

Press Release

8 February 2023

World-first Cultural Safety Training to be embedded in Doctors Education

The first Cultural Safety Training Plan world-wide to be implemented into the curriculum of medical specialist training will mark a turning point in New Zealanders experiences with their doctor, says Chair of Te Ohu Rata O Aotearoa (Te ORA) Professor David Tipene-Leach, and Council of Medical Colleges Chair, Dr Samantha Murton.

The *Cultural Safety Training Plan for Vocational Medicine* in Aotearoa was launched with a celebration breakfast and symposium this morning at Te Wharewaka O Pōneke.

“The Cultural Safety Training Plan we are launching today is a key part of the big move toward achieving equity and the aspiration of Māori reaching our full health potential,” Professor Tipene-Leach said.

“The Cultural Safety Training Plan provides curricula foundation for medical colleges’ training programmes. We want to support doctors as they train and retrain to undertake culturally safe practice, as defined by the patients and whānau they serve,” Dr Murton said.

Cultural Safety for doctors looks like examining the impact of their own culture on their work with patients; a commitment to address any of their own biases, attitudes, assumptions, stereotypes, prejudices that may affect the quality of care provided to patients; and engaging in ongoing self-reflection and self-awareness to hold themselves accountable for providing culturally safe care, as defined by the patient and their communities.

This training plan has been designed to reflect the unique context of Aotearoa. Whilst cultural safety is applicable to all cultural, ethnic, religious and other social groups, its focus on Māori health outcomes is immediately obvious and intentional.

“This is a significant project, and I want to thank everyone involved from the Council of Medical Colleges, researchers and Te ORA for how we have worked together to develop this Training Plan,” Professor Tipene-Leach said.

The Cultural Safety Training Plan responds to the 2019 statement from the Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ) that medical education in Aotearoa should include a focus on cultural safety. It builds upon the independent research findings on the current state of cultural safety and health equity delivered by doctors in Aotearoa New Zealand developed by Te ORA and the Medical Council of New Zealand in 2020. Colleges already have Hauora Māori and cultural competence training well embedded in their curricula -cultural safety is in addition to those pieces of work.

The [Cultural Safety Training Plan for Vocational Medical Training in Aotearoa can be downloaded here](#), and the earlier work [Literature and Environmental Scan of Cultural Safety in Medical Training](#) downloaded here