

Tū Mai Rongoā Māori

**Calling forth the mana
of Rongoā Māori**

Report of the online symposium 2022

Published by Whakauae Research Services Ltd

Copyright

This document and the contents herein are property of Whakauae Research Services Ltd ©2022.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication is for general information only. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, because the information is generalised accuracy cannot be guaranteed. Readers are advised to seek independent advice on particular matters, and not rely on this publication. No liability is assumed by Whakauae Research Services Ltd for any losses suffered directly or indirectly by any person relying on the information contained in this publication.

Citation

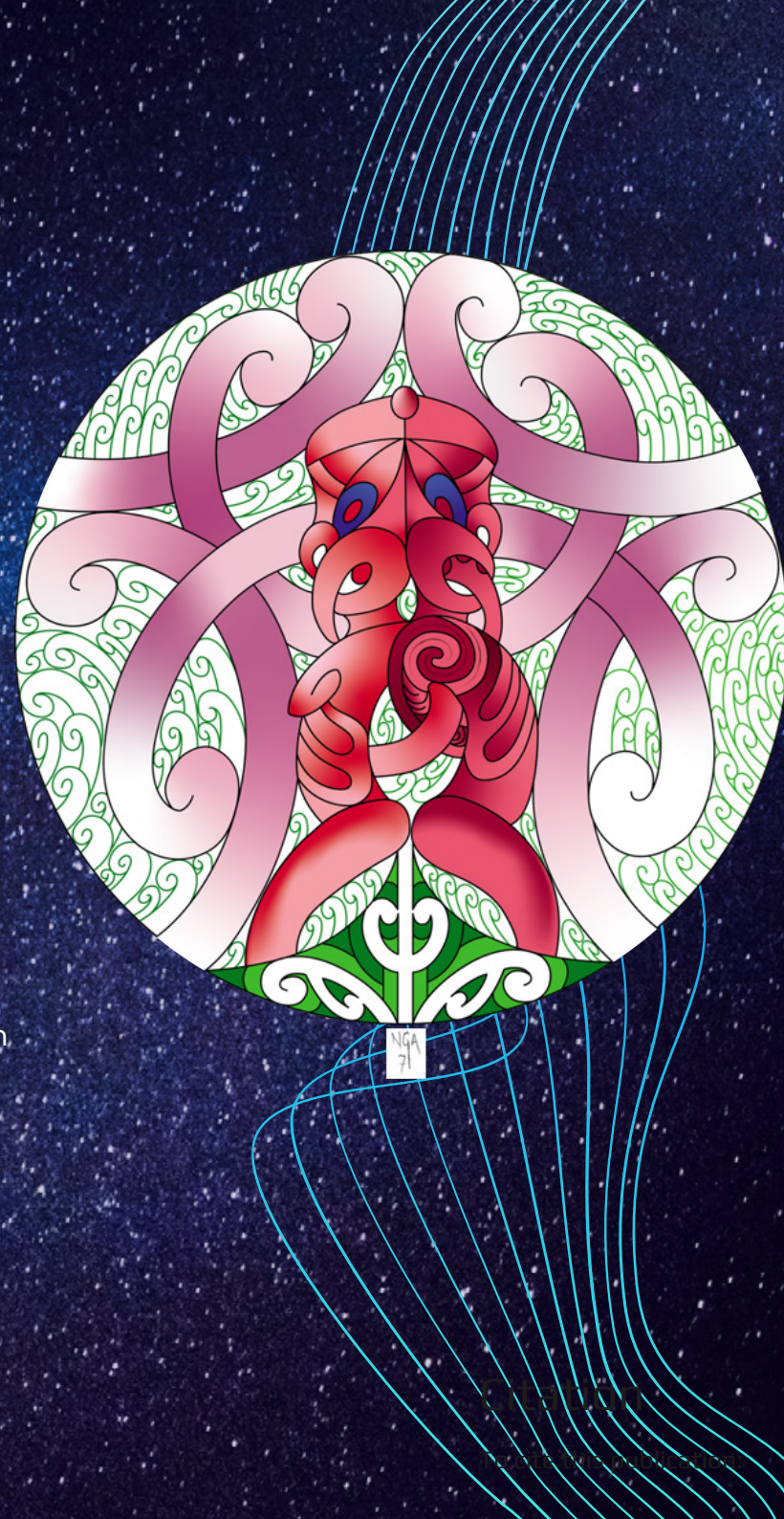
Allport, T., Johnson, T., Potaka-Osborne, G., Boulton, A. & Kerridge, D. (2022). Tū Mai Rongoā Māori: Calling forth the mana of Rongoā Māori. Report of the online symposium 2022. Whakauae Research Services Ltd: ISBN number. 978-0-473-65508-2

ISBN number: 978-0-473-65508-2.



