New kete of knowledge for Māori whānau

Reason
Research at the School of Nursing,
The University of Auckland
Editor’s Note

Our 20th issue of *Reason* comes at the end of the year 2020. A synchronicity in a most unsynchronous year. Despite the curveball Covid-19 threw us all, we have lots of good news to report. The cover photo was taken at the recent launch of the Pā Te Aroha website, a major outcome of the Pae Herenga research project, which you can read about on page 3. Also on page 3, a report on our outstanding success with grant applications. We couldn’t have done it without our grants team: Louise Brand and Ruth Wilson. They are tireless in their dedication to the School’s research.

Also in this issue, you’ll find out more specific information about our Health Research Council funded activation grants, the excellent research completed by some of our students and staff and our annual list of publications, beginning on page 14.

Wishing you all the very best for the upcoming holidays,

Lisa Williams

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School of Nursing Alumni (SONA) launches

School of Nursing co-founder Dr Margaret Horsburgh gave the inaugural lecture named in her honour at the SONA (School of Nursing Alumni) launch on 10 December. The event brought together current and past students as well as staff, clinical stakeholders and dignitaries from the community.

‘The purpose of SONA is to strengthen ties between our graduates and staff,’ said Head of School Julia Slark. ‘It’s a chance to develop networking opportunities, offer career services and hold special events we hope they will enjoy and benefit from.’

‘We anticipate that SONA will inspire both current and former students to become lifelong learners,’ Julia added. ‘Alumni are well-placed to act as ambassadors and promote the School’s research to the wider community.’

SONA will also incorporate a philanthropic fund to help support nursing students through their education and develop pathways into nursing research.
While 2020 has had its challenges, procuring grants wasn’t one of them. Our researchers received more than $1.8 million across 18 projects.

The Health Research Council (HRC) funded Dr Jackie Robinson and Professor Merryn Gott $1.2 million to explore deprivation and palliative care. The HRC also awarded several activation grants, (see p. 11), awarded A/Prof Terryann Clark a $5000 Māori Health Research Knowledge Translation Grant (p. 10) and funded a $5000 Māori summer student to work with Terryann on whānaungatanga and health outcomes, health literacy and access.

From the University, Drs Catherine Bacon, Willoughby Moloney, Cynthia Wensley and A/Prof Rachael Parke received $25,000-$30,000 new staff grants. Rachael also earned a $25,000 Early Career Research Excellence Award.

The Auckland Medical Research Foundation (AMRF) funded Professor Merryn Gott ($98,000) to explore social connectedness among older adults during Covid-19. The Donny Charitable Trust awarded A/Prof John Parsons $10,000 to develop the Healthy for Life programme. Ida May Booth donated $180,000 to fund a Māori and Pacific Island Post-Doctoral Fellowship, and Dr Stephen Jacobs earned a $18,850 Universitas 21 grant to explore an international collaboration with other universities that supports nursing students as they move into work.

2020 brings major funding success to the School of Nursing

The Pae Herenga research project led by Dr Tess Moeke-Maxwell achieved a significant milestone in November. The group launched the Pā Te Aroha website, a major outcome of the four-year Health Research Council funded study that investigated Māori end of life care customs.

The website, which features the art work of Sofia Minson, will act as a rich repository of knowledge for whānau as they navigate end of life experiences with their kaumātua. It also contains a section for health practitioners. ‘More than 60 whānau, rongoā practitioners, tohunga and Māori health professionals gifted their end of life pūrākau to us during the project,’ Tess said.

The launch was held at the University’s Waipapa Marae. Te Ārai Kāhui Kaumātua, who called for the Pae Herenga study, led proceedings and blessed the website.

The programme highlighted digital stories created in collaboration with research participants and a documentary featuring Māori veterans.

Online repository a kete of Māori end of life knowledge

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**Nurse practitioner training programme ramping up to go nationwide**

The School of Nursing is leading the rollout of the Nurse Practitioner Training Programme (NPTP) across Aotearoa New Zealand. The rollout comes after five years of piloting and is funded by the Ministry of Health. During the next four years, 50 NPTP places will be made available, with priority places going to Māori and Pacific people.

