

Kaiāwhina Workforce Action Plan

LEADING A STRENGTHS-BASED CO-DESIGN APPROACH TO TRANSFORMING THE HEALTHCARE LANDSCAPE IN NEW ZEALAND

Why did the Kaiāwhina Workforce Action Plan come about?

There is a compelling call for action to ensure that New Zealand has a sustainable health and disability workforce for the future given the increasing demand for services as the population grows and ages, and as models of care move closer to home, become more integrated, and new models emerge. A core part of this workforce will be fulfilled by kaiāwhina – the non-regulated care and support workforce in the health and disability sector.

Key Drivers signalled a need for a paradigm shift in how the contribution of the kaiāwhina workforce is organised, supported and valued.

Consumer Focused Service

New Zealand health and disability services needed to increase responsiveness to the needs of consumers of services. As front-line workers, kaiāwhina are essential for supporting consumers to meet their wellbeing goals.

Workforce Scope

There had been significant growth in the employment of an "unregulated workforce". In tandem with this were reports of "scope creep" with more tasks demanded of them. This is due in part to the increasing demand with an ageing population and shortages in the nursing, medical and allied workforces. A competent and qualified kaiāwhina workforce enables these workforces to operate at the top of their scope.

Central Government

Acknowledging the vital importance of the kaiāwhina workforce to the health and wellbeing of New Zealanders, Government were looking for the role and contribution of kaiāwhina to be more visible and recognised as part of the collaborative team to improve health outcomes for consumers.

Workforce Plans

Different parts of the sector had completed planning specifically for their future workforce needs in response to changes in demand and models of care and support. Yet, kaiāwhina had variable experiences of training once recruited. Despite the significance of this workforce no strategy existed to inform its ongoing development. The benefits of a comprehensive and inclusive sector approach to planning for the kaiāwhina workforce were identified.

Education and Training

Training for kaiāwhina was disparate and local and national qualifications confusing, so no clear and coherent career pathways could be described. In 2013, a formal review of qualifications for the health, disability and social service sectors enabled a focused analysis of the career pathways and training being offered to kaiāwhina.

Changing Models of Care

Government was seeking an assurance that strongly positioned the health and disability workforce to respond to new and changing models of service delivery, including integrated care models and readiness to embrace technology, supporting positive consumer outcomes.

Workforce Data

Data on this workforce was scarce, in part because no single definition of the unregulated health workforce existed. There was no consistent quantitative data collected and analysed about kaiāwhina, estimated to be more than a third of the total health and disability sector workforce, and no single agency responsible for collecting workforce data.

Kaiāwhina - What's in a Name?

The adoption of the term kaiāwhina is an example of the seminal leadership and influence by the Kaiāwhina Workforce Action Plan and its stakeholders. During the development of the Plan, the term "unregulated" or "non-regulated" was repeatedly raised as being demeaning and pejorative. The term kaiāwhina was suggested, socialised and officially adopted by the multiple stakeholders in the Plan. Kaiāwhina (from the Māori language, meaning "a person who assists") now represents all non-regulated roles in the health and disability sector.



In late 2013, Health Workforce New Zealand and Careerforce committed to a 20-year vision to build a strengths-based transformational approach to advance the role and contribution of kaiāwhina as valued members within the health and disability system.

A kaiāwhina workforce that adds value to the health and wellbeing of New Zealanders by being competent, adaptable and an integral part of service provision.

This included the provision of learning and development pathways to ensure kaiāwhina have the required skills, knowledge and attributes to respond to current and emerging roles, and to also ensure opportunities are provided in an accessible manner for kaiāwhina to attain this learning.

To achieve this vision an initial five-year plan was developed following extensive consultation. In 2014 the Health Workforce New Zealand and Careerforce partnership established the Kaiāwhina Workforce Taskforce to provide over-arching governance to the Plan. A Working Group and Programme Team coordinate the progress of the Plan's actions and report through to the Taskforce.

Leadership

Kaiāwhina have:

- A voice
- Access to nationally recognised qualifications
- A career pathway including apprenticeship opportunities for workplace training
- Recognition of skills and competence – earning a living wage or above linked to qualifications
- National Equal Pay and Time & Travel Settlements – enshrined in legislation
- The opportunity to develop leadership skills and gain leadership qualifications
- More efficient and effective workplace training programs, including recognition of existing competence, training to the gaps and access to online learning tools
- Inclusion as part of the integrated team in an increasing number of Ministry of Health strategies
- Acknowledgment of contribution growing amongst health professional groups
- Greater visibility and a place for the conversation through the Kaiāwhina Workforce Taskforce and Health Workforce New Zealand Kaiāwhina Workforce Advisory Group

The Vision

The Plan

Transforming Outcomes MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Amplifying and Accelerating the Systems Change

Leadership

Why is strong leadership for the kaiāwhina workforce important?

Having a well prepared, supported and fit for purpose workforce ready to respond to the needs of people is critical for sustainable health and disability services into the future. The wide range of roles within the kaiāwhina workforce, which represents a significant and increasing share of the total health and disability workforce, is an essential component of integrated health provision and disability support to enable good lives. The Kaiāwhina Workforce Action Plan goal is to build such a workforce and to have this workforce accepted and valued as an essential part of the integrated team.

The Kaiāwhina Workforce Action Plan is overseen through a partnership between Health Workforce New Zealand, the business unit within the Ministry of Health that provides national leadership on the development of New Zealand's health and disability workforce, and Careerforce, the Industry Training Organisation whose coverage includes health and disability.

However, one of the greatest strengths of the Kaiāwhina Workforce Action Plan is that it was co-created and is being implemented, by multiple owners in the aged care, home and community, mental health and addictions, and disability sectors across private, non-government organisations, district health boards, and government settings.

These owners are collectively invested in progressing this workforce for the benefit of consumers, the kaiāwhina themselves and the New Zealand health and disability system as a whole.

The Kaiāwhina Workforce Taskforce was established to provide governance and direction from experts and leaders across the sector.

The Action Plan was approved by the Kaiāwhina Workforce Taskforce in 2015 and implementation commenced in July 2015.

The Plan continues to be implemented moving forward through promotion, ownership and continued stakeholder engagement. Each domain has specific priorities to achieve as the Plan gets rolled out. The Plan is a living document which is largely web-based to enable flexibility, adaptability and responsiveness in a fast-changing environment.



Kaiāwhina will be:

- Known and visible through a comprehensive national data system which informs workforce planning
- Included in models of care design so their skills and knowledge are able to contribute to improved consumer outcomes
- Technologically competent
- Choosing the kaiāwhina role as their career of choice
- Members of integrated inter-professional teams
- Training and employed for increasing numbers of leadership and management roles

You can contact us at kaiāwhina@careerforce.org.nz or visit the website for further information www.workforceinaction.org.nz