

Nā wai ēnei matatika, ture rānei?

***Whose morals and ethics are we
talking about?***

Presentation for the Royal Australasian College of
Physicians Congress, Auckland, 6 May 2019

He kōrero hei āta whakaaro...

“E ngā rangatira, whakarongo mai. Kaua e ūwhia te Tiriti i te kahu o Ingarangi, engari kia mau anō ki tōu ake kahu, te kahukiwi o Aotearoa nei!”

“Distinguished guests, please listen. Do not place the Treaty on the flag of England, but rather retain your own symbol, the kiwi-feathered cloak of Aotearoa.”

Āperahama Taonui, Kaitāia, 28 April 1840

He aha ngā pūtake o te kōrero nei?



- 1 Anglocentric views of morals & ethics provided the foundation for racial bias & prejudice in NZ
- 2 That bias & prejudice became institutionalised through policies of assimilation & integration
- 3 Current Māori health inequities continue to be impacted on by this history & its current consequences

Kia eke ki te whakamāramatanga – towards a definition

- Put simply:
 - **Morals** are about knowing the difference between right & wrong. They are principles that individuals use to guide their practice.
 - **Ethics** are morals or moral values put into action through a set of rules.
- The key question of course is, “who determines what is right & what is wrong?”

White is right – colonisation & racism

- Prevailing views of right & wrong in Aotearoa today have been framed from an Anglocentric view & were historically institutionalised into the laws & practices of the State through overt policies of assimilation & integration.
- In Aotearoa, these policies remained in place until the late 1960s, had a enduring inter-generational effect, & almost resulted in cultural extinction.
- This history continues to impact on current Māori health & socio-economic inequities.

Racism & white supremacy - ChCh, Friday, 15 March 2019

- The shootings shocked our nation & resulted in a national call to address racism led by our PM & embraced almost universally by our people.
- The shootings showed the extreme end of white supremacist ideas & misguided Eurocentric ideologies.
- The shootings challenged the view that our nation was open & accepting of difference, & reminded Māori of their own traumatic history as the first to experience such ideologies.

Accepting difference – post ChCh

- Traumatic as the events in ChCh were, they provide an opportunity to restart; to progress a wider discussion about prejudice & bias, & what to do about it.
- Racism is not just about prejudice & bias, but its amplification through power, & the privileges that eventually ascribe to some but not all.
- This national-level discussion provides an opportunity to consider institutional racism and its impact on Māori health inequities.

Mana motuhake – the right to be Māori

- The developmental end-point for Māori has remained largely unchanged since the arrival of other settlers to Aotearoa.
- In simple terms, it is the right to be Māori; to live on our terms, according to our philosophies, values & practices, often expressed as mana motuhake (Te Whakaminenga, 1835) &/or te tino rangatiratanga (Te Tiriti, 1840).
- Policies of assimilation & integration post 1840 did not accept the right of Māori to be Māori.

Mana hauora – recognising Māori health aspirations

- Wai 2575 is an umbrella for many Māori concerns about potential Government breaches of its responsibilities to Māori and Māori health services under Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- Nonetheless, it is also the most recent manifestation of Māori aspirations to manage their own health on their own terms.
- Those aspirations are tempered by a lack of trust & confidence, & fueled by a desire to normalise Māori values, views & ways of doing things.

Mana tangata – addressing Māori health needs

- While Wai 2575 involves Māori aspirations to manage their own health on their own terms, most Māori will (at least in the short to medium term) have their health needs addressed by mainly non-Māori managed and delivered services.
- Given that, there remains a challenge for all those delivering health services to improve their performance with & for Māori.
- That challenge extends to RACP.

Mana ōrite – addressing Māori equity

- Addressing Māori inequities through the life course allows the consideration of many disciplines and lenses, & an understanding of historical & inter-generational trauma.
- Tikanga Māori (Māori philosophies & practices) need to frame & underpin the moral & ethical principles driving this work.
- Most importantly, the journey to address Māori inequities needs to be a personal one for practitioners.

Me anga whakamua ahakoa te
aha – proceed, no matter what

**“Kua tawhiti kē tō hāerenga mai, kia
kore e hāere tonu. He nui rawa ngā
mahi, kia kore e mahi tonu.”**

***“You’ve come too far not to keep going. You’ve
done too much work not to continue on.”***

Sir James Henare

Tuatahi, titiro ki a koe anō – firstly, start with yourself

- For you as practitioners, exploring the impact of health services on Māori health means:
 - exploring your own views of what is right & what is wrong.
 - understanding how those views have been framed.
 - recognising the privileged position you are in.
 - accepting that you have a personal & individual role to play in addressing Māori health.
 - taking up the challenge to address unfair & unjust practices & actions which continue to effect Māori health inequities by using your privileged positions to champion equity.

Tuarua, kia toa koe – secondly, champion equity

- For you as practitioners, addressing Māori health inequities means contributing to the wider public understanding that there is unfairness & injustice that results in differential access to health services & differential health outcomes.
- While NZders generally consider themselves strong proponents of social justice & fairness, a developed understanding of equity remains elusive for many (who assume fairness is everyone getting exactly the same thing rather than according to need and/or right).

Tuatoru, kia tū hei tauira – thirdly, be an exemplar

- For you as practitioners, addressing Māori health inequities means:
 - challenging yourself to learn more about Māori values & views as important precursors to optimising your practice and its outcomes.
 - leading change to improve your performance with & for Māori.
 - showing the courage to honestly review your own practice.

He kōrero anō hei āta
whakaaro...

“Courage is the most important of the virtues, because without it, no other virtue can be practiced consistently.”

Maya Angelou, Cornell University, 24 May 2008