The pilot proved highly successful, with 18-24 trainees per year progressing through to registration and employment as NPs. Course Director and Chair of Nurse Practitioners New Zealand, Sandy Oster, and the NP team are now working in collaboration with Victoria University of Wellington and University of Otago to ensure a consistently high standard of NP education across the country. With 68 national applicants, the number of trainees (both NPTP and non-NPTP funded) at The University of Auckland is expected to more than double in 2021.

The NPTP is part of a wider programme led by Dr Sue Adams to establish NP (and enrolled nurse) services to increase access to mental health and addiction services in primary health care settings. ‘The programme is developing a strong equity focus,’ Sue said, ‘working in partnership with Mahitahi Hauora PHE, the Fono, Te Rau Ora, and Te Ao Māramatanga. Opportunities for research from honours to post-doc are plentiful.’

**Face-to-face contact still tops for beating loneliness**

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Groundbreaking research examining email use within the hospital setting demonstrates the complexity of this supposedly ‘simple’ method of communication. Sally Dennis and Susan Waterworth’s new paper offers results from Sally’s master’s project, which Susan supervised. Sally conducted focus groups with health professionals to understand their email practices and perspectives for sharing information in the future.

Sally and Susan concluded that it’s important organisations ensure email is recognised as a legitimate work process. They also need to implement approaches to support staff ‘to engage, feel in control of email and reduce stress.’ Healthcare staff who don’t view using email as a legitimate work process has concerning implications ‘from a patient safety and quality perspective.’ See their paper, Health Professionals’ Engagement with Email – Enabler or Disruptor. *Computer, Informatics, Nursing* Journal. 2020; doi:10.1097/CIN.0000000000000658

The unprecedented rise in numbers of people over 60 worldwide has sparked a research revolution. And Professor Vanessa Burholt is on a mission to channel opportunities associated with global ageing. This past year she’s been laying the groundwork for the Centre for Co-Created Ageing Research. Its purpose is to ‘deliver creative and innovative solutions to improve health, wellbeing and human flourishing among older people,’ Vanessa said.

She’s currently working with a diverse group of stakeholders within and outside the University to help shape the Centre’s proposal. Their primary focus will be on social and clinical gerontology, participatory methods, Kaupapa Māori and Pacific research, epidemiology, engineering, digital technologies, architecture, creative arts and design. This dynamic mix of disciplines will ‘give older people, researchers and communities the opportunity to co-create world-class interdisciplinary ageing research.’
Teaching excellence recognised

Dr Gigi Lim earned the 2020 Founders’ Award for Excellence in Genomic Nursing Education from the International Society of Nurses in Genetics (ISONG). She received the award during ISONG’s virtual congress in mid-November. ISONG is a global nursing specialty organisation dedicated to genomic health care, education, research and scholarship.

Do hearing impaired patients give informed consent?

Gaining informed consent is a cornerstone of good nursing care. Yet challenges can arise with hearing-impaired patients. A team of second-year nursing students reported on these challenges in *Kai Tiaki Nursing*. They looked at such issues as patient safety and the risk to their rights, competencies and codes breached when nurses don’t obtain consent and prioritising informed consent in the face of high patient load. Dr Kim Ward supervised the group who included: Elizabeth Henning, Jessica Wu, Georgia Battin, Kris Munar, Chloe Oh and Emma Stevenson. See: Henning E, Wu J, Battin G, Munar K, Oh C, Stevenson E, Ward K. (2020) *Ensuring informed consent for hearing impaired patients*. *Kai Tiaki Nursing*. 26(10 Nov); 18-19.

Valuing nurses: an action plan for the future

In collaboration with Auckland DHBs, the School held a hui in early December on improving the valuing of nurses and nursing. ‘We wanted to bring Māori and tauiwi nurses and researchers together to discuss improving the status and wellbeing of nurses,’ said coordinator Dr Stephen Jacobs.

