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### **DHB takes the lead on mission to boost Māori workforce**

When Te Hine-Ngaro Tuterangiwhiu started as a physiotherapist at Waitematā DHB six months ago, she already felt a part of the team thanks to national Māori health careers programme, Kia Ora Hauora (KOH).

Waitematā DHB is the new lead organisation for KOH coordinating four regional coordination centres to implement initiatives designed to encourage more Māori into the health workforce and improve Māori health outcomes.

KOH, launched in 2008, was initially led by Counties Manukau DHB. Today it is led nationally by Waitematā DHB and carried out regionally by Northland, Lakes, Capital and Coast and Canterbury DHBs.

Waitematā DHB has a large Māori population with 61,450 people and strong Māori leadership to support the programme into the future.

KOH provides increased opportunities for Māori to see the health sector in action through mentoring and local events. This includes open days, hospital visits, science days, wānanga, café, workshops and tertiary events.

Te Hine-Ngaro, of Ngā Puhī and Ngāti Ruanui descent, enrolled with KOH during her first year at AUT.

“This programme gave me the access I needed to meet great physios and other healthcare professionals already in the industry, which helped confirm that this was the right pathway for me in order to make a meaningful difference in our community.”

Te Hine-Ngaro’s first language is te reo Māori and she has been acknowledged by the DHB for her initiative to incorporate te reo and tikanga into her everyday work.

“I was fortunate to have met other Māori healthcare staff within the DHB who supported and empowered me to be myself in my role and to utilise my own skills and cultural knowledge to enhance my own practice.”

“Integrating values such as manaakitanga and aroha into my practice enables me to form strong connections with my colleagues and patients. Manaakitanga and aroha are values that are transcendent across most cultures and also align with the values of the DHB. I am grateful and humbled to work with many that exemplify such values within their own mahi.”

Waitematā DHB has just over 7000 staff and a total of 483 of them identify as Māori making up 6.7 percent of the Waitematā DHB workforce currently.

General Manager for Māori Health at Waitematā and Auckland DHBs, Riki Nia Nia, says having more Māori health professionals in the health sector will encourage and inspire more rangatahi to pursue health careers also.

“Waitematā DHB is a champion for Māori workforce development in our country, reflected from the top with our CEO, who is Māori,” he says.

Waitematā DHB CEO Dr Dale Bramley says a strong Māori workforce will contribute to the acceleration of positive Māori health gains and a better health service for all.

“We are committed to eliminating inequities wherever they exist, particularly in relation to Māori. Our efforts have already contributed to Māori gaining twice as many years in life-expectancy compared with the non-Māori/non-Pacific population since 2008.

“Having a health workforce that better reflects the community we serve plays its part by increasing engagement, so that is what our DHB continually works to achieve.”

KOH further enhances our ongoing work to reduce inequities for Māori. Other programmes Waitematā DHB has implemented includes Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) Screening, wahakura wānanga promoting safe sleep among infants, the Awhi Tamariki health screening programme in schools and the Healthy Babies, Healthy Futures initiative educating Māori mothers about healthy lifestyle choices.

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**For further information contact**

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