



Te Niwaha

Research Project Impact Case Study

Lifting Immunisation rates in vulnerable communities within Waikato/Counties Manukau regions

Short Research Title

Raakai | Immunisation evaluation in the Tainui waka rohe

Key researchers

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Introduction

Research Purpose:

To understand what helps and hinders whaanau decision making and access to immunisation services. Applying a systems lens, we will explore local immunisation ecosystems to bring forward insight from kaupapa Māori and other providers and practitioners about what impacts whānau oranga including the uptake and provision of immunisation (and improved immunisation rates).

Research Approach:

The project takes a developmental evaluation and tikanga-led kaupapa Māori approach to engaging with partners, whaanau and community. It draws on a range of sources of insight and evidence such as literature analysis, whaanau surveys, interviews, focus groups, and wānanga, and analysis of other research engagement to develop a synthesis about successful immunisation responses, what challenges are faced and how these may be overcome.

Alignment with Te Niwha:

This strategic project enables grounded contextual knowledge to be gained from whaanau and contributors to the immunisation ecosystem and what works to help inform and lift childhood immunisation rates, optimise hauora service delivery, and support whaanau and communities to make informed decisions about immunisation. This project also has opportunity to help shape strategic conversations between hauora providers about immunisation and strengthening the immunisation ecosystem.

Results

Evaluation engagement with two Counties Manukau Providers has led to insights into the complexity and the uncertainty of the business and environmental contexts of hauora service provision for whaanau, including immunisation provision. As such, the evaluation team is undertaking evaluative activities to better understand the immunisation ecosystem that the providers are having to navigate while providing hauora services. This includes conducting contextual analysis of immunisation ecosystem and how that can impact the provision of services to elevate oranga whaanau including the uptake and provision of immunisation. The insights gained from this are expected to enable providers to have informed strategic conversations with Te Whatu Ora and other contributors to the immunisation ecosystem, at both local and national levels, with the objective of strengthening the immunisation ecosystem. This line of inquiry will inform the engagement of providers within the Tainui waka rohe (Waikato).

Ongoing analysis of data from whaanau and community engagement at significant events within Te Ao Māori (Turangawaewae Regatta and Te Matatini) is occurring. An example of preliminary insights is that there appears to be three prominent age-groups have been identified, each with differing immunisation requirements and characteristics. Those under 25 years of age with children under 5 years wanted to know more about vaccination in general, about side effects and what the overall options around vaccination are. The majority of those around 25 to 53 years of age with tamariki and/or mokopuna tend to have competing priorities e.g., paying mortgage, job sustainability, paying for children's education, staying afloat, that vie for attention, energy and money. However, for this group, if the timing and cost for supporting their children and mokopuna to get vaccinated were suitable, they will likely drive vaccination for their whaanau. Those 53 years of age and over tend to advocate for vaccination but are not the key decision-makers, preferring to defer to their children to make decisions for their tamariki. Ongoing data analysis will further shape these insights and help determine potential impacts they might make to immunisation. These types of insights will inform discussion and feedback sessions between the evaluation team and key networks such as regional NPHS Immunisation teams.

Insights gained from analysis around enabling factors for immunisation suggest that a positive immunisation approach:

- endorses tikanga-led approaches
- values and respects whānau and community
- has the right people at the table from the start (good comms response)

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- draws on historical knowledge, practices and processes that have worked
- values and trusts community voice
- tailors engagement strategies to a continuum of needs considering context and reach
- supports a hauora/wellbeing holistic wrap-around and wellness approach – that supports informed decision-making vs just having a focus on immunisation
- engenders trust by understanding and utilising who whānau and community trust
- values and resources local solutions to address gaps.

Impact

The expected impact the research will have now and in the future is that:

- It is expected to enable local and national contributors to the immunisation ecosystem, especially Māori providers, to have collective informed strategic conversations about immunisation and strengthening the immunisation ecosystem. This will be a key future impact for Māori providers and wider systems partners.
- Ongoing data analysis will further shape insights gained from whānau data collection and help determine potential adaptations they might make a positive difference to immunisation commissioning, provision and outcomes. This includes the opportunity to socialise learnings with the Minister and potentially impacting policy around supporting strengthened Māori provider immunisation ecosystems within the Counties Manukau/Waikato rohe.

Future directions

In conclusion, the case study highlights the importance of the next phase for the evaluation to achieve key results. Translating insights into actionable changes that supports increased immunisation rates is critical to get right. Some of the ways this might be achieved is by:

- Policy
 - Practice e.g., Lay vaccinators
 - Tikanga led approached that frame funding and engagement
 - Ensuring that the right people are at the table from the start
 - Values what worked historically in increase immunisation rates and why do – do more of this
 - Hearing and funding local solutions and gaps
- Communications and engagement
 - Utilise trusted whānau/community to engage with whānau and community
 - Reduce the use of influencers and social media
 - Trust whānau voice
 - Strategies to meet a continuum of needs around immunisation needs e.g., awareness, questions answered, to ensure improved reach and acknowledge whānau contexts
- Funding
 - Funding a Hauora/wellbeing holistic wrap-around approach to immunisation.