The day-long meeting at the University’s Waipapa Marae covered topics related to wellness, mental health, leadership and thriving in the workplace. ‘It was important for us to look at what research has already achieved in these areas but mainly to build an action plan for the next five years by identifying priorities for what needs to happen next,’ Stephen said. ‘A strong partnership between nurses and researchers can drive action.’
The School of Nursing is raising funds to help seven year-old Hollie Beattie beat cancer. The daughter of staff member Jo Beattie, Hollie was diagnosed with neuroblastoma, a rare form of cancer in 2018. After exhausting treatment options in New Zealand, her family is looking to Spain for new treatment. To donate: https://givealittle.co.nz/cause/helping-hollie-fund.

Helping Hollie
Jo & Hollie Beattie

Survey to gauge nurses alcohol and drug use
To understand better their alcohol and other drug use, Dr Marea Topp is asking registered nurses (RNs) who provide direct patient care, to complete a five-minute anonymous online survey. Marea aims to estimate the prevalence of RNs’ alcohol or drug use in 2020, compare it to a similar study from 2005 and explore the implications for altered work performance and delivery of safe care.

The research will fill a critical gap in the Aotearoa New Zealand and international literature. There is only limited evidence reporting the prevalence of nurses’ alcohol and drug use and the impact on patient safety and nurses’ wellbeing.

The New Zealand Nurses Organisation (NZSO) is distributing the survey. RNs wishing to take part can visit NZSO’s Facebook page.

Weaving success into research through mentoring
The School’s new mentorship model incorporates Māori weaving (tukutuku) into its framework. Tukutuku refers either to the weaving of lattice work that often adorns Māori meeting houses or to the lattice work itself.

By relying on tukutuku as its core metaphor, the model acknowledges that mentoring requires people to bring their best selves and work in partnership. ‘Just like with tukutuku, mentorship requires time, patience and whiti whiti korero (back-and-forward communication),’ said Dr Tess Moeke-Maxwell. Tess worked with kuia Whio Hansen to provide the cultural translation of the tukutuku metaphor.

Other mentorship team members are A/Prof Melody Smith, and Drs Kim Ward and Bobbi Laing.
PhD focuses on complex chronic conditions

Congratulations to Cecilia Wong-Cornell for being awarded her PhD. Her thesis explored the experiences of New Zealanders from socioculturally diverse backgrounds who care for older family members with complex chronic conditions. A/Profs John Parsons and Elsie Ho from the Faculty and Professor Nicolette Sheridan from Massey University were her supervisors.

The race to supply online learning to nursing students

March’s Covid-19 lockdown meant our staff had three days to prepare for online teaching. In the first semester, 33 post-graduate courses were rebuilt and delivered online to 1525 students across Aotearoa New Zealand. This was an amazing accomplishment as the majority took it in stride, stayed with their studies and produced a 99% pass rate.

Second semester teaching has continued predominantly online. Similar to last semester, most students are on target to succeed. For undergraduates, some disruption occurred regarding their clinical placements. Yet through rescheduling and finding alternatives, students remain on track to meet their clinical and academic requirements.

Gender research definitely not ‘lost in translation’

Though Covid-19 has stopped us all from venturing overseas, Te Ārai Research Group’s graphic novel Vivian about gender and palliative care is traveling to Växjö, Sweden. Translated by Carina Werkander (A/Prof in Caring Services, Center for Collaborative Palliative Care, at Linnaeus University) she will use it as a case study in the University’s undergraduate nursing curriculum.

The English version is available for download at: https://tearairesearchgroup.org.

The research underpinning it can be found in the article titled Gender and Palliative Care, a Call to Arms, just published in Palliative Care and Social Practice. It details how gender affects both women and men at the end of life.
Moving from PhD to Post-Doc

Congratulations also to Jesse Whitehead who just received his PhD from the University of Waikato. His thesis examined aspects of general practitioner services in the Waikato DHB. Jesse has been a research assistant with A/Prof Melody Smith and Dr Naimh Donnellan on their Knowing Your Neighbourhood project. He will now move into a postdoctoral post on the study.

