

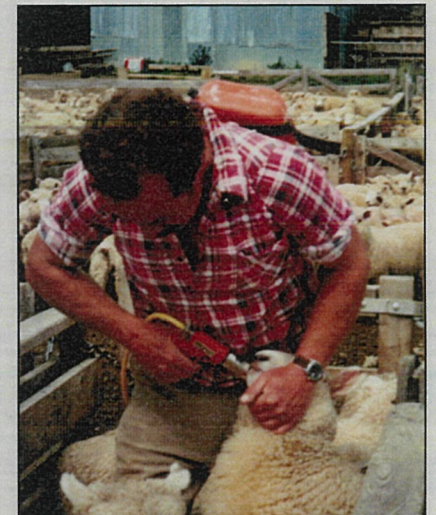
What are the factors that influence the mental health of rural males working in the agricultural/ farming industry in rural New Zealand and how does this effect access to mental health care?

Clinical Issue:

“ In 2011, there was a higher rate of suicide in rural areas compared with the rate of suicide in urban areas (12.5 deaths per 100,000 population in rural areas compared with 10.6 deaths per 100,000 population in urban areas)” (Ministry of Health, 2011)

- The downstream effects of depression and anxiety are numerous; “poorer decision making on the farm leads to poorer farm productivity and profitability.” (Federated Farmers of New Zealand , 2014)

Alice Parata: 09006389



Factors identified within the literature to influence rural mental health:

- Climate; natural disasters
- Fluctuating economic prospects
- **Isolation**
- Long hours
- Self reliant culture
- Stoicism
- Poor access to mental health services
- Culture of silence

(Hossian et al, 2008)

Implications for Practice:

- Stigma associated with mental health
- Risk of ↓ confidentiality in small communities
- ↓ no. of nurses and doctors remaining in rural sector
- ↑ rural and urban divide due to recent structural change of rural communities

(O'Hara, 2010)

Conclusion:

- Deeper understanding of the pressures felt within rural communities is needed.
- Current literature is currently focused primarily on farm owners and farm managers. Attention needs to be brought towards the different levels of organisation within rural employment,
- Recognition of rural community's initiative , drive and determination to find creative solutions to difficult challenges should not be underestimated

Recommendations from the literature:

- Cultural change over time ; ↓ stigma
- Retention of health care professionals in rural sectors by DHB's
- Recognition of the use of social media to ↑ awareness of stigma & break down barriers of social isolation

(Federated Farmers of New Zealand, 2014)

Hossian, D., Eley, R., Coutts, J & Gorman, D. (2008). Mental health of farmers in southern Queensland: issues and support. *Australian Journal of Rural Health*, 16 (1) , 343-348. doi: 10.1111/j.1440-1584.2008.01014.x

Federated Farmers of New Zealand. (2014). *Rural Mental Health*. Retrieved from: <http://www.fedfarm.org.nz/advocacy/National-Policy/Rural-Mental-Health.asp>.

Ministry of Health. (2011). *Suicide Facts: Deaths and intentional self-harm hospitalisations 2011*. Retrieved from: <http://www.health.govt.nz/publication/suicide-facts-deaths-and-intentional-self-harm-hospitalisations-2011>

O'Hara, Y. (2010). *Down on the farm: depression and mental health in the rural south*. Dunedin, New Zealand: Southern Rural Life and Courier Country

Picture(s): A.H. Parata (Personal communication, May, 1982)

Population	Rural males, aged between 18-44, Living and employed within the agricultural sector (Sheep & Beef, Dairy and Crop)	Sheep & Beef, Dairy and Crop farms are closely linked and all have similar demands, workloads and financial strains. Male population group because there is a greater % of males employed in agriculture. Age (18-44) because I wanted to exclude the mental health problems associated with chronic illness & old age— there is a higher prevalence of chronic illness in old age.
Exposure	Lifting the stigma associated with mental illness, raising awareness of mental illness and encouraging rural men to discuss their own mental health. Exploring the factors that influence mental health in rural populations	I felt that due to the increasing suicide statistics among rural New Zealanders, it was telling that there was a lot of mental health not being addressed before it was too late
Comparison	Urban Population groups	Mental illness awareness and availability of mental health services has already come a long way in urban areas but there is still a deficit present in rural areas.
Outcome	Increased availability and access to mental health care for men working in rural areas. Address stress factors influencing rural men. Attention to be paid to the role of isolation in rural communities.	I expect to find recommendations from international research from increasing mental health awareness and access to service. NZ seems to be following international suicide statistic trends.
Time	Comparison over the last 10—15 years	Acknowledge current culture and explore the changes within this culture that may be influencing the stress being felt by rural males

Schneider, Z., & Whitehead, D. (2003). Identifying research ideas, questions, statements and hypotheses. In Z. Scheider, D. Whitehead, G. LoBiondo-Wood & J. Haber (Eds.), *Nursing and midwifery research methods and appraisal for evidence-based practice* (pp. 63-64). Sydney, Australia: Mosby.