata whaiora to express their cultural identity and increased their confidence to kōrero te reo Māori and explore healing through te ao Māori.

“And just highlighting that for whanau that, you know, I seen you and I noticed that, and I know what that means for you to say ‘kia ora’ out loud to somebody else. It's pretty cool. So, yeah, those tangible things that you can hear, and you can feel, and you can see, you know, amazing, powerful indicators of the people that are coming along in their journey.” - Partner

Partners shared that they would kōrero with tāngata whaiora about the healing innate within rongoā Māori and how they could use Māori health models such as Te Whare Tapa Whā to support their wellbeing.

“And I start introducing rongoā, you know, I start talking about the healing process within themselves, being... having a diagnosis, you know, how do they deal with that? In the white world, sorry,... in the white world they've got all the medications and everything like that, but, you know in te ao Māori, we could use the rongoā and te whare tapa whā.” - Partner

They shared that as a result tāngata whaiora were able to find tools and strategies they could use to build resilience and maintain oranga hinengaro.

“She can cope with different little triggers that she had previously. She's got all these wee tools in her toolbox, in her kete now too, and her coping mechanisms are great. She's getting out and about.” – Partner

“It is so powerful. It is changing lives. It is helping our wāhine make different informed mātauranga Māori based decisions. Yeah, so they are using this mātauranga to guide them.” – Partner

Partners also shared that tāngata whaiora felt more confident to express their tino rangatiratanga and decide their own pathways to orange hinengaro.

“Some of them have refused to have counselling because of the trauma that has been all that they have experienced through the lack of ongoing concern, through the changing of counsellors, through the lack of specific tikanga based guiding and supporting narratives. So now they are strong enough to say ‘no, I want... what I want is a Māori counsellor because I know that they are gonna understand me’.” – Partner

The process of whakawhanaungatanga was a core value partners (Māori psychologists and counsellors) incorporated to build connections and develop trust with tāngata whaiora. They shared that many of the tāngata whaiora they supported had “never spoken about this [trauma they had experienced] to anybody else”, and they were unaware of additional support that may have been available and the process to access it. Therefore, the support provided by the cultural packages enabled them to engage in talking therapies, and as a result the psychologist or counsellor was able to source funding through other avenues so they could continue in their healing journeys.

“And so it is only through that process, you know, of this funding coming in, of building whanaungatanga that people have felt safe enough to share pieces of themselves that will swap them onto a different funding track.” – Partner

Romiromi

One partnerer described that for many tāngata whaiora they were able “release” the trauma they were holding on to through romiromi sessions. Access to these sessions were described as healing and supported tāngata whaiora with tools and strategies to maintain their orange hinengaro.

“[It’s the] first time she has ever had someone intentionally come into her space [to provide romiromi] with a whakaaro of healing instead of coming into her space with a whakaaro of meting⁴ⁱ out pain and mamae.” - Partner

“And she was able to, you know, through these sessions that she has been having to, you know, to release that, and to use the tools that she has been taught. She is more engaged now than what she has ever been.” - Partner

The release of the trauma helped them to stand in their rangatiratanga, with the partner sharing that they were confident to speak up and advocate for themselves. For one

⁴ Oxford Dictionary Definition: dispense or [allot](#) justice, a punishment, or harsh treatment.e.g "punishments meted out to soldiers who violated army regulations"

tāngata whaiora, the increased confidence encouraged them to enrol in a programme to learn te reo Māori.

“From a wahine that would barely look at you in the eyes... from a wahine that couldn't even lift her head up to speak, to a wahine now that is advocating for herself, that is standing in her mana motuhake.” - Partner

“She stood in her rangatiratanga, reached out to Te Wānanga o Aotearoa and now she is doing an online course in te reo Maori. She would never have done that.” - Partner

Summary:

Partner insights about the healing practices tāngata whaiora were able to access through the support of cultural packages highlighted the following outcomes:

- Improved oranga hinengaro through practices that enabled them to release the trauma they had experienced
- Strengthened cultural identity and increased feelings of self-worth and value that encouraged further engagement in te ao Māori
- Increased confidence and ability to self-determine and self-advocate for the solutions and strategies they wanted to engage in that would support them to maintain oranga hinengaro
- Sustainable funding for continued access to psychological support

Section 3 - Partner and funder insights

The five partners were selected based on existing relationships with the funder and their established history of specialist mental health and addiction service delivery. A closed tender process was used and partners were invited to confirm their interest. This simplified the procurement process and demonstrated high trust, faith and goodwill in the providers capability to effectively deliver the He Kete Whaiora cultural packages.