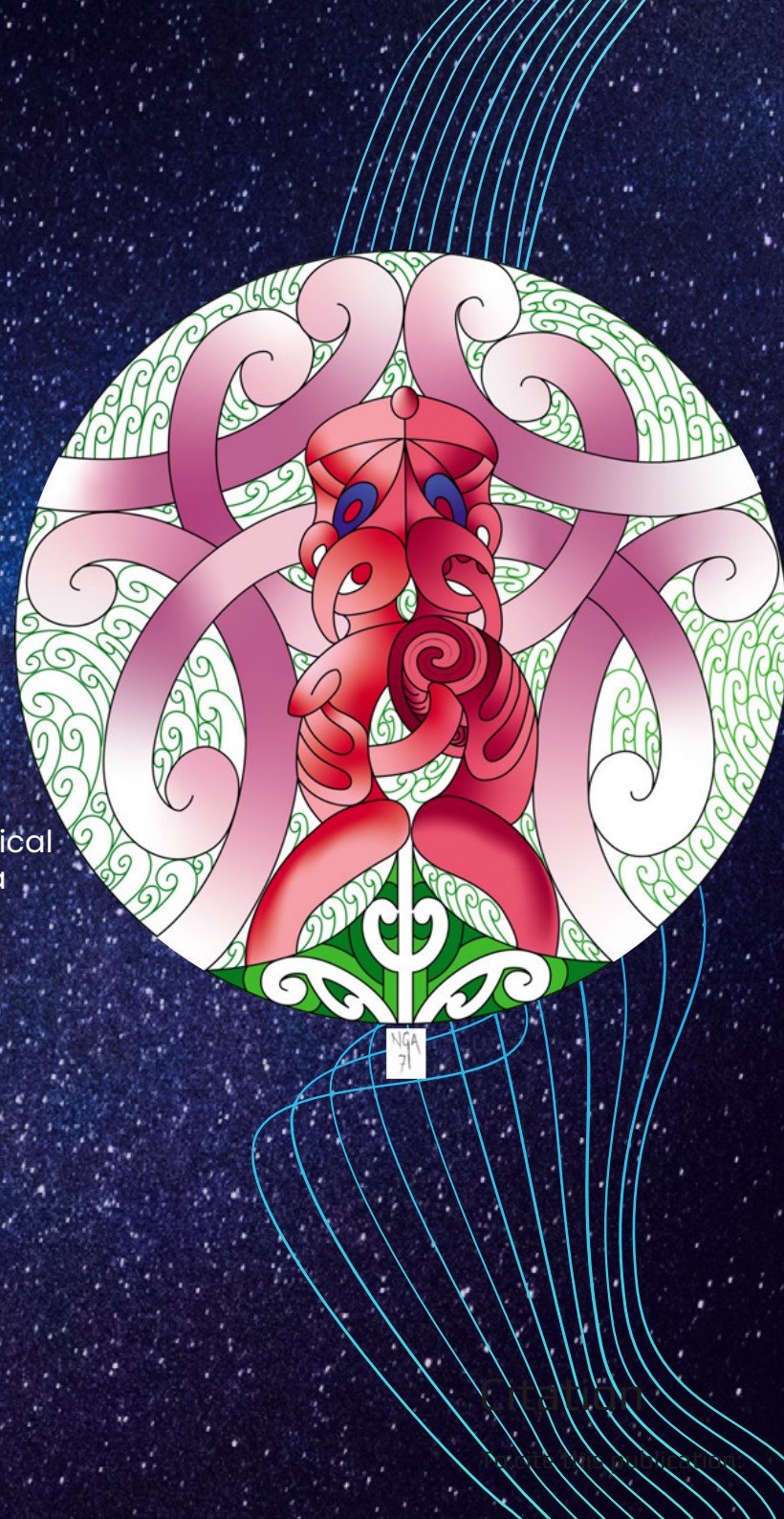
For further information

Whakauae Research Services Ltd
19 Ridgway St
Whanganui 4500
Phone (06) 3476773
www.whakauae.co.nz



Contents

- 3 Introduction
- 4 About the symposium
- 5 Ngā Kai Kōrero: the knowledge sharers
- 9 A visual summary of the symposium
- 11 Theme One: Rongoā Māori covers all aspects of wellbeing
- 14 Theme Two: Connection, collaboration and engagement- the three critical pillars required to advance the movement of Rongoā Māori in Aotearoa
- 16 Theme Three: The symposium was healing
- 18 Call to Action: Bringing Rongoā Māori into the light
- 19 Acknowledgements and further reading





Introduction to the report



This insights report presents the key themes from the symposium *Tū Mai Rongoā Māori – Calling forth the mana of Rongoā Māori*, held online on the 29th June, 2022. The symposium was a collaboration between Whakauae Research Services Ltd (Whakauae), the Interim Māori Health Authority (now known as Te Aka Whai Ora), the Ministry of Health, the Accident Compensation Corporation, and Te Kāhui Rongoā. The idea for the symposium came out of the Te Ao Rauropi: Mapping the Biosphere of Rongoā Māori research project undertaken by Whakauae and funded by the Health Research Council of New Zealand. The *Tū Mai Rongoā Māori Symposium* was significant for being the first time these diverse stakeholders created a platform for speakers to kōrero about the past, present and future potential of Rongoā Māori.

This report weaves together the kōrero of the symposium presenters, along with the thoughts and reflections from the many who attended the symposium. Participants actively engaged with the presenters and their topics throughout the symposium submitting online pātai on the day. Participants also provided comments and feedback through a post-symposium evaluation. The subsequent themes, captured in this report, represent the many voices and views of participants regarding the challenges, triumphs and possibilities that comprise Rongoā Māori.

If you would like to see what the speakers said, there is a short visual summary included in this report on pages 10 & 11.

You can also view the recording of the *Tū Mai: Rongoā Māori* symposium at this link here: <https://rongoa-symposium.whakauae.co.nz/media>

What is Rongoā Māori?

Rongoā Māori is an approach to health and wellbeing practices based on a Māori worldview, guided by respective hapū and whānau customs, tikanga and mātauranga Māori. Rongoā Māori is a taonga tuku iho, a prized and integral part of Te Ao Māori, handed on to us from our tūpuna. Over time, the practice of Rongoā has faced challenges on several fronts.

More recently we have witnessed a resurgence in interest in the practice of Rongoā Māori. This in turn has ignited a growing demand from a broad range of people, organisations and those involved in the health and disability sectors to better understand Rongoā Māori.

During the symposium we were reminded that any form of knowledge will only ever truly make sense within its own cultural context. Western science is not the only lens with which to view the world nor is it the standard by which all other ways of 'knowing' should be judged. We heard that Rongoā Māori is not a complementary or alternative medicine (CAM), nor is Rongoā about simply lotions and potions and mirimiri. Rather, Rongoā shares an intrinsic relationship with the natural world.

About the Symposium

Tū Mai: Rongoā Māori partners invited participants to a free, one-day, on-line symposium which sought to reawaken our understanding of Rongoā, calling forth the mana and the mauri of Rongoā so that it again becomes a normal and natural aspect of our everyday interactions with the world. The *Tū Mai Rongoā Māori Symposium* shone a spotlight on Rongoā Māori, its depth and breadth and the crucial role it has in enhancing the wellbeing of people in Aotearoa. The symposium provided a platform to look our challenges in the eye and share the mātauranga we have accrued in recent times about the potential of two worlds working together to forge a better future.

The symposium provided the opportunity for key collaborators in the advancement of Rongoā to share their understanding of Rongoā and their hopes for Rongoā to resume its rightful place in the way Aotearoa cares for its people. The *Tū Mai Rongoā Māori Symposium* reflects a pivotal era in the recognition of the mana of Rongoā Māori by the health and disability sector in Aotearoa. Current important perspectives were shared on the place of Rongoā as a taonga tuku iho in our collective commitment to improve health equity for all New Zealanders.

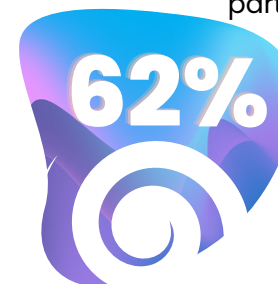
The symposium was presented in two sessions; the theme of the morning session was "Miria te Rongo"; stimulating the senses to reach their potential. In this session we sought to inspire and to better understand, achieve, and attain the gifts embedded in the practice of Rongoā Māori. The theme of the afternoon session was "Ngā Tai o Pari Ata" referring to the incoming morning tide. In this session we reflected, envisioned, and prepared for the soaring energies and possibilities that lay ahead. The date selected for the symposium (29 June 2022) was specifically chosen due to the Whiro moon on the cusp of Matariki rising, further cementing the link between Rongoā Māori and our natural (environmental) rhythms.

The Symposium in numbers



1039 participants registered for the symposium (Session One: Miria Te Rongo was attended by 435 participants & Session Two: Ngā Tai o Pari Ata was attended by 363 participants)

Participants came primarily from the fields of **health, Rongoā, education and policy**



62 % of the symposium **attendees** were Māori



69% of attendees that responded to the evaluation reported that the symposium **changed their understanding of Rongoā Māori**

Themes from the Symposium

Four high level themes emerged from the three sets of data we have drawn upon for this report, namely: the speakers' presentations, and the participants' pātai during the question and answer sessions, and the results of the symposium evaluation. These themes include:

- 1 Rongoā Māori covers all aspects of wellbeing;**
- 2 Connection, collaboration and engagement- three critical pillars required to advance the movement of Rongoā Māori in Aotearoa;**
- 3 The symposium itself was a healing experience- i.e., there was a space for people to put down their thoughts down, to be heard; and,**
- 4 Call to action - the next steps required to support the safe and mana-enhancing growth of Rongoā Māori throughout Aotearoa.**

These themes are discussed in greater detail through pages 11-18 of this report.