Enabling those in aged care to have a voice using the arts

Professor Merryn Gott is part of a team that has been awarded an Australian Research Council Discovery Grant designed to benefit older adults. The $310,000 (AUD) grant will use design and creative arts methods to amplify the voices of aged care residents. She joins Queensland University of Technology staff led by Professor Evonne Miller on the project. The study will use diverse art forms to engage audiences in critical conversations about aged care.

‘The implications for our programme of research here are significant,’ Merryn said. ‘What we learn in Australia will have direct application for using arts-based methods in Aotearoa New Zealand. Its relevance is timely given we face similar challenges.’

How to talk to patients about end of life plans

BNurs(Hons) student Natalie Allingham learned first-hand how research can feed into health service improvement. She presented results from her Honours project to Auckland District Health Board’s Advance Care Planning (ACP) steering group.

Her study focused on factors that enable health professionals to talk to patients about ACP and what key factors influence these perspectives. ‘Cue recognition, organisational influences, use of hooks, normalising, and cultural influences were all found to be enablers,’ she said. Natalie’s motivation to undertake the research stemmed from her own experience. ‘I saw how ACP was being underutilised in my practice setting.’

Dr Jackie Robinson supervised Natalie.
A personal experience of tangihanga distress during Covid-19 lockdown

Covid-19 severely disrupted Māori tangihanga practices for people who died during the Level 4 lockdown earlier this year. Dr Tess Moeke-Maxwell and her whānau (extended family) endured these disruptions personally when her newborn mokopuna (grandchild) Te Minaora died. The death was anticipated to some degree as she had been diagnosed with a rare heart disease pre-natally. She passed away within 24 hours of her birth.

Tess and her co-authors have published a paper about the whānau’s experience, ‘Te Whakatara! – Tangihanga and bereavement COVID-19’. Adopting an auto-ethnographic approach, they described the circumstances around Te Minaora’s short life and death and the impact of the COVID-19 tangihanga (funeral) policy restrictions on the family.

They noted the protective aspects of tangihanga processes, how when performed correctly, they benefit whānau throughout the grieving process. They ‘restore us to normal life following a stormy event such as the death of an infant.’ Even in the midst of a nationwide pandemic, tangihanga is an ‘institution that is critical to our health and wellbeing.’

Among their recommendations was the suggestion that in any future pandemics, ‘local Māori have autonomy to plan and manage tangihanga to avoid unnecessary distress, particularly where there is a known palliative condition.’ To read more see the latest edition of The Ethnographic Edge.

Knowledge translation grant extends reach of rangatahi research results

A/Prof Terryann Clark (Ngapuhi) was awarded a $5,000 Health Research Council (HRC) Māori Knowledge Translation Grant to make the findings from her Harnessing the Spark of Life: Maximising Whānau Contributors to Rangatahi Wellbeing study more accessible. This will involve her rangahau hauora roopu (Māori research team) co-designing mana-enhancing digital resources. Topics that will be developed include how to strengthen whānau relationships with rangatahi, talking about the ‘hard stuff’ and how strong cultural identity improves health outcomes. Check out their website for more information on this project https://www.youth19.ac.nz/the-surveys
Building a strong community team for palliative care study

A core team of researchers kicking off a Health Research Council funded project exploring deprivation and palliative care travelled to the Bay of Plenty in October to meet with their community partners. ‘Developing and maintaining relationships with the people involved in the care of those nearing the end of life is essential for our success,’ said Dr Jackie Robinson, the project co-lead with Professor Merryn Gott.

They met with representatives from the Bay of Plenty District Health Board, the Eastern Bay and Waipuna Hospices and the Eastern Bays Primary Health Alliance and Western Bays Primary Health Organisation. ‘We were welcomed so warmly by everyone and their passion to support the project was inspiring,’ Jackie said.

The University arm of the project consists of researchers from the Te Ārai Palliative and End of Life Care Research Group and the School of Population Health and is supported by the Te Ārai Kuri Kaumātua.

Post-grad coursework nets nationwide impact

Zara Schofield rose to the challenge set in her master’s post-graduate course: N701 Clinical Project. As a result, her work is making an impact nationwide. Zara, a paediatric immunology/allergy nurse specialist at Starship, developed a guideline for nurses to assist in the administration of subcutaneous immunoglobulin (SCIG) for children with immune deficiencies.

