

## Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Te Tatau o te Whare Kahu ki Hine Pae Ora - our journey

When we commenced our work, there were already a number of documents in public circulation including the Review of the New Zealand Health and Disability System, the Waitangi Tribunal's Hauora Report on Stage One of the Health Services and Outcomes Kaupapa Inquiry, and research supported by a partnership between Te Rau Ora, Counties Manukau DHB and Ngā Maia.

### A need for radical transformation

There were strong signals about the need for a radical transformation of the health system including midwifery. We needed a transformative approach for the Aotearoa Midwifery Project, because what we have been doing to address disparities has not worked. The Council required the CRG to have a strong evidence-based review and a focus on equitable outcomes.

### Learning to be a Tiriti partner

It was clear that Te Tiriti o Waitangi should be used to frame our way of working because it is the founding document of Aotearoa. Building on Te Tiriti o Waitangi and privileging the needs of Māori as Tangata Whenua enables Tangata Tiriti to understand what it means to a Tiriti partner. We have an opportunity to build a different foundation for how we position ourselves and address equality for all communities that midwives work alongside. Te Tiriti o Waitangi is recognised in the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003, which also sets out the functions of the Midwifery Council. Te Tiriti envisaged a relationship of mutual benefit between those who were here (Tangata Whenua) and all those who were to come (Tangata Tiriti). It was an agreement to an on-going equal power sharing relationship, in which their respective autonomy is affirmed.

Following the Midwifery Council's selection and appointment of the CRG, Co-chairs were appointed to reflect Te Tiriti o Waitangi. However, at that stage the implications of working within a Te Tiriti framework was not understood as the Tangata Whenua representatives on the CRG were significantly out numbered by Tangata Tiriti representatives. The Midwifery Council undertook a further selection process to increase the number of Tangata Whenua members.

### A new way of working

At the first meeting in May 2020, the CRG watched a PowerPoint presentation showing examples of five Tiriti partnerships that are already in action throughout the country. The partnerships are varied, and each was selected purposely to highlight the flexibility of Te Tiriti as a partnership model, and to illuminate the potential of a Te Tiriti approach to meet common and specific needs. The CRG was presented with a simple conceptual Te Tiriti o Waitangi framework (shown to the right) to inform our way of working, which was modified as a result of their feedback.



This model comprises three houses (whare). The whare of Tangata Whenua comprises whānau, hapū, iwi and their descendants. The whare of Tangata Tiriti comprises all other citizens of Aotearoa and their descendants. Te Whare o Te Tiriti o Waitangi, is the decision space where the members of the whare come together to discuss, debate and negotiate their various positions on any given topic.

The CRG was asked to complete a short survey. One question asked them to select from a list of words the ones that best express effective collaborative partnership. Their choices are mapped below. The size of each word represents the frequency it appeared in CRG answers. We used the three whare model in practice. Due to Covid, CRG meetings were held online via the Zoom platform and decisions were achieved by a two-step consensus process. Whatever the decision, the CRG convened into their separate break-out room (aka respective whare) to establish their position as a whare. They reconvened back together in one Zoom room with their already formed position, placed their position on the table so to speak, and both whare deliberated to reach a joint decision.



Tangata Whenua were outnumbered. Representation based on numbers of people and conventional democracy, is problematic for minority groups. Representation that is based on the structures of a partnership, rather than the number of people, is a fundamental point of difference from conventional decision-making and it is the reason, the three whare model is enabling for Tangata Whenua views.

### Committing to the scope in Te Reo Māori

One of the earliest decisions made by the CRG was their agreement to a Māori language and an English language version of the Scope of Practice. They agreed that an English language version alone, is not sufficient. They also agreed that the English language version was not adequate without the inclusion of Māori words like Aotearoa, because they recognised that Māori language is inherent to the language identity of midwifery in Aotearoa.

### Gendered language

Another decision of the CRG had to do with the use or not, of gendered language. This was a great challenge for Tangata Tiriti, and more specifically, English language speakers, because many words commonly used like he and she, are gender specific.

### Deliberating the use of whānau instead of woman

A further decision of the CRG, and the longest of all deliberations, occurred because of the inclusion of the word whānau instead of the word woman. Tangata Whenua came to a very quick decision on their view that whānau is a much more appropriate word to use instead of woman, which is philosophically consistent with mātauranga paradigms of holism in social structures.

Tangata Tiriti deliberated for a longer period of time. The implication of using gendered English words, came up again. Tangata whenua offered and were asked to explain the reasons for their view. The actual decision to include the word whānau and remove the word woman, occurred over at least four separate meetings. This process required using the three whare model over and over, especially for Tangata Tiriti, as they moved to new positions and new understandings of words, concepts and what is required of them as Tiriti partners.

### Challenging and changing everything

The Scope of Practice has taken much longer than the CRG anticipated because the Te Tiriti process that was used, was new and it challenges and changes everything when entered into. We had to think about the current society that we live in, as well as the disparities we need to address. The three-whare model meant that in the Te Whare o te Tiriti o Waitangi something new was able to be articulated together as Tangata whenua and Tangata Te Tiriti.