

**11 December 2018**

## **Rongoā Māori Research Project Presents Guidelines**

On 11 December at the University of Auckland, Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga – New Zealand's Māori Centre of Research Excellence and Whakauae Research for Māori Health & Development presented the results of the 2017 project - Cultural, Ethical, Research, Legal & Scientific (CERLS) Issues of Rongoā Māori Research. The output of this research project is a set of Rongoā Māori research guidelines.

These guidelines challenge the research community to have an understanding of Te Ao Māori values and the practice of Rongoā Māori before engaging with future Rongoā study participants. They encourage researchers to address Māori concerns about the exploitation of traditional knowledge which is shared in studies for commercial gain, or the assumption of intellectual property rights beyond those traditionally charged with carrying such knowledge. The CERLS guidelines also draw researchers' attention to a duty of care to attend to not only their legal health and safety responsibilities, but also to the cultural health and safety aspects of their studies.

It is hoped that these CERLS guidelines will also help inform Māori communities about their rights and provide assurance that researchers who use them will be inclusive and collaborating, giving care and attention not to reframe the scope or practice of Rongoā Māori either by omission or misrepresentation. Most importantly however, the guidelines acknowledge the importance of tikanga Māori and Māori ways of knowing and sharing information.

This Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga Kia Tō Kia Tipu - Seeding Excellence project started with a clear desire and intention to inform and bring Rongoā study participants and researchers together in a way that serves the needs of both communities. It is expected that the guidelines being released today will not only protect Rongoā Māori practitioners, but also provide some guidance for the wider research community (both Māori and non-Māori) when conducting research in this area.

Donna Kerridge, study participant and Rongoā Māori healer is hopeful that the CERLS guidelines will help consolidate the gifts and abilities, skills and experience necessary to honour the sharing of different world views and that they will facilitate a journey of empowering and informing people,

that gives effect to the guideline's importance and practical value in today's more responsive research climate.

Project lead investigator Dr Amohia Boulton, from Whakauae Research for Māori Health & Development expressed her desire that these guidelines will “provide a strategic framework and promote research that will be culturally, methodologically and ethically appropriate for all parties involved”.

Whilst the project team believes that the CERLS guidelines will stimulate ongoing discussion and contemplation about all the issues identified, this is very much just the beginning and there have been many questions raised in this project that still need to be addressed.

It is considered imperative that new models, paradigms and frameworks are found that will allow Rongoā Māori to be treated as the taonga it is, even if not currently fully understood by science, medicine or research and which will ensure that the future generations can feel secure that Rongoā Māori is a taonga that continues to be treasured and protected in the years to come.

Download the CERLS guidelines here

## **ENDS**

***Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga (NPM)** is a Centre of Research Excellence hosted at the University of Auckland comprising 21 research partners and conducting research of relevance to Māori communities. Our vision is Māori leading New Zealand into the future. NPM research realises Māori aspirations for positive engagement in national life, enhances our excellence in Indigenous scholarship and provides solutions to major challenges facing humanity in local and global settings. Visit [www.maramatanga.ac.nz](http://www.maramatanga.ac.nz)*

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