This section is broken into four subsections and described below to demonstrate the key themes that emerged from the insights of partners and the funder:

- Implementation of the cultural packages
- Reporting requirements
- Sustainable funding
- Opportunities for improvement

Implementation of the cultural packages

High trust procurement processes assume there is a clear understanding of the expectations of the funder and the deliverables in the contract. Prior to the evaluation

the funder advised that there had been two 'resets' with partners to rectify any misunderstandings about the expectations, criteria, intent and purpose of the fund.

"Well, at the start it was kind of a misunderstanding, I think. I don't know but just know what the pūtea was for. So, we went homeless, you know, we did what we weren't supposed to be doing till later on. It was a bit of a muddle up." - Partner

The funder described their reflections and that there was a desire to enable partners to be autonomous in their delivery approaches. This meant that they were not prescriptive in their verbal communication about the cultural packages. They shared that this may have contributed to some of the misunderstandings and had resulted in some of the cultural packages being used to address physical health and social challenges experienced by tāngata whaiora. It was expressed that this was not the intent of the cultural packages and that other funding sources would be more appropriate to address barriers to oranga hinengaro due to health or social challenges.

Partners talked about the lack of clarity and guidelines at the inception of the contract and that this had caused confusion and frustration. For some partners their understanding of what was needed to support tāngata whaiora to strengthen cultural identity and self-determine strategies to oranga hinengaro differed from the funder's expectations.

"Te Aka Whai Ora [Hauora Māori Services – Te Whatu Ora] have talked about that.. this, you know, there was a whole reset that had to happen because messaging initially was very, I don't know whether it was vague or what the word for it was." - Partner

"It was like, here's \$5,000 you know... here's your tāngata, go out and make a difference in their life, and I was like, yay. You know, there was no guideline of what we could spend the money on that was also... we thought, yay, we go to their houses, and we see them, you know, they need a bed, they need a washing machine. You know, after burning all their bridges with WINZ and all that, so we were able to provide them with that, those kinds of things that made a difference in their life." - Partner

Partners expressed that as kaupapa Māori organisations they are whānau centric and that their ethos is grounded in connection and reconnection to whakapapa. They described that their 'core business' was to support tāngata whaiora to express their cultural identity and tino rangatiratanga, making it difficult to assess the boundaries and limitations for the use of the cultural packages to align with funder expectations.

“As a kaupapa Māori organisation, we, by default will reconnect whanaunga back to their whakapapa.” – Partner

“It is somewhat challenging to assess the boundaries relating to what is to be considered appropriate cultural support. We have interpreted this as anything that can be seen to address a need in the areas of whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, rangatiratanga and kaitiakitanga. As a number of our tangata whaiora have pressing needs with regards to everyday expenses we have included some allowance for these to stabilise their living conditions to allow us to awhi their cultural development.” - Partner

They felt there was often a lack of understanding from the funder of the long-term outcomes that would eventuate for some tāngata whaiora when the physical and social health challenges were addressed.

“Funders need to understand the people who are being supported, and to understand that for some there is an enduring benefit in the value they have received from the programmes. This can sometimes be difficult to describe.” - Partner

Partners described the relationships they had built with tāngata whaiora, sometimes over decades, meant they knew for some tāngata whaiora the physical and social challenges had to be addressed before they were ready to express their cultural identity and reconnect to whakapapa and whenua.

“It's that whole holistic stuff, isn't it, which is really hard through a very westernised output KPI stuff, as it's really hard to kind of say, well actually, all of these things, when we look at te ao Māori, all that reconnection to your wairua can't be uplifted if your tinana is not good.” - Partner

There was an expressed need for provision in the contract to enable a holistic approach to address the complexity of barriers some tāngata whaiora faced that made connection to te ao Māori difficult. One partner shared that tāngata whaiora needed to be “alive and fit and healthy, then they can actually do that reconnection back to whakapapa”.

