

10 July 2023

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Your request for Official information, reference: HN20021859

Thank you for your email on 7 June 2023, asking for the following which has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

"I have been unable to locate any statutory reference to Te Whatu Ora. By way of OIA please advise if this is:

- *The maori name for Health New Zealand*
- *How "official" is this name given that it has no statutory recognition or interpretation of the name and therefore it has no legal standing e.g. can te whatu ora make a demand for payment*
- *What implied official/ statutory recognition does the name have if so by virtue of which enactment*
- *There is a requirement for transparency in our laws yet this undefined name has become responsible for establishing to running the health system across New Zealand*
(<https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.futureofhealth.govt.nz%2Fhealth-nz%2F&data=05%7C01%7Cchnzoia%40health.govt.nz%7C525d410e18634fceb0ce08db670e8d20%7C23cec7246d204bd19fe9dc4447edd1fa%7C0%7C0%7C638217084413314987%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljojMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzJlLCJBTil6lk1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=GzVaJpDZJLXVFm3HsUuFL5qzQ7UkIINol2GHTqKg1o%3D&reserved=0>). *Where does one find te whatu ora and where does it get its powers from how do we get accountability from it*
- *Is there is a legitimate reason for it to be called te whatu Ora if so why was this not reflected in statute*
- *Who assigned this name and how was this name attributed to a statutory body which did not exist prior to 1 July 2022*
- *If Health New Zealand was to be known by any other name why was it not reflected in statute"*

Our legal name is Health New Zealand under the Pae Ora (Healthy Futures) Act 2022, which is our establishing and governing legislation.

The Māori name for Health New Zealand is Te Whatu Ora. In many of our communications, and in our branding, we use both names (such as in the letterhead above).

As an organisation, we are proud to hold both the names of Health New Zealand and Te Whatu Ora, and to have both names so strongly embody the purpose of our work. You raise a legitimate point that not everyone may recognise that the Māori name is synonymous with Health New Zealand, which is something we will keep in mind ahead.

Agencies can use trading names other than their legal name, and one basis for this is use of official languages. After Parliament agreed to recognise Māori as an official language in 1987, the use of te reo Māori has increasingly become more common in New Zealand. Most government agencies have adopted a Māori name to use alongside their English name. This is consistent with the purposes of the Māori Language Act 2016 and Maihi Karauna: the Crown Strategy for Māori Language Revitalisation 2019 – 2023. In the case of the health system, our Māori name also recognises the importance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi to our work, [as reflected in our legislation](#), such as through the [health sector principles](#).

With regards to the background to our Māori name, an expert advisory group, initiated by Tā Mason Durie and led by Rahui Papa, undertook significant work. In short, Te Whatu Ora is 'the weaving of wellness'; the combining together of people, resources, organisations, viewpoints and actions for the betterment and wellbeing of all. 'Whatu' has both a meaning of weaving and is also a direct reference to the pupil of the eye, reflecting the vision required of a new entity to improve health outcomes. There is a video on our website further explaining the name if you would like to view it (<https://www.tewhatauora.govt.nz/about-us/who-we-are/our-structure/our-story>).

You have asked why the name Te Whatu Ora wasn't reflected in statute. A practical reason is the name did not exist at that time; however we are not in a position to speak to the specific motivations of lawmakers at the time.

How to get in touch

If you have any questions, you can contact us at hnzOIA@health.govt.nz. If you are not happy with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, Te Whatu Ora may proactively release a copy of this response on our website. All requester data, including your name and contact details, will be removed prior to release.

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Ngā mihi nui.



Peter Alsop
Chief of Staff