Ngā Pou

Our three pou for the kaupapa held the spiritual space safe for the day

Lynda Toki

Ngāti Maniapoto



Marilyn Vreede

Te Āti Haunui-a-Pāpārangi,
Ngāti Hauiti, Tūwharetoa



Tohe Ashby

Ngāti Hine, Ngāti Te
Tarawa, Ngāti Kawa,
Ngāti Rahiri



Kai kōrero

The knowledge sharers



Stacey Morrison

Te Arawa, Ngāi Tahu

We were delighted to be facilitated and guided by the dynamic Stacey Morrison (Te Arawa, Ngāi Tahu) as our Master of Ceremonies (MC) for the symposium.

Stacey is a multi-talented wahine toa, a sought after and respected radio and television personality of over 25 years, and a tireless advocate for Te Reo Māori.



Riana Manuel

Ngāti Pukenga, Ngāti Maru, Ngāti Kahungunu
Chief Executive/Tumu Whakarae,
Māori Health Authority.

Riana's previous role was Chief Executive Officer of Hauraki Primary Health Organisation and Te Korowai Hauora o Hauraki. She has invested heavily in developing strategic, visionary leadership within the Māori and health sectors, and been involved with Kaupapa Māori organisations for most of her career.

Ko Riana Manuel tōku ingoa
Ko Moehau kei waho
Ko Te aroha ki uta
Ko Hauraki te Whenua
Ko Tikapa te Moana
No Te Awaawa o Manaia tōku ūkaipō
Ko Ngāti Pukenga, Ngāti Maru, Ngāti Kahungunu ōku Iwi
Ko Mātaatua, Tainui, Tākitimu ōku waka

I am a village girl and have spent my whole career working to improve the outcomes for our people here in Aotearoa. I am a registered nurse by trade and have enjoyed a career that has seen me work across many different parts of the sector developing strong relationships as I go. I am a daughter to two of the best parents one could have asked for, a wife to an amazing husband, a mother to my beautiful tamariki, a nanny (which is by far my favourite role), a sister, and an aunty to many.

I am deeply committed to improving the health of wellbeing of my people and believe in doing so it will impact positively on the health and wellbeing of our great country, Aotearoa. Mā te kahukura, ka rere te manu.



Eldon Paea

Eldon Paea (Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngā Puhi, Ngāti Porou) Manager Māori Health, Health Partnerships, ACC.

Eldon joined ACC in 2018, as a Commercial Manager in the procurement team. In 2020, he took on his current role, managing the newly created Māori Health team. His role is focused on commissioning services that will improve access, experience, and outcomes for whānau Māori, and increase opportunities for Māori health providers. Key mahi includes:

- Rongoā Māori service
- Raranga cultural safety uplift – a new standard that will apply to all ACC services and contracts
- Kaupapa Māori health services – new, regional services that will be Māori designed and delivered.

Eldon is a Chartered Accountant with a Bachelor of Commerce, Accounting and Commercial Law. He has previously worked in management roles at Spark New Zealand and KPMG New Zealand.



Pā Rōpata (Rob) McGowan QSM

Currently works for the Department of Conservation (DOC) and is the Amo Aratu for Ngā Whenua Rāhui.

Pā Rōpata is well respected nationally for his work with and for the restoration of Rongoā Māori practice in New Zealand. He has been involved for more than 20 years in teaching, researching, and assisting Māori re-engage in traditional uses of NZ native plants, particularly for medicine (Rongoā Māori).

Pā Rōpata has also provided input into aspects of intellectual property issues relating to the Waitangi Tribunal's WAI262 report and served as a Rongoā Māori advisor to numerous Government committees, Māori tribal authorities and for a number of Rongoā Māori related research and education initiatives. Pā Rōpata is a former Catholic priest and a fluent speaker of te reo Māori.



John Whaanga

John Whaanga (Ngāti Rākaipaaka, Ngāti Kahungunu and Ngāti Rongomaiwahine), Deputy Director-General for Māori Health at Te Manatū Hauora, the Ministry of Health.

John began his career in the Department of Conservation in 1989 (working on Treaty of Waitangi policy and negotiations), before moving on to the Ministry of Education (Māori Education Group) in 1991. John originally joined the Ministry of Health in 1993, as a foundation member of the then newly established Māori Health Directorate, Te Kete Hauora. John then spent six years working in the Ministry, culminating in management roles in both public health and Māori health (as Manager, Te Kete Hauora).

After leaving the Ministry, John took up a number of significant roles in tertiary education, including as:

Chief Advisor Wānanga, Tertiary Education Commission; Deputy Chief Executive, Te Wānanga o Aotearoa; and Chief Operating Officer, Taratahi Institute of Agriculture. In 2018, John was acknowledged in parliament for his work in successfully negotiating a \$100 million Treaty of Waitangi settlement for Ngā Iwi me Ngā Hapū o Te Rohe o Te Wairoa – this was the culmination of over 30 years work. In 2019, John returned to the Ministry of Health to lead the Māori Health Directorate as Deputy Director-General, Māori Health.



Margareth Broodkoorn, ONZM

Margareth Broodkoorn Ko Ngāpuhi te iwi, ko Ngāti Wharara, Ngāti Korokoro, me Te Pouka. Margareth is the Chief Executive Officer of Hokianga Health Community Trust.

Margareth is a registered nurse, with ten years solid nursing experience before moving into various health management positions, including with Hauora Hokianga from 2008 to 2010, and Director of Nursing and Midwifery with Northland DHB to 2019. She was they Chief Nursing Officer of NZ with Ministry of Health.

Margareth has a strong commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi in addressing health inequity for Māori and access to health services for all consumers.



Hone Taimona & Faith Murray

Hone Taimona (Ngā Puhi) and Faith Murray (Te Whakatōhea) both represent Taumata Rongoā o Hauora Hokianga, Hokianga Health Rongoā service.

Taumata Rongoā is our local hospital movement that serves the people of Hokianga and works as part of a collective within Te Taitokerau Rongoā community.



Donna Kerridge

Ngāti Tahinga, Ngāti Mahuta

Donna's professional life has encompassed a successful IT career in which she contracted for major NZ corporate and government initiatives, the study of Western health science and Rongoā Māori, consultancy for ACC and the Ministry of Health.

Having worked with Whakauae Research Services for several years as a research participant, Donna was contracted as a researcher to Te Ao Rauropi: Mapping the Biosphere of Rongoā Māori Project in 2021.

Donna is a respected, traditionally trained Rongoā Māori practitioner of more than 20 years' experience who currently serves as the contracted negotiator for the national body of Rongoā practitioners, Te Kāhui Rongoā.