Quarterly reports

The challenges with the interpretation of the delivery of the cultural packages is also evident in the quarterly reports. The quantitative data provided varies across partners which made it difficult to aggregate and analyse the data. For some partners it may have been more difficult to accurately capture the data when cultural packages had been

used to provide group wānanga and group activities, as the reporting measures didn't allow for this information to be captured adequately.

The funder shared insights that highlighted numerous follow up conversations and emails with partners for additional information, and to clarify the use of the cultural packages to align with the contract deliverables. This included requests for narratives to show how they had strengthened cultural identity and enabled tāngata whaiora to self-determine strategies and solutions to maintain oranga hinengaro.

Some partners expressed frustration at the reporting measures that they felt were based on 'mainstream' indicators, and that they didn't allow for the outcomes to be measured in a meaningful way.

"This is a typical mainstream framework that's been wrapped up in a kaupapa Māori korowai to appease the funders and say 'Yeah, this is... this is kaupapa Māori work'. Well, actually, we're already doing kaupapa Māori work, how about you allow us to navigate what our own reporting should look like, instead of determining what outcomes look like." – Partner

Funders shared that they had received no feedback on the reporting measures at the inception of the contract as requested. However, one partner suggested that reporting measures that enabled them to reflect how the use of the cultural fund relates to connection to whakapapa would have been helpful

"What would that look like? Well, I think we need to get away from the funding being the mechanism for how we report. Then you let the organisation decide how that relates to the whakapapa, as opposed to, you know, the very specific, granular things that they're asking for in reporting." - Partner

Sustainable funding

One of the concerns expressed by the partners was the lack of certainty about ongoing funding and the impact this may have on tāngata whaiora. They worried that tāngata whaiora may have their hopes raised and then be unable to progress further in their aspirations and goals.

"So, we aspire to have these hopes and dreams, and then it's like "oh sorry, bro, you can only do level one, we don't have any funding for level two." - Partner

Some of the partners in larger regional centres were able to minimise the impact of this tāngata whaiora and sourced other programmes at local marae within their community.

“Because we've used all of her pūtea, [my role] is to connect with a couple of the marae that are close to her, so that she can start going to the programs that they have there as well and utilise those things, you know, those marae programs that we have in the community.” - Partner

Several tāngata whaiora also shared that “it would be great” if there was additional resource available. This highlights the need for discussions with tāngata whaiora to provide information about the scope of the cultural packages and to support them to develop plans that would maximise the benefit to them.

Opportunities for improvement

The challenges experienced by both the partners and the funder demonstrated the need to embed tikanga Māori in the commissioning process. Partners shared that they would have liked to have been able to come together kanohi ki te kanohi with the funder and other partners to share information and to build relationships.

“Koha is a reciprocal process. It's an agreement between two people that things are going to happen. It's not one sided.” – Partner

The funder also felt it would have been beneficial to meet regularly face to face, however they had to work within budget constraints and instead organised to meet virtually with all of the providers on two occasions. This highlights the onus is on both the funder and the partners to foster a partnership where there is a commitment to engagement and connection.

In addition to this it was suggested that a “staggered” evaluation process would have been helpful to track their progress and to identify any challenges and opportunities for improvement. This would also enable them to celebrate their successes and share their knowledge with other partners.

“So, being able to... being able to have that kind of investment, to be able to do that as well, so that you're not just running, which I know is often the case too. We're running and there's nothing there to sort of be able to go, well, we'd love to do it, but actually, do we have the resource, either people or pūtea? It doesn't really matter, because sometimes it's both to be able to do those things. Because I guess when it comes to sort of doing the tracking of things like your funding and stuff like that, have you been able to do that, like to actually even know whether you're running at a massive deficit with it?” - Partner

Regular evaluations would also provide key insights for the funder about additional resource that may be required for the delivery of cultural packages. This was particularly relevant to the partners as the considerable time and additional resource needed to plan and support tāngata whaiora is not always factored in to the contract.

