

### TOP REGIONAL INSIGHTS



Photo source [NZ Herald](#)

**“There is a need to highlight the human element of the issues and human capitals costs of the challenging health care situation. Building a set of collaborative relationships that will hold us together as we move forward is critical.” Harry Burkhart, RSLG Co-Chair**

**Co-design is underway for development of the future health workforce.** The RSLG and Northland DHB have facilitated a co-design process (including a dedicated rūpū Māori) with Iwi social service providers, training providers, industry employers, and hapū to develop innovations in quality care for whānau. This group is developing recommendations to expand the labour pipeline by bringing together employers, schools, training providers, and hapū and community groups.

**Toitū Te Waiora WDC is mapping regional provision to identify gaps and better align with service needs across Tai Tokerau.** Key opportunities are increasing kaupapa Māori provision; improving signposting for career pathways and training provision; and tackling perceptions that the sector is poorly paid.

**There is an increasing need to attract locals in to community/health care assistant roles to meet the regions growing health needs.** These roles are stepping stones into the industry that provide the opportunity to recognise knowledge, and encourage industry progression. The region has historically relied on some migrant workers in these roles, but are taking steps to attract more local workers.

**Funding for training providers delivering health subjects needs to be reviewed to gain greater equity with other trades, such as construction etc.** This would ensure that service providers can maintain viable business models, and include coverage of service expenses such as mileage which would help attract more learners to follow this pathway.

### TRENDS AT A GLANCE



**Health needs are growing, and becoming more complex** - over the last 5-years the ratio of home base complex care to standard care in Tai Tokerau has increased from 30% to 70% requiring a significant increase in care skills.

**Aging health workforce** - 20% of the workforce will be aging out over the next 5 years, with (for example) Northland DHB staff having an average age of 45-46 years.

Source: Northland DHB <https://www.northlanddhb.org.nz/>



**Workforce trend data** - Among DHBs, Northland has one of the highest percentages of older people in our total population of 179,000 (in 2018 19.6% compared with 15.2% nationally) and it is also ageing faster than most other DHBs (by 2028, 25.7% compared with 19.4% nationally)..



**The co-design group have identified that many of the care services provided are not culturally appropriate.** Increasing demand and an aging population has highlighted to employers, care givers and clients the need to include Mātauranga Māori based Tikanga training as a basis for all training programmes in Tai Tokerau, especially in the health care sector.

**Perfect storm combination** – workforce aging out; the vaccine mandate reducing the available workforce; along with the COVID-19 environment, and low vaccination rates – all make it difficult to service contracts across multiple funders – ACC, MOH and DHB

### TOP LABOUR MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

- The co-design for workforce development project has established a foundation for collective agreement** on workforce priorities and potential actions, from the compulsory school sector right through to aged-care providers.
- Iwi hapū have been very supportive in providing solutions and recommendations to this sector** recognising that as Māori providers they are at the front line, especially as they respond to the health demands and effects of COVI-19. Insights from other sectors have also been incorporated.
- The members of the co-design group are investigating several options, including:**
  - Facilitating connections between residential and home based care providers, and local Iwi/hapū groups.** This will enable hapū to share tikanga that means care is appropriate, while developing awareness of careers, and a pipeline of workers who can provide services to their own whānau.
  - Collaborating with Toitū Te Waiora to map out service provision across the motu.** This will identify the gaps, and enable more effective delivery of training and services to the sector, while making pathways more visible.
  - Collaborating with MSD to identify those who are already caring for whānau.** By identifying these people they can offer support to help them gain qualifications that will enable them to provide a quality service while enhancing their employability and contributing to the wellbeing of their communities.
  - Embedding a pastoral care model across the sector, which includes a Te Ao Māori approach.** It includes an individual learning and career plan; integrated employability and life skills; wrap-around pastoral care; and localised learning with earn as you learn components. The model is intended to align with procurement models, service guidelines and a clear outcomes framework.

### TOP LABOUR MARKET CHALLENGES

- Māori are underrepresented in health staff across the region.** Although there has been some improvement, for example Northland DHB reports progress following a workforce equity manager appointment, increases in Māori employment in the health and community workforce is low. Māori remain 18 percent of employees, while representing 35 percent of the region's people
- Unintended gender bias is occurring in fees free training.** Training providers are funded less for health related qualifications than other trade related qualifications. This sees male-dominated industries that have fees free trades training attract learners to these courses, rather than health related fields which are not fees free.
- COVID-19 lockdowns have shown that online learning is a barrier for some learners,** particularly those who do not have access to internet infrastructure thereby making it a non viable option.
- Staff retention is an ongoing challenge.** This is exacerbated by the increased demand for higher skilled (level 3 and 4 workers) to support the more complex cases. There are a number of actions that employers can take, such as having a buddy when employed, which is proven to help staff retention. However this involves extra cost to the employer, which makes the business model non-viable long-term.
- Service provision contracts are not covering employee costs for mileage, leaving employees unable to recoup costs.** Employers and workers are reluctant to provide services, especially in rural areas where workers cover long distances when they cannot claim realistic mileage.

### THE TAI TOKERAU REGION



### OUR FOCUS FOR THE NEXT 2 MONTHS:

- Finalising Mātauranga Māori framed Aspirations for Te Purunga ki Te Raki regional workforce plan
- Formalising regional officials group to support agency alignment and implementation with the RWP