Ngā Pou o te kaupapa Karakia Timatanga

Eldon Paea
Manager
Māori Health,
ACC



Colonisation virtually outlawed being Māori outside of the home.... language, Rongoā etc

We have turned to Mātauranga Māori to help improve equity outcomes and embed Te Tiriti principles in the way we do things

Stacey Morrison
(Master of Ceremonies)

Tēnā koutou,
Nau mai to Session One:
Miria Te Rongo

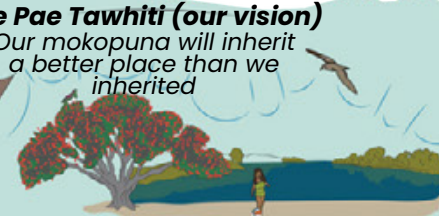


Riana Manuel
Chief Executive
Māori Health
Authority

MHA stands upon the shoulders of many Rangatira. It has taken 182 years to get here

We need a fleet for this journey and the leaders to guide us there

Te Pae Tawhiti (our vision)
Our mokopuna will inherit a better place than we inherited



The lever to get us there is
Te Ao Māori Innovation



We need **more Rongoā contracts**



Some in-patient hospital care is already using Rongoā alongside our Western models of medicine

We must all come together collectively and collaboratively on our journey

Equity is the lens that governs our behaviour

Let's ask some questions- What are the regulatory mandates for medicines?

Q What's different about MHA and the other Health Providers we currently have?

A The Māori Health Authority is a Crown entity. In Public Service we will be policy setters fighting for equitable outcomes for our people



A We will be funding providers & looking at self monitoring. Medicines will be provided by partners



Data tells us that Māori are:

2.5 times

more likely to sustain life impacting serious injuries

25% less

likely to make a claim to receive the support they are entitled to receive

Barriers to Services are:

- Cost
- Taking time off work
- Too busy to attend to their own healthcare
- Lack of trust in the system

25%

more likely to make a sensitive claim

We are not piloting Rongoā, we are embedding it!

2000 kiritaki have accessed Rongoā services in 2 years
ACC have funded 15,000 Rongoā sessions over 2 years
19% of new kiritaki are choosing Rongoā & 71% of them need no other form of ACC support

Whānau benefits

- Reduced pain and symptoms
- Reduced need for medications
- Increased quality of life and wellbeing

Rongoā provides an entry point for Māori to re-engage with a health system that many Māori had given up on

Legal Framework
The current legal framework is based on a Western model of health

We need to use our 'Mauitanga' (be innovative) to address the challenges we face

"We are here to help, don't push us down, partner, with us"

Mātauranga Māori is the knowledge of the land from the people who belong to the land



Get to know the plants and they will tell you everything you need to know

Health is best measured in relation to the whole universe, the whole network of life that binds together each one of us

Māori identity comes through their connection to the whenua



Mauri exists in the connections that sustain life

The priority is to ensure that we live very much aligned to the rhythms of the world around us

"Ka ora te whenua, ka ora te tangata"

"The foundation of Rongoā Māori is not rākau, trees, and plants, but wairua"

Māori see themselves as part of the world of Tāne, bound together by whakapapa and intricately interconnected in the web of life

Rongoā Māori as Māori understand it to be, not as others perceive it to be

We won't find the solution to our current crisis out of the thinking that has created it



Rob McGowan (Pā)

Exciting times ahead. Watch this space!"

"Wishing for a crayfish won't bring it"



Q When will you have a database of Rongoā practitioners?

A On the ACC website are the Rongoā practitioners that wanted to be on the website. You can register there

A We need to keep our knowledge in a way which is safe. We are answerable to our whenua. If she says no, don't do it

Q Going forward, who will deliver Rongoā services?

A Our intention is to grow services. Our Rongoā is provided by partners. We need to grow awareness and get more services

We need to be bold and brave. There are many capable people to create this change

We need to be aware of the unintended consequences. We need to consider wellbeing more holistically

A We are looking into this. It's just the how. No set time-line - but its in the pipe-line. Currently we are looking at a Rongoā advisory group

Q When will we see Rongoā in legislation?

A We need research about Rongoā but it must be conducted within the safe boundaries which tikanga provides. Our Kāhui Rongoā- our Rongoā community can guide and set boundaries

Q What are your views on Rongoā being researched?

A Rongoā needs to currently fit into three rehabilitation areas. Rongoā currently fits into one - social rehabilitation. We need to work with legislation and policies to remove barriers to speed it up

Q When will Rongoā be accessed as quickly as Western services at ACC?

A Riana, has MHA been given enough resource?

A Yes and No. There is a need for further funding, yet the biggest resource we need to influence are our people. **We need to rally our people to come to Rongoā**

Q I think a re-set is needed. Concerns, anxiety and hope and aspiration is what I hear. We need to do something different. We hope for every person to expect a life of well-being supported by whānau

A Our challenge is to step back and understand what is health. We need to have more of connection to whenua. We need to be brave and re-address legislation from a wholeness point-of-view

Q Some are concerned about 'Rongoā Māori' being legislated. What are your thoughts?

Karakia

Lynda Toki

Session Two: Ngā Tai o Pari Ata



Rongoā is purposeful for the Hokianga
Rongoā fits perfectly with our people in the Hokianga

Margareth Broodkoorn Chief Executive
Hokianga Health Community Trust

Today we'll play you a video of our local mahi in Rongoā




"Rongoā & medicine are quite different disciplines"

Rongoā brings a vibration of wellness

Rongoā helps build people's expertise in caring for themselves

Our whānau benefit from the best of both worlds

Our hospital is becoming a place of learning and wellbeing not just sickness

Rongoā is not alternative or complementary. It is Rongoā

"Our future is bright and Rongoā is here to stay"

"Rongoā Māori is a way of being, doing & knowing to preserve and heal Te Taiāo including tāngata to achieve balance"

"We have an obligation to protect and enable Rongoā Māori and support Mātauranga Māori"

Rongoā Māori and science can work together but authentically and in a way that does not require compromise, and helps each other flourish

We need to afford Rongoā the respect & the place it deserves in our country

Rongoā is a way of interacting with the world

John Whaanga Deputy Director-General
Māori Health, Ministry of Health

Mātauranga Māori and Science have their own māra

"We make beautiful spaces in nature to help heal our whānau"

Rongoā brings a calm and helps people recover much better in hospital

We need to consider how new legislation eg. (the Therapeutic Products Bill) can provide further legal protection for Rongoā

Mātauranga has not been as privileged in the same way science has in Aotearoa

A Nurse told us "learning about Rongoā has been life changing for me"

Whānau want karakia before they are helicoptered out and we can provide that

Our hospital is the first hospital in Aotearoa that offers a tohu in Rongoā

"In winter we take our service to kaumātua homes"

TŪ MAI RONGOĀ MĀORI
Stand ready for the soaring energies ahead!

For Māori to be well, we must first be allowed to be Māori

The only reason Rongoā even exists today is because it works!

This is a tūpuna driven kaupapa

Donna Kerridge Rongoā Māori Practitioner

Q What role can the Māori play in actively supporting Rongoā going forward, given the new health restructure?

A There is a big role the Minister has around therapeutics and there is a large role to meet the Treaty. We have a task to help the Māori Health Authority and to listen to communities

Q Can non-Māori practice Rongoā?

A You need to be able to connect to the wairua. To connect with the earth. This can sometimes be a challenge for non-Māori. We want Rongoā to be inclusive, not exclusive

Q How can Rongoā Māori help hapū māmā with their mental health?

A Allow them to be Māori. When we have seven generations on the same whenua, we know we are well. We need to re-establish our connections

Q What did you need to include Rongoā in Hokianga Health Community Trust?