“It's like 'okay, so who's paying for the gas? who's paying for that stuff, [e.g.] time to be away? who's paying for the kai? Are we staying there one day or two? We're getting the koha then next minute, the He Kete Whaiora funding doesn't look as flash as it as it may look on paper” – Partner

“There was like \$10k I think that was for 20% as a management levy... yeah, this is for you to do...and that is not much across, you know, the expectations and understanding the time it takes to sit with whānau and support whānau to get the maximum value from these things.” - Partner

Kaimahi also shared insights about how they would like to see the cultural packages utilised that would maximise the value of the cultural packages.

“I would like to see organisationally the ability to utilise the funding to host wānanga in their hometowns or at their marae. You know, if we have eight whānau that are able to access He Kete Whaiora then that means eight wānanga or weekend trips or three-day noho that they go on where they spend time on their marae, sleep at the marae. We reconnect, and take the rōpū into the water, and they can put their feet in the water and just actually reconnecting them to where they come from.” – Partner

“I believe that we could do more for them with the pūtea and be more intentional about the way that we're utilising it.” – Partner

This highlights an opportunity for a collaborative approach to delivery of the cultural packages with shared processes, systems and resources to enable the fund to be implemented effectively as intended.

Conclusion

Insights from tāngata whaiora and partners demonstrate the positive effect of the He Kete Whaiora cultural packages. Tāngata whaiora were supported by partners to engage in opportunities that immersed them in te ao Māori and strengthened their cultural identity. These opportunities were reported to have increased their confidence, promoted healing and provided them with solutions and strategies to maintain oranga hinengaro.

The relationships tāngata whaiora had with partners shows the instrumental role of a by Māori for Māori approach. Partners were able to identify tāngata whaiora who would benefit from the cultural packages, and either worked 1:1 with them on individualised plans, or delivered additional wānanga and group projects that increased opportunities to reconnect to te ao Māori. Both approaches addressed some of the barriers that tāngata whaiora experienced that had impacted on their engagement in te ao Māori, with key outcomes that included:

- Increased access for tāngata whaiora to healing approaches grounded in te ao Māori that improved mental, physical, spiritual and whānau wellbeing
- Increased engagement in wānanga and te ao Māori kaupapa that enabled tāngata whaiora to develop peer to peer relationships and increased their confidence in their cultural identity and knowledge of tikanga Māori
- Tāngata whaiora received 1:1 support and resources to achieve their goals that reconnected them to te ao Māori, and enabled them to self-determine strategies and solutions to healing and to maintain ora ngā hinengaro
- Increased independence, meaning and purpose in the lives of tāngata whaiora

The evaluation also demonstrated opportunities for improvement in the implementation of the cultural packages. This included:

- improved communication between the funder and partners about the purpose and expectations of the cultural packages including the boundaries and limitations for their use. The partners will also need to ensure that kaimahi are also informed and that they understand the purpose and expectations for the use of the cultural packages.
- improved communication between the partners and tāngata whaiora to ensure tāngata whaiora fully understand the purpose of the cultural packages and that they have the time to discuss the process and options for their use.

Overall the evaluation demonstrates that the He Kete Whaiora cultural packages were effective, enhanced the skills of tāngata whaiora, and provided the support that strengthened their identity and knowledge of tikanga Māori; enhanced connectedness, resilience, self-identity and quality of life.

Next Steps

Based on the findings from the evaluation the next steps could include:

- Provide comprehensive written guidelines and information about the boundaries and expectations for the use of the cultural packages to ensure there is a clear understanding of the use of the cultural packages

- Explore the potential for a collaborative approach to delivery of the cultural packages with shared processes, systems and resources to enable the fund to be implemented effectively as intended
- Review the reporting requirements with a view to establish outcomes-based measures that allow for reporting on the expected long-term benefit of the cultural packages
- Implement an evaluation programme to monitor the efficacy of the cultural packages at regular intervals, and to celebrate the successes of the He Kete Whaiora cultural packages
- Partners to implement the necessary resource and training to ensure that tāngata whaiora are adequately supported 1:1 to understand the intent and purpose of the cultural packages

