

Tomorrow's Workforce Award Entrant: Hawke's Bay District Health Board



Increasing Māori representation in the workforce, and training staff to engage more effectively with Māori in the community, are two ways the Hawke's Bay District Health Board (HBDHB) is working to reduce health inequities in their region.

The initiatives support the HBDHB's vision of providing: Excellent health services working in partnership to improve the health and wellbeing of our people, and to reduce health inequities within our community.

The HBDHB employs nearly 3000 staff, providing health and well-being services to the 155,000 people of Hawke's Bay.

The first component of the work, Engaging effectively with Māori, has allowed the DHB to set the platform to transform the organisation from a cultural perspective. They wanted to engage more appropriately with Māori patients and consumers and make sure they had a workplace environment that was more attractive to potential Māori staff. The intervention was developed through the HR Services Education and Development team and Māori Health Services, who worked together to develop learning to support staff to more effectively engage with Māori.

The previous learning intervention on the same issue ran for a day, had a low take up rate by staff and did not receive positive reviews. Nearly 60 per cent of staff attended the new intervention, (in April, 2016), which was a much higher attendance than the previous initiative.

The new sessions were designed based on staff understanding some basic principles. For example, never to make assumptions about who identifies as Māori and who does not. Staff shouldn't generalise about what Māori might want and thirdly treat each consumer as an individual. This means finding out about the person as an individual and what matters to them.

This course was introduced to staff in three-hour sessions facilitated by a highly experienced external facilitator.

As a result of the training, staff are now better able to engage effectively with not just Māori consumers but all consumers. This has led to increased levels of consumer satisfaction evidenced through the increases in compliments and reduction in complaints as shown in the HBDHB's analysis of their most recent consumer feedback.

The second focus, Increasing Māori staff representation, began with nursing staff, the DHB's biggest workforce. Working with nursing graduates, the DHB placed greater value on locally trained candidates and those who were Māori, bringing Māori competence to their everyday work. As a result of this the DHB increased the number of Māori nursing staff to 10.1 per cent at 30 June 2015 up from 7.0 per cent at 30 June 2012. Overall Māori staff representation has increased from 8.7 per cent at 30 June 2012 to 12.3 per cent at June 2015.

The DHB believes staff have benefited by being part of a more representative and diverse workforce and that greater diversity has led to better team problem solving and improved health outcomes for all consumers.

The results of the initiatives are tracked at the top level and are included in the KPIs of the DHB Chief Executive, General Manager of Māori Health, Chief Nursing Officer and the General Manager of Human Resources. The Māori staff representation KPI is reported quarterly at Board level.