A We needed energy to implement Rongoā. As we worked with colleagues who weren't always 'ready' for Rongoā one strategy we used was to dominate the environment with Rongoā

Q If Rongoā Māori is under ACC why can't other modalities of non-Māori practitioners be recognised also?

A All other health options need to be considered. Research of its effectiveness is required

Q Are there any service business plans that we can access?

A Rongoā Māori is very bespoke. You need to feel into your community and deliver accordingly

Q How do you help whānau who may have a calling towards Rongoā practice?

A Tikanga needs to be learnt by living it. Go to your Marae. Get adopted to you local Marae to learn the ways

"Science is not the only lens with which to view the world nor is it the standard by which all other ways of 'knowing' should be judged"

"Any form of knowledge will only ever truly make sense within its own cultural context"

Ngā Ture

- Medicines Act
- Quackery Prevention Act
- Tōhunga Suppression Act
- Therapeutic Products Bill
- Tikanga
- Te Tiriti o Waitangi

BRIDGE

Natural LORE

Science LAW

We must ensure that Rongoā Māori is recognised & protected in legislation for the benefit of all New Zealanders

Karakia Whakamutunga

Ngā Pou o te kaupapa

What can we do to support Rongoā across the motu? What we have achieved here can be done elsewhere... we would love to help all



Visual Summary of the Tū Mai Rongoā Māori

You can download the full A3 poster of this at Whakauae's website: www.whakauae.co.nz

You can also watch the Tū Mai Rongoā Māori at this link here: www.whakauae.co.nz/Rongoā

Illustrated by Dave Leigh, Emphasise Ltd www.emphasise.nz



Theme One: Rongoā Māori covers all aspects of wellbeing

Rongoā is inseparable from a holistic Te Ao Māori worldview

Pā McGowan presented on the essential connections of wellbeing – and Rongoā – to everything, by stating that *“health is best measured in relation to the whole universe, the whole network of life that binds together each one of us.”* The connection to the whenua was also reiterated by Donna Kerridge, who explained that *“our first patient is always the whenua”*. Whānau in the symposium told us that the framing of Rongoā as an unending, cyclical connection to Te Ao Māori was an important theme of the:

“The holistic aspect of Māori health care presented...the deep listening to life and nature and of respect for the otherthe requirement to reset the northern hemisphere practices upon which we live in Aotearoa.....along with the beautiful reference by all the speakers to the tīpuna, to the knowledge that lives on and the importance of right communication and relationships....even with our land.”

Whānau shared their passion for a holistic approach to wellbeing, a concept which mainstream Western systems and the English Language at times cannot quite capture in all of its breadth and depth. A holistic wellbeing approach works not just for Māori but for all New Zealanders.

Symposium participants (from herein referred to as whānau)* told us the extent to which Rongoā Māori was a holistic worldview and practice that functioned across the entire spectrum of wellbeing. Whānau reflected on the kōrero of the different presenters, who spoke about Rongoā as being applied (and applicable) across all areas of wellbeing, by commenting on the range of linkages that could be seen.



“[The symposium provided a] clearer understanding of the importance of the holistic approach Rongoā provides – a beautiful concept that like so many aspects of Te Ao Māori doesn’t translate simply into English as it fails to capture the completeness of the experience. It enhanced my belief of its benefits and its relevance in our current health system for Māori and non-Māori.”

*Whānau quotes are used in these pages, highlighted in bold.



“I am so excited to see the implementation of tikanga Māori into the health system but even more so into the daily lives of those within Aotearoa. In particular, it is exciting to see the expansion of preventative options. It gives me hope.”



Wherever care is needed Rongoā can play a role

The speakers discussed how Rongoā was applied to their various fields of health and wellbeing care from prevention, treatment and promotion of wellbeing. Rongoā was thought to play a significant role in wellness promotion, prevention, and treatment. Participants in the symposium viewed Rongoā's potential for complete recognition and integration throughout the entire spectrum of wellbeing as another crucial theme.

The speakers also emphasised their intention of Rongoā to be used alongside Western care models, such as Hokianga Health's acceptance of Rongoā practices in the hospital setting. ACC talked about purposefully expanding their funding to include Rongoā, while the Ministry of Health aims to incorporate mātauranga Māori in their strategies and approaches. Whānau in the symposium expressed their appreciation of the growing representation of Rongoā Māori in settings that have historically been dominated by the Western approaches to wellbeing.

“I particularly enjoyed listening to John Whaanga's kōrero. I think this really struck me, as someone who teaches quite a science-based health discipline that has developed from a Euro-centric model. As such it often fails to perceive individuals and their needs from a holistic perspective.”

The presentations demonstrated how Rongoā Māori and other care structures can coexist and also function independently of one another, like a waka hourua the two kaupapa can balance each other. Speakers like Margaret Broodkoorn also emphasised that “Rongoā is not alternative or complementary, it stands on its own”.



“I enjoyed the overall feeling of HOPE! Having quality speakers, that understand the depth and breadth of Te Ao Māori; tikanga; mātauranga Kōrero about how the Ministry of Health/Māori Health Authority will form ... being able to appreciate the fight ahead for equity!”



Opportunities

The symposium's speakers and whānau both considered opportunities for how Rongoā might operate more successfully across the entire continuum of health care.

Whānau identified a need to continue working on Rongoā education for all New Zealanders with a focus not just on the health sector but ensuring that Rongoā remains accessible to everyone. Additionally, the role of creating technology in new avenues for access to Rongoā participation and knowledge were highlighted.

“...I would want it to be accessible. Finding the correct way to merge technology and tikanga.”

Education about Rongoā and how it can help with different aspects of life was also about finding ways to pull in people that are not already engaged.

“I think that sometimes we forget that Māori belonging to kaupapa Māori services are already engaged, how do we engage those that are either with mainstream or not with anyone?”

There was still a strong sense of optimism when considering Rongoā as a whole systems care alternative to the status quo. Whānau reiterated their excitement for a time when Rongoā will be more widely acknowledged, resourced, and supported as an everyday and normal wellness practice and tool for prevention, treatment, and wellbeing promotion.



Theme Two: Connection, collaboration and engagement– the three critical pillars required to advance the movement of Rongoā Māori in Aotearoa

Whānau who attended the *Tū Mai Rongoā Symposium* expressed their conviction that Rongoā Māori was a legitimate and important form of healing. The presentations prompted discussion about what Rongoā Māori looks like in a contemporary world, where Western medicine is positioned as the dominant therapeutic practice. Whānau said that the also deepened their understanding of Rongoā Māori. Whānau also told us that Rongoā Māori needs connections and collaborations to flourish.

Connection with Te Ao Māori

Pā McGowan and the other speakers told us that Rongoā Māori is about who we are as Māori. Pā told us that *“Māori understand health from a very different perspective to that of our Western industrialised society”*. He went on to say that Rongoā Māori draws on the mauri or the *“connections that enable life to thrive”*.

Whānau agreed with this kōrero, telling us they learnt that Rongoā Māori is bigger than just healing, it is about connection to traditions, to te taiao, and to spirituality. This helped some whānau realise that Rongoā Māori was more than rongoā rākau or mirimiri and it helped them understand better the connection to wairua.