“We ask our students in N701 to find innovative, evidence-based solutions to issues that affect patient outcomes,’ said Course Director Dr Cynthia Wensley. ‘Zara’s guideline is an excellent example of this.’

Nurses in different DHBs had indicated via a survey that they needed to become more familiar with this technique. ‘Zara responded with a solution that’s making a real impact on care,’ Cynthia said.

Zara will present her guideline at the Starship Nursing Grand Round in February 2021 and will also offer Zoom trainings to nurses around the country if needed.
Let kids do the talking about Active School Travel

‘Children are extremely aware of their environments and capable of articulating their preferences and needs,’ says A/Prof Melody Smith. Such knowledge motivates Melody and colleagues Drs Niamh Donnellan and Victoria Egli in their research to support kids active school travel across Aotearoa New Zealand.

‘Understanding what children want means we can design and construct environments that are actually going to engage them and their families.’ The team’s recent work in Whangārei provides an example of how talking to children can produce unique findings.

‘Fun was an important topic for kids,’ Melody says. ‘They had many suggestions about how to make the shared path they used more fun to travel.’ Paintings and art, rock climbing and playgrounds with kids’ paintings of what they want to be when they grow up made the list.

Check out the reference list starting on page 14 to find out more about their body of work in this important area.

Help with sussing children’s activities comes from above

Measuring children’s exposure to healthy and unhealthy environments in Taranaki is leading to novel approaches in quantifying the built environment for child health. Spurred by the need to supplement Council environmental data, Drs Niamh Donnellan, Jesse Whitehead, Yvonne Anderson and A/Prof Melody Smith have been developing new ways to fill in gaps in the information available.

‘We’re using historical images of features and destinations shown on Google Street View that can influence children’s physical activity and dietary behaviours,’ Niamh said. ‘These might be dairies, fast food outlets, playgrounds and pedestrian crossings, for example. By characterising the activity spaces around where children live and go to school, they give us a picture of the day-to-day interactions children have with their neighbourhood environments.’

This work is part of their Knowing Your Neighbourhood Study, funded by the Health Research Council.
A perfect score for new HRC activation grants

The Health Research Council (HRC) awarded $30,000 activation grants to all School of Nursing staff who applied. Dr Tess Moeke-Maxwell will address the knowledge gap in Indigenous end-stage, home-based care while, Dr Rosemary Frey will examine COVID-19 and hospice community services in New Zealand and Scotland. Dr Aileen Collier will look at palliative care telehealth during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A/Prof Rachael Parke will investigate people’s experiences of hospital visiting during COVID-19 restrictions. A/Prof John Parsons will continue his work exploring various ways to best deliver healthy ageing messages to older people via media.

Dr Julia Slark will explore the implementation of a new bicultural compassionate care framework within Middlemore Hospital.

Drs Tai Kake and Kathy Peri will work with project lead Dr Gary Cheung from the School of Medicine to conduct the first clinical trial involving Māori who have dementia.

Pandemic doesn’t defeat first cohort of MNSc students

Despite Covid-19 roadblocks, the inaugural year of the Masters of Nursing (MNSc) programme is on track. ‘I’m proud of the way our students have risen to the challenge of starting their nursing education this year,’ said MNSc Programme Director Dr Michelle Honey. Next year is looking promising too. ‘We’ve had a significant amount of interest for our second intake in 2021.’ International as well as local students are applying, even though our borders are closed. ‘We’ve received 25 international applications from North America, Asia and Africa, though with the current restrictions and the need to be in New Zealand to complete clinical placements, international applicants may have to wait till 2022,’ Michelle said.

The MNSc is a two-year programme that qualifies those with a relevant undergraduate degree and GPA of 5.0 or higher to become a Registered Nurse (RN). As students must already have a degree to be eligible, the academic work is at Master’s level.
The List

School of Nursing staff produced 134 publications in the past twelve months, a record number. Journal articles, book chapters and books are all represented here on a diverse range of topics. Enjoy.

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