Familiarity with a patient's cultural heritage has proven to be related to better-quality patient care and outcomes (Bloomfield & Logan, 2003)



# Te Reo Māori in the Nursing profession

## Introduction

Across time, research has typically shown that health outcomes for the Māori population of New Zealand, has been significantly poorer than that of other population groups within the country. In the face of an increasing Māori population, with projections indicating that the Māori population will grow from 734, 200 to 1 - 1.8 million between 2017 and 2038 (Stats NZ, 2017), it is alarming that the health system is still failing to adequately meet the needs of this ever-growing ethnic group. With the nursing profession at the forefront of the health care system, I endeavoured to research the way in which incorporating Te Reo Māori in to nursing education could benefit Māori patients and lead to a more effective, culturally competent healthcare system.

### **Evidence**

The 2013 census indicated that only 148, 395 people, a mere 3.7 percent of the total population, could speak Te Reo. However, a quarter of that number were children. This coincides with further statistics that show that the Māori population itself is continually increasing and as of 2015, half of the Māori population was under the age of 24 (Stats NZ, 2017). These figures indicate that there is a large, younger Māori generation coming up through the health system, that will require a health workforce that is culturally competent and confident in working with Māori patients, more so than ever.

For Māori, Te Reo is considered a gift from their ancestors. It is more than a language, it expresses the values and beliefs of the people and serves as a focus for Māori identity and it is for this reason that language and pronunciation are of the upmost importance (Ministry of Health, 1997).

It is believed that Te Reo and tikanga Māori are intertwined. Tikanga Māori is described by Te Taura Whiri I te Reo Māori (2018) as the guidelines for general behaviour for day to day life and interaction in Māori culture. Because of this intertwinement, in learning te reo, the learner, in this instance the nurse, is in turn gaining access to te ao Māori (the Māori world) and to Māori world views which will give them a greater insight in to how to be culturally safe in their practice when working with Māori patients.

#### References:

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http://archive.stats.govt.nz/browse\_for\_stats/population/estim tes\_and\_projections/MaoriPopulationEstimates\_HOTPAt30Ju Te Taura Whiri I te Reo Maori. (2018). *Tikanga Māori*. Retrieved From:http://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/te-reo-maori/tikanga

## Conclusion/Recommendations

Durie (2001) suggests that the foundation of a culturally competent workforce will ultimately depend on an increase in the uptake of Te Reo Māori. As of now, nurses are educated in the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as well as the concepts of culturally safe practice, as guided by the nursing council of New Zealand. Building off of these principles and concepts with the introduction of Te Reo Māori courses and standards in to the undergraduate nursing curriculum would be my recommendation moving forward (researched and assessed as to effectiveness) to ensure Māori healthcare consumers are receiving the culturally competent care that they are entitled to.



PECOT Model Category	Information relating to the question	Explanation
Population	Nurses and The Māori population of New Zealand	Māori experience systematic disparities in health outcomes and determinants of health, whereas nurses make up a vast proportion of the healthcare workforce that is failing them. There is also great frontline access to nurses. As a nursing student I also want to look at what role I can take in actively addressing this issue.
Exposure or Environment	Throughout the nursing workforce (undergraduate training – working RN)	Nursing is an ever-evolving profession that involves continuous education. Cultural competency needs to be addressed at all levels of nursing as throughout time, nurses will have been educated around different views and practices.
Comparison/Control	Current cultural safety teaching methods	I am interested to see if there is any evidence to suggest that the current way of teaching cultural safety with Māori patients in nursing is effective in enabling students to apply it confidently in practice
Outcome	Whether implementing te reo Māori will help to achieve the best health outcomes for Māori through culturally competent care	Is te reo the answer to bridging the gap between Māori and the health care system
Time	N/A	Time is irrelevant as it has been and continues to be an on-going issue within the New Zealand health sector

From the information laid out above a databased search can be performed. The inclusion terms consist of cultural competency, te reo Māori, nursing, Māori, New Zealand and education or training. This insures that cultural competency in relation to Māori alone is targeted, rather than culturally safe practice across all cultural groups.

Using the PECOT model of research (Whitehead & Schnieder, 2013a) I was able to narrow down my search question around cultural competency in relation to working with Māori patients. Given that I am a nursing student, I want to educate myself on ways in which I and other nurses can utilise appropriate and alternative ways to become culturally safe and competent. The literature review will be based on the question; "Will nurses learning te reo Māori make for a more culturally competent healthcare system and help achieve greater health outcomes for Māori?"

#### Rationale:

For this assignment I decided the most effective way to display my researched information was in the form of a poster, which will be presented at the Otago Polytechnic Evidence Based Practice Forum. "Posters, done well, can provide a creative, eye-catching, and quite detailed means of communicating research findings" (Whitehead & Schnieder, 2013b, p.385). Because of the lack of research on my chosen clinical issue, presenting my information in this medium will allow personal interaction, shared problem solving and ideas and networking for future research during the practice forum. My recommendations require further specific and intensive research to evaluate effectiveness; therefore, it would not be appropriate to provide an undetailed government submission. Dissemination of academic work is integral to the development of the professional presence of nursing. As a nurse, it is important to actively report the results of clinical innovation and best practice so that others are able to critique your work and develop their own evidenced-based practice (Whitehead & Schnieder, 2013b).

#### References:

Whitehead, D. & Schneider, Z. (2013a). *Identifying research ideas, questions,*Statements and hypotheses. In Z. Schneider, D. Whitehead, G. LoBiodo

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