Connection with others interested in Rongoā

Over 1000 individuals registered for the symposium which provided an opportunity for those with an interest in Rongoā Māori to connect. One whānau participant said it provided her with optimism about how *“we can all connect and work together from whatever traditions we were born into”*, while another said they enjoyed *“being together with likeminded people”*. Whānau described the symposium as a space for stakeholders from diverse communities to kōrero and learn more about Rongoā Māori.





Collaboration

Each of the Crown agency presenters described their commitment to advocating for Rongoā Māori as a legitimate healing practice. Many Rongoā healers are already collaborating and providing services alongside Western medical models. One such example was where Rongoā was being embraced in the hospital setting at Hokianga Hospital. In this example, the audience was told about how Rongoā healers were delivering programmes to hospital staff and community members to enhance their understanding of Rongoā Māori. Volunteers were planting native trees and māra kai to create spaces of healing rather than illness. Whānau said this idea was inspiring, providing a model of

“Rongoā Māori in action in health care settings supported by Māori and non-Māori alike”

which could be transferred to other like settings.

Another example of collaboration was ACC engaging and funding Rongoā Māori services for the health and wellbeing of kiritaki (clients/consumers). Whānau were particularly interested in how this partnership developed and how it was working within a Western construct two years on from its inception. One whānau participant commented on the presentation by ACC saying,

“I loved the authenticity, the whakapapa of Rongoā Māori within the ACC Framework and it is great to hear from other Māori in non-Māori organisations doing the mahi to ensure equity exists and hearing that they too struggle. It helps to know we are on the right path to ensure nobody gets left behind no matter who they deal with but also to hear ways others deal with situations that arise.”



While many whānau were optimistic about Rongoā, others expressed concern around how Rongoā Māori can be delivered alongside mainstream services without compromising the integrity of Rongoā Māori. Other worries included safeguarding intellectual property and the effects of commercialisation. One whānau participant said they would like to see Rongoā

“in a really safe space, protected from commercialisation and big tech/data companies holding people's information”.



The symposium kōrero told us that the reconfiguration of health agencies to be more responsive to the needs of Māori and reduce inequities provided an opportunity for Rongoā Māori practitioners to develop new partnerships and help change the way health services are delivered. One whānau participant commented that

“ACC, MHA, MOH [need to] work collaboratively with Rongoā practitioners, our elders and experts in the field of traditional healing and mātauranga Māori, towards the common goal of improving health outcomes for all, healing from past historical mamae and moving forward into the future.”

For others, there were questions about how collaboration would work. Whānau wondered how Rongoā Māori providers would be accredited.

There was a desire for agencies to recognise the skills and expertise of healers often gained through whakapapa connections and intergenerational transmission of knowledge. One whānau participant concurred with this, saying that what needed to happen was for

“Rongoā Māori practitioners’, healers’, tohunga autonomy [to be] acknowledged by government and mainstream health practitioners.”

Opportunities

Pā McGowan told us that Rongoā has long been dismissed by the medical profession as not a legitimate medicine. He said *“they presumed they knew what Rongoā Māori, traditional Māori medicine, was, and had decided that it had nothing to offer. It is not ‘real medicine’, they tell each other, it is ‘faith healing’ and based on primitive superstitions and the like. Very few stopped to ask Māori what it actually was, and not many wanted to”.*

We know the current health system is overburdened and unable to meet current demand, so New Zealand needs to look for other options. Rongoā Māori has the potential to meet this demand, however there are many people both Māori and non-Māori who do not understand how Rongoā can benefit their health and wellbeing. For us to change this thinking we need to change the narrative around Rongoā Māori and make it available to all New Zealanders. The symposium has done this by providing Crown agencies, Rongoā healers and others with an interest with a space to start those conversations.

“ [The symposium] deepened my understanding of wairua aspects of Rongoā Māori that I wasn’t really aware of previously and added to and enriched my kete mātauranga in relation to Rongoā Māori”.





Theme Three: The symposium was healing

Whānau told us that the symposium was a healing space. The forum provided a way to acknowledge the past, offer an understanding of the current situation and to provide an aspirational space to consider the potential of Rongoā Māori as an opportunity to help resolve some of the health equity issues we experience today. Whānau have been seeking wellbeing solutions that resonate with their culture. Rongoā Māori is one avenue that supports an approach to wellbeing, which connects whānau to Te Ao Māori and nurturing their identity and confidence in a modern world.

"The weaving of voices and the sound of te reo. [The symposium] also re-stimulated huge feelings from my past of joy for the people of this land and great grief for my fractured connection with those that my peoples left when Tāwhirimātea blew them to this place. I know in my bones so much is true that has been spoken today - I understand the utter grief and the desire to bring Rongoā that has been held down, to the heart of the people again. May this symposium stop at least one more suffering."

The Past

The history of Rongoā Māori was shared amongst speakers (notably practitioners, Pā McGowan and Donna Kerridge) who talked to how Rongoā is a tool for healing, yet due to the many practices and policies which prohibited the use of Rongoā Māori in the past century there is a need to further recognise and protect the practice of Rongoā Māori in health legislation. Despite the mamae (hurt) around the rejection of Rongoā and its application, predominantly practitioners remain optimistic.

"Not only did I learn so much but I also became very optimistic about how we can all connect and work together from whatever traditions we were born into."

"The symposium was different and it showed how much has changed, there is a lot of openness with Rongoā now then it used to be to."

"I hope for the future that Rongoā, herbal medicine and holistic health will be part of NZ's Health system and accepted by government agencies."





"It confirmed what was taught to me from a young age from my parents in the kūmara garden, to my koroua and kuia on the marae."



The Current Context

Rongoā Māori has not been understood as a holistic frame of wellbeing in all its rich dimensions. Hokianga Community Trust shared their bold vision and learnings from their rohe where Rongoā Māori practitioners are working alongside medical clinicians to enhance the wellbeing of whānau. Their innovative practice of Rongoā Māori has transformed how whānau perceive hospitals. Hospitals are becoming a place of learning and wellbeing – not just sickness. Margareth Broodkorn and her team take their Rongoā Māori services to kaumātua in their homes during winter, they are purposeful in supporting the growth of rongoā plants and take their healing outside of traditional medical spaces – beautiful spaces in nature help whānau heal. They remind us that Rongoā brings a vibration of wellness – and their stories provide critical evidence that the successful application of Rongoā Māori within communities builds resilience and delivers better health outcomes for whānau.

"Especially happy to see and hear about the initiative of Rongoā at the Hokianga Hōhipera. This has enhanced my knowledge of Rongoā In a positive way."

"The ability for whānau to experience the fuller extent of wellbeing or oranga needs to derive from mātauranga Māori, and Te Ao Māori ways of being, seeing and knowing. Hence why Māori leadership in all aspects where Māori are concerned, should be paramount – this should be reflected across all elements that benefit Māori, socially, economically and spiritually."

"There is so much more to consider in practice of Rongoā Māori and all that it entails as part of ones return to wellness eg; whakapapa, karakia, manaaki, ngā mahi kia tau te rangimārie."

Whānau, including medical professionals, employees from community organisations, and representatives from local service providers, expressed their knowledge of the factors that enabled and hindered the use of Rongoā Māori in the spaces they worked. This knowledge was shared generously in the symposium, with whānau explaining that forums (such as a symposium) were highly valued spaces to be able to share the whakaaro, thoughts and aspirations of whānau. Rongoā practitioners said it was good to feel heard, to share their journeys and to have a space to have their thoughts 'written down'.

