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*Te  
Whaioranga*

ePānui from PHARMAC's Te Whaioranga Māori Health Team



## ePanui August 2012 From the Chief Executive

Some years ago the staff of PHARMAC visited different parts of New Zealand, reporting back to the community on our Māori Responsiveness Strategy. One of the highlights of the journey was an overnight stay on the marae at Whangara, north of Gisborne.

Whangara at the time had found new fame for its part in the hit movie *Whale Rider*. For the night we stayed, we set up a screen in the whareniui *Whitireia* where we slept, and watched the movie in the same house where it was filmed. It was a memorable experience for all.

That wasn't the only memorable impression we took away from Whangara. Near the marae is the Whangara cemetery, and some of our people paid their respects there. One of the things that struck our people was the ages of those in the cemetery – men who had died in their 30s and 40s, and younger children. To the Ngati Porou people of Whangara, this was their history. To our PHARMAC people, this was a very real picture of the differences between Māori health and life expectancy, and that of New Zealand Pakeha.

We know there is a difference in the life expectancy between Māori and other New Zealanders. A Northland DHB report said that in some parts of the community, the life expectancy for Māori men can be up to 10 years less than for non-Māori. To any fair thinking New Zealand, that's just not right.

It is this kind of statistic that drives Te Whaioranga, our Māori Responsiveness Strategy. Since its beginning in 2002, the strategy has seen PHARMAC improve representation of Māori in PHARMAC, its advisory committees and the PHARMAC Board, and put greater effort into building relationships and interacting with the Māori community to improve Māori use of the medicines that are funded.

Some of our programmes, notably He Rongoā Pai, He Oranga Whānau and the One Heart Many Lives cardiovascular programme, have adopted unashamedly Māori kaupapa. We've seen the community rise to the challenge of heart disease through locally-led programmes like The Bro Files in Northland and the rise

of the Iron Māori movement, which PHARMAC has sponsored since its inception.

This is all good news, but we need to keep thinking of new ways to work. Earlier in 2012, PHARMAC worked to bring together Government and local health providers under as a single health check entity at the national kapa haka festival Te Matatini. The success of the Whānau Hauora Village has been recognised in a recent Human Rights Commission report A Fair Go for All, as an example of what can be done to bring health services to Māori that makes it accessible to the community.

PHARMAC has a strong commitment to improving Māori health through medicines. This is a legacy I have inherited as PHARMAC's new Chief Executive, and one I intend to see continue. To quote Sir James Henare:

Kua tāwhiti ki to tātou haerenga, ki te kore e haere tonu

He tino nui rawa ā tātou mahi, kia kore e mahi nui tonu

We have come too far not to go further

We have done too much not to do more.



### Scholarship winner sees part in improving Māori health

Otago University pharmacy student Andy Davis wants to be part of innovative new ways of providing pharmacy services to Māori. [More](#)



### Team SBW

One Heart Many Lives has been instrumental in the Far North and we have seen many tane and their whanau lives changed because of this programme. [More](#)



### Diabetes products changes

Diabetes is a growing issue in the community and affects nearly 200,000 New Zealanders. Recently PHARMAC has made some changes to the funding of products used to help manage diabetes that will lead to improvements in access for patients. [More](#)



## One Heart Many Lives at Koroneihana

As television's Dr Victor Kahu, he was usually seen saving other people. But for actor Calvin Tuteao the Koroneihana at Turangawaewae was his turn to get his heart health checked. [More](#)



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