

## Policy Statement on Pacific People and their health

*As a Pacific nation, New Zealand has a responsibility to its region and to Pacific people living in New Zealand<sup>1</sup>.*

The health disparities of Pacific people in New Zealand are systemic and avoidable. There is an obligation for New Zealand to promote and protect Pacific people's health and wellbeing<sup>2</sup>. Opportunities to identify the causes of health inequities within the Pacific context should be a priority for the Government.

### **Thus CMC will support and work where possible with:**

- The Government to prioritise Pacific health in public policy and support efforts to identify and address inequities in health for Pacific peoples in New Zealand.
- HWNZ to increase support for the Pacific providers and Pacific workforce developments.
- Colleges to encourage and promote a Pacific workforce in key disciplines where there is a demand for services for Pacific people and encourage a culturally competent workforce<sup>3</sup>.
- Colleges to encourage and promote research that addresses inequity in health care in New Zealand.
- Groups working in this area to standardise approaches to collection of ethnicity data<sup>4</sup>.

CMC supports the work of Colleges who are undertaking health related projects in Pacific nations.

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<sup>1</sup> Pacific peoples come from the 22 Pacific Island countries and territories and comprise distinct populations with diverse political structures, socio-economic status, language and culture. The Pacific covers some 10.6 million people living on 551,312 km<sup>2</sup> landmass spread over 165 million km<sup>2</sup> surface area of the Pacific

Ocean. Additionally, there are over 290,000 people that identify as Pacific living in New Zealand.<sup>2</sup> The primary focus of this policy is the New Zealand-based Pacific population however there are related issues that arise from the historical, familial and cultural links to the wider Pacific.

<sup>2</sup> The health of Pacific people s i n A o t e a r o a i s " e v e r y b o d y ' s b u s i n e s s " Contributed by Dr Api Talemaitoga, Clinical Director, Pacific Programme Implementation, Sector Capability and Implementation Directorate, Ministry of Health, Wellington [www.bpac.org.nz/BPJ/2010/November/docs/BPJ\\_32](http://www.bpac.org.nz/BPJ/2010/November/docs/BPJ_32)

<sup>3</sup> Best health outcomes for Pacific Peoples - Medical Council of New Zealand <https://www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/News.../Best-health-outcomes-for-Pacific-Peoples.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Ministry of Health. Ethnicity Data Protocols for the Health and Disability Sector. Wellington: Ministry of Health, 2004. <http://www.health.govt.nz/publication/ethnicity-data-protocols-health-and-disability-sector>

(Accessed September 2014)

Ministry of Health. Ethnicity Data Protocols Supplementary Notes. Wellington: Ministry of Health, 2009. <http://www.health.govt.nz/publication/ethnicity-data-protocols-health-and-disability-sector> (Accessed September 2014)