"Without a doubt the aspect of the symposium that I enjoyed of course were the presentations of Pā and Donna's kōrero which was inspirational and enriching. Hokianga Community Trust presentation and the successful of integrating Rongoā Māori with DHB [District Health Board] and on how Rongoā Māori practitioners are working alongside the clinicals to support the holistic wellbeing of the patient."

"It has made me determined to continue my Rongoā pathway. As I have recently encountered barriers but have faith MHA [Māori Health Authority] will support my journey."



Opportunities

ACC Māori Health Manager, Eldon Paea, suggested Rongoā Māori provides a critical entry point for Māori to re-engage with a health system that many Māori had given up on. This is important in the context of Māori health inequity in New Zealand where Māori are 2.5 times more likely to sustain life impacting injuries and are 25% less likely to make a claim to receive the support that they are entitled to. Rongoā Māori has the potential to transform how New Zealanders engage with health systems, and to provide a holistic framework toward whole-of-whānau wellbeing instead of focusing on the individual.

Pā McGowan reminded us that the foundation of Rongoā Māori is not rākau, trees, and plants, but wairua. It is from this place of wairua that Rongoā Māori should be understood and then applied to ensure its integrity and whole-ness as it is applied across the newly established health entities (e.g. Te Aka Whai Ora). Pā McGowan reminded us to revisit our individual thinking on how we as humans are very much aligned to the natural rhythms of the environment around us. Pā spoke of the potentiality of the new health entities in New Zealand and agreed that we need a fresh start, a new beginning. Such a beginning can be found in the mātauranga of those who have been in Aotearoa longest.

"I enjoyed the sessions by Riana and Eldon because they talked about the bigger picture and what opportunities and threats to Rongoā practice are out there."

"It is more a validation of the depth of Rongoā Māori as opposed to a main stream concept of it being just a one dimensional therapy that stands in isolation ie; Rongoā rākau, mirimiri, romiromi."



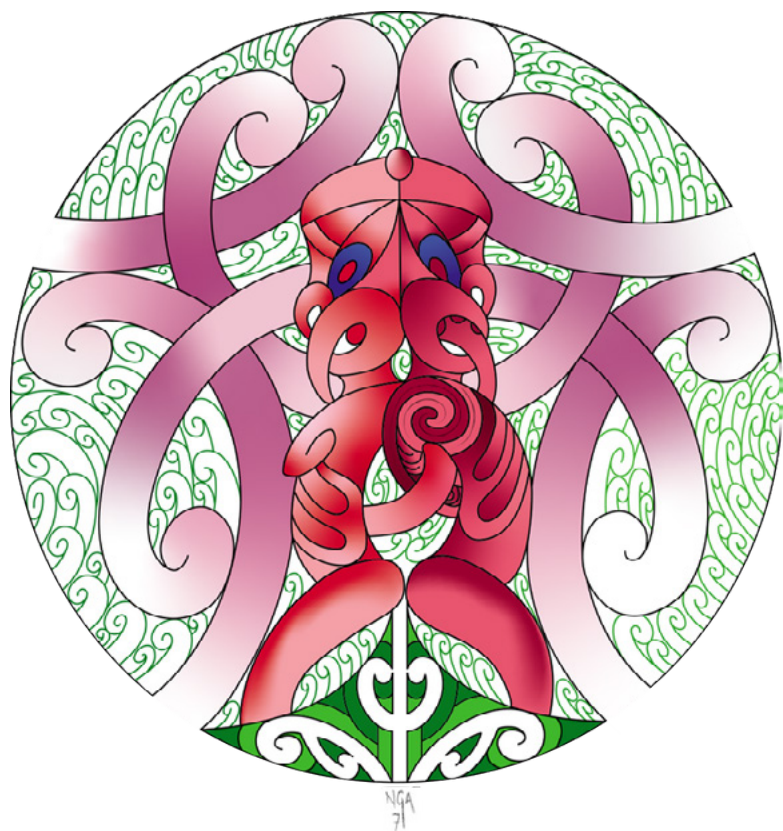
Call to Action: Bringing Rongoā Māori into the light

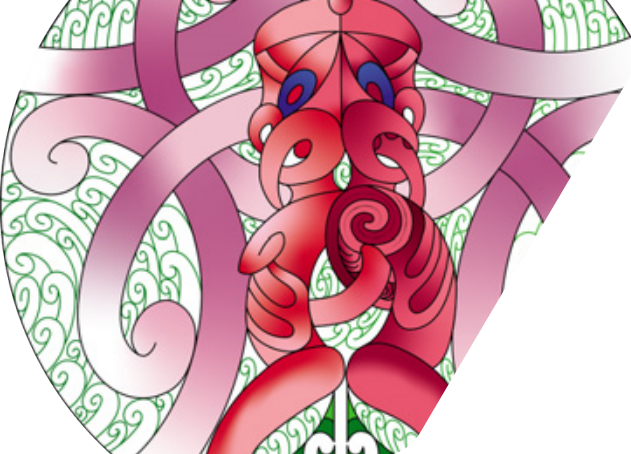
Following on from the symposium, conversations continue and we are all encouraged to consider how to best bring Rongoā Māori into the light in Aotearoa New Zealand.

What we heard was there is a long, deep and growing movement of Rongoā Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand that needs the right set of conditions for Rongoā to thrive and be adopted across the health and disability sector. As identified previously there are differing perspectives about Rongoā Māori being integrated within mainstream health systems. There was a consensus that at the end of the day, our whānau deserve access to and the ability to choose, the wellbeing tools they need. Bringing Rongoā Māori into the light does not denigrate Western approaches to care, it brings greater choice to the table for the health and wellbeing of all New Zealanders.

The following are a set of considerations for stakeholders in the Government's health and disability sector, Māori health research, and Rongoā Māori communities to continue the collaborative approach initiated by this symposium to:

- **Help shift professional and cultural norms that have suppressed the use and demand for Rongoā Māori services over the past century**
- **Enable and provide the resources urgently needed to address Rongoā Māori workforce development and service needs**
- **Ensure that all future associated legislative changes recognise and protect Rongoā Māori in order ensure that it enjoys at very least, the same protection and privilege as modern medicine**
- **To amend or repeal existing legislation that continues to suppress or constrain the practice of Rongoā Māori**





