

20 April 2016

Letter from the Chair of Whakauae Research Services Ltd

Change of Leadership for Whakauae Research

In accordance with its strategic intent and long term sustainability goals, the Board Chair of Whakauae Research Services Ltd, Mr Peter Fraser, today announced a change in leadership for the health research centre. Dr Heather Gifford who established Whakauae in 2005 under the auspices of Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Hauiti, has stepped down from her role as Centre Director, paving the way for Dr Amohia Boulton to take over the day to day management of the organisation.

Mr Fraser observed, “Whakauae started as an audacious vision about the critical need for, and the intrinsic value of, independent Māori public health research that was iwi-mandated and led by Māori. That vision is now very much a reality as Whakauae has developed into a team of highly skilled, dedicated, and respected professionals. It is therefore timely for Heather to pass the role of Centre Director on to Dr Amohia Boulton, who has been with Whakauae since 2009 and been the Acting Director for the past year whilst Heather has been on sabbatical.”

Dr Gifford will remain an active member of the Whakauae team in her new position, Strategic Advisor Business and Research. As a member of Ngāti Hauiti, she also maintains a role on the Board of Directors for the company. “Having spent nine months recently on sabbatical in the UK, I have come home appreciating the need to maintain a harmonious work/life balance while also pursuing my passion of undertaking excellent public health research. The change of leadership has been part of a carefully thought out transition phase for the centre, taking us into the next phase of our development.”

Dr Gifford further stated that the team is “excited by the possibilities the change in leadership heralds. While for the most part things will remain very much ‘business as usual’, under Amohia’s leadership as Acting Director we have already seen strong leadership and a strengthening of our position as a Kaupapa Māori organisation. The centre is well positioned to make the most of the opportunities provided by being one of the few iwi-owned research centres in a post-settlement



phase of Māori development.”

The Board acknowledges the enormous contribution Heather has made over the last decade and welcomes Amohia in her new role of leading Whakauae into its second decade.

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About Whakauae Research:

Whakauae Research Services Ltd (WRS) is a tribally owned and mandated research centre that undertakes a range of health services, health policy, primary care and public health research and health promotion evaluation. Owned by Ngāti Hauiti (a tribe from the Rangitīkei area of the North Island), the central purpose of WRS is to transform the lives of Māori by undertaking high quality kaupapa Māori research that is innovative, collaborative and cutting edge.