Glossary

Kupu (word)	Definition
Awhi	to care for, embrace and cherish
Hiko	a march, hike or journey
Kaitiakitanga	guardianship, stewardship and protection of the whenua
Koha	a gift or contribution that demonstrates reciprocity
Mamae	hurt, pain
Manaaki	to support, care for to show generosity and care for others
Manaakitanga	to show generosity and care for others
Mana Motuhake	Māori self-determination
Mātauranga	Knowledge, wisdom and understanding
Mau rākau	Māori weaponry
Meremere	short weapon – of stone, often greenstone
Mokopuna	grandchild
Oranga Hinengaro	mental wellbeing. In te ao Māori this also relates to the interconnected relationship of physical, social, spiritual and whānau wellbeing
Patu	hand weapon
Pūtea	fund, sum of money
Rangatiratanga	chieftainship, right to exercise authority, leadership
Romiromi	a traditional Māori healing practice that uses massage techniques
Taha Māori	Māori identity
Taiaha	long wooden weapon
Tamariki	children
Tangata Whaiora Tāngata Whaiora	a person or people seeking oranga (wellbeing)
Tino Rangatiratanga	self-determination, sovereignty, autonomy
Tukutuku	ornamental lattice-work used particularly around carvings of meeting houses
Tūpuna	ancestors
Turangawaewae	a place to stand where there is a sense of belonging through kinship and whakapapa
Wai rākau	traditional Māori medicine made from plants
Wairua	spirituality
Whakaaro	thought, opinion and understanding
Whakamā	to feel shy, ashamed or embarrassed
Whakawhanaunga	to make connections and develop relationships

Whānau whānui	extended family
Whāngai	to feed, nourish, bring up, foster, adopt
Whenua	land
Whakapapa	genealogy

Appendices

Appendix A: Consent form

You have been invited to take part in an interview about your experience in receiving support from [provider] through the He Kete Whaiora fund.

Background

The He Kete Whaiora Cultural Packages were funded by Hauora Māori Services – Te Whatu Ora to tāngata whaiora to self determine solutions and strategies through te ao Māori approaches to enable healing⁵, and to maintain ora ngā hinengaro.

The fund is intended to enhance people's skills and provide the support that will strengthen their identity and knowledge of tikanga Māori; enhancing connectedness, resilience, self-identity and quality of life.

About the evaluation

The evaluation will be managed by Kerri Butler (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Porou), Evaluator from Take Notice. Kerri has her own personal experience of accessing mental health services in inpatient settings and the community and her focus is on amplifying the narratives of people with lived experience.

We are interested in finding out the impact and value of the cultural package. This interview is an opportunity for you to reflect on your experience. We will use the insights to gather the stories that demonstrate the effect of the fund on strengthening identity and knowledge of tikanga Māori.

Other considerations

We will be using audio equipment to record key insights during the interview. Your kōrero will remain confidential to our team, and you will not be identified in the report. There will be no reference to you or your name in any publications.

You can decide to withdraw from the discussion at any time and you do not have to answer or share any information you do not feel comfortable sharing. There is no financial benefit for you; however, a \$50 koha for your time will be given as an acknowledgement of your contribution and participation.

By participating in this interview:

- I agree to be audiotaped.
- I understand that if I change my mind and decide not to participate, I can withdraw any information I have provided up until the 10th October 2024
- I understand that parts or all of my story may be included in the final report, which Hauora Māori Services – Te Whatu Ora may decide to publish.
- I understand that the data will be kept for 5 years, after which they will be destroyed.

⁵ Healing from acute distress, substance or gambling harm, addiction and trauma

- I will be given access to a summary of the evaluation findings when it is finished.

I agree to take part in the interview based on the conditions outlined above.

- ☐ I would like the opportunity to check the transcript and make factual changes (please tick)
- ☐ I wish to be anonymised for the final report. (please tick)
- ☐ I understand my story may be identifiable even if it is anonymised. (please tick)

Declaration by participant:

I hereby consent to take part in this interview.

Participant's name:

Signed:

Date:

Who should I contact if I have further questions?

If you have any queries or concerns, please contact Kerri Butler – kerri@takenotice.co.nz or Ph 0274483390.