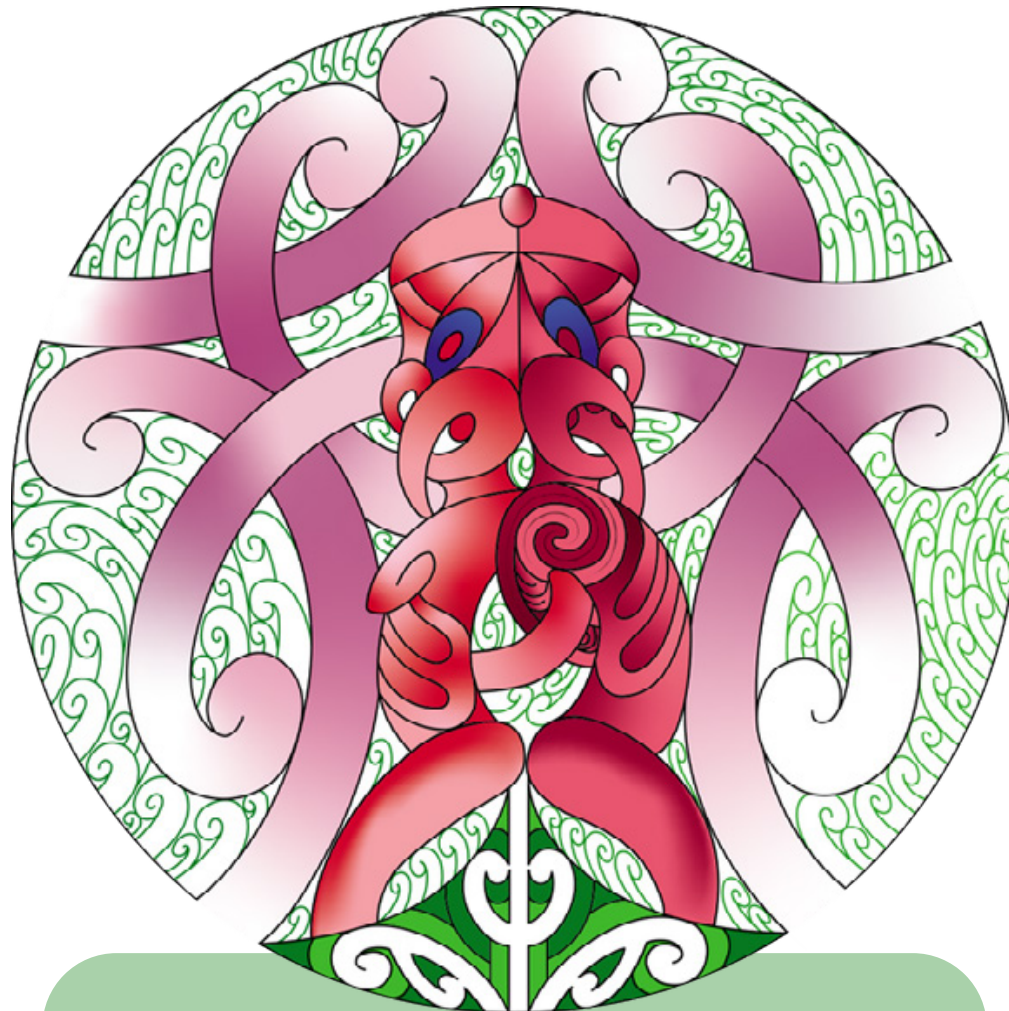
Acknowledgements

The Te Ao Rauropi research team were the instigators and bold visionaries of this symposium. Without your ringa raupā, dedication and commitment to excellence, this opportunity to showcase Rongoā in all its strengths could not have happened. We would like to acknowledge the time and commitment of all whānau who participated in the Te Ao Rauropi research project as well as the attendees, speakers and funders at the *Tū Mai Rongoā Māori online Symposium*. Your feedback and reflections are critical in helping decision makers understand what is needed- you hold the solutions in your hands. Thank you to our Pou who kept the kaupapa safe and vibrant throughout the day.

This project was funded by support from the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC), The Interim Māori Health Authority, Ministry of Health and Te Kāhui Rongoā. Thank you to Pā McGowan & Korty Wilson for their photographs.

Further readings on Rongoā Māori

- Mark, G., Boulton, A., Allport, T., Kerridge, D., Potaka-Osborne, G. (2022). "Ko Au te Whenua, Ko te Whenua Ko Au: I Am the Land, and the Land Is Me": Healer/Patient Views on the Role of Rongoā Māori (Traditional Māori Healing) in Healing the Land. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. Vol 19, no. 14: 8547. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19148547>
- Mark, G., Kerridge, D., Allport, T., Potaka-Osborne, G., Boulton, A. (2022). Rongoā Māori: more than mirimiri and pani. Whakauae Research Services Ltd, Te Pūtake - Whakauae Raro Occasional Paper Series, Number 3, July 2022. <https://www.whakauae.co.nz/publications/occasional-papers/15/>
- Ahuriri-Driscoll, A & Boulton, A. (2019). Traditional Healing and Indigenous Wellbeing in Aotearoa, New Zealand. In Routledge Handbook of Indigenous Wellbeing. Christopher Fleming and Matthew Manning (Eds). Routledge, UK.
- Mark, G., Boulton, A., Kerridge, D. (2019). Rongoā Māori is not a complementary and alternative medicine: Rongoā Māori is a way of life. *International Journal of Human Rights Education*, 3(1). Retrieved from <https://repository.usfca.edu/ijhre/vol3/iss1/12>
- Mark, G., Johnson, M., Boulton, A. (2018). Cultural, Ethical, Research, Legal and Scientific (CERLS) Issues of Rongoā Māori Research. Whanganui, New Zealand: Whakauae Research for Māori Health and Development.
- Mark, G., Chamberlain, K., Boulton, A. (2017). Acknowledging the Māori cultural values and beliefs embedded in Rongoā Māori healing. *International Journal of Indigenous Health*. Vol 12, Issue 1, pp75-92. DOI:10.18357/ijih121201716902.
- Ahuriri-Driscoll, A., Boulton, A., Hudson, M., Potaka Osborne, G, Stewart, A. (2015). Mā mahi, ka ora: by work, we prosper - traditional healers and workforce development, *NZMJ*. Vol 128, No. 1420, pp34-44.
- Mark, G. (2014). Huarahi rongoā ki a Ngai Tātou: Māori views on Rongoā Māori and Primary Health - Results of research conducted with Māori patients of rongoā and primary health. Whanganui: Whakauae Research for Māori Health and Development.
- Boulton, A., Hudson, M., Ahuriri-Driscoll, A., Stewart, A. (2014). Enacting Kaitiakitanga: Challenges and Complexities in the Governance and Ownership of Rongoā Research Information. *International Indigenous Policy Journal*, Vol 5, No 2. Retrieved from: <http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/iipj/vol5/iss2/1>
- Mark, G. (2012). Rongoā Māori (Traditional Māori healing) through the eyes of Māori healer. Sharing the Healing while Keeping the Tapu. Unpublished doctoral thesis. Massey University, Auckland, New Zealand.
- Mark, G. T., & Lyons, A. C. (2010). Māori healers' views on wellbeing: The importance of mind, body, spirit, family and land. *Social Science & Medicine*, 70(11), 1756-1764.
- Mark, G. (2008). Conceptualising mind, body, spirit interconnections: perspectives of Māori and non-Māori healers (Unpublished master's thesis). Massey University, Auckland, New Zealand.



Te Ao Rauropi logo

The koru in purple represent the interconnection of all things *ngā tangata, te tai ao, Rongoā rākau, mirimiri -ngā mea katoa*. The koru connect us to wairua represented in the colour of the kūmara- a highly regarded food source utilised to whakanoa things tapu.

Small pikopiko in green colours depict wairua and wellbeing. They have a relationship with each other and don't follow a defined direction but have many pathways- representing unlimited growth and potential.

The tekoteko in red represent male and female elements in harmony.

At bottom of this tahu are maunga and awa representing our grounding in the environment and to the sustenance of Papatūānuku.

