

# HE ARA ĀWHINA (PATHWAYS TO SUPPORT) FRAMEWORK

Presented to the Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission

*19 April 2022*



**changing  
minds.**

**He mana tō te mātau ā-wheako**

Our lived experience is our strength

19 April 2022  
Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission  
Via email: [kiaora@mhwc.govt.nz](mailto:kiaora@mhwc.govt.nz)

# SUBMISSION TO THE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING COMMISSION ON THE HE ARA ĀWHINA (PATHWAYS TO SUPPORT) FRAMEWORK

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback and to share the voices of Lived Experience to inform the He Ara Āwhina (Pathways to Support) framework.

Our submission has been informed by the voices of people with Lived Experiences of mental distress and/or addiction within our networks. Anonymised direct quotes have been incorporated throughout our submission.

## About Changing Minds

Changing Minds was founded to reduce mental health stigma and discrimination through education and awareness. We nurture whānau mātau ā-wheako to embrace the mana of their mental health Lived Experiences as a source of collective strength to activate equitable wellbeing across all of Aotearoa.

Changing Minds provides systemic advocacy for the rights of people with Lived Experience, up-to-date mental health information, and social development initiatives across Aotearoa. We see our Lived Experience as taonga (treasure) with which we can inspire and activate others to see that hopeful, positive recovery is possible.

Changing Minds would welcome the opportunity to engage with the Commission ahead of the next phase of consultation to ensure a range of Lived Experience voices are heard.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of our submission, we'd be happy to do so. Please address any queries to Anne Bateman, Interim CEO and Board Chair via email in the first instance ([communications@changingminds.org.nz](mailto:communications@changingminds.org.nz)).

Ngā mihi nui,  
**The Changing Minds Team**



## He Ara Āwhina (Pathways to Support) Framework

The He Ara Āwhina (Pathways to Support) Framework is one component of Aotearoa's wider health and mental health system reforms. When we read the draft framework we see many of the features Changing Minds and others in the sector have been calling for over many years, such as access to choice, self-determination and connected care. We are pleased to see the end to seclusion and coercive and punitive practices clearly stated in the framework.

Including this historic feedback is a great step, but we wish to acknowledge the risk that without clarity during implementation, these outcomes will be diluted and the Lived Experience voice lost.

*"We have to give the people that are really grassroots a chance, they've had so many barriers, and [some people] come to the table so exhausted, so fatigued. And, you know, sometimes they say oh just for one interview, what [effort it] took to get a support worker... or when they didn't have an interpreter..."*

We support the two perspectives approach to the framework and the commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Gaps in cultural literacy for the wider sector and clinicians must be addressed to enable the health workforce to effectively deliver on the principles within the framework.

*"Caring, warm, genuinely understanding, and well-informed (e.g. I'd want the person [in charge of system improvements] to be aware of social justice issues and different identities)."*

## Lived Experience Inclusion and Leadership

While the framework identifies many of the themes the Lived Experience community and the mental health sector have been calling for, we would like to see a greater emphasis on the contribution of Tāngata Mātua ā-wheako and the value of our diversity of thought and experience in an ideal mental health system.

We encourage the Commission to make reference to both Tāngata whaiora and Tāngata Mātua ā-wheako to recognise our engagement with the mental health system is not a constant, but that Tāngata Mātua ā-wheako can contribute significantly to the leadership and creation of connected care and support within the system.

*"Ultimately people want to feel seen and heard, and not brushed aside or dismissed."*

*"I'd like to feel believed"*

*"Safe. Open. Honest. Fair."*

## Action and Implementation

When we compared the He Ara Āwhina (Pathways to Support) Framework against the He Ara Oranga (Wellbeing Outcomes) Framework (See Appendix 1), the implementation gap between an ideal health system and ideal wellbeing is clear.

The Commission has stated this phase of consultation is focused on describing an ideal mental health system and that consultation on methods and measures to assess the system will come at a later date. We do not believe these aspects of the framework should be approached in isolation. As a sector and as individuals we know how we want to be treated in those times we are most in need of support, we now need to see how Aotearoa's systems and services will respect and uphold these ideals.

As we work together to map the path between He Ara Āwhina and He Ara Oranga there is an opportunity to be bold in embedding Lived Experience at the heart of the system. Changing Minds wants to see Tāngata Mātua ā-wheako supported to generate and produce service options and awareness.

Implementation is a significant aspect of an ideal system. We would like to see a continuous improvement approach embedded within the He Ara Āwhina framework and practical measures such as a system delivery follow up post interaction between an individual and the system.

*“It's important to fully acknowledge experiences and that includes removing a culture of fear around feedback, with a view to seeing feedback and critique as a pathway to continual improvement and best-practise development, so that services can continue to flourish as well as the wellbeing of those accessing these services.”*

## Lived Experience Feedback

In addition to seeking feedback on the Commission's questions and areas of interest, we asked our Lived Experience Community the following question - *“If you were accessing a mental health service in future and this experience wasn't ideal for you; how would you like an investigation of follow up to feel (with a view to improving the mental health system for others in future)?”*

While we received limited feedback from the Lived Experience community on whether anything was missing from the framework, as discussed above, much of what Changing Minds and the sector has been calling for over several years has already been included. However many people reached out to us on how future actions, remedies and changes would feel. We trust these views will assist the Commission in shaping the next stages of the He Ara Āwhina (Pathways to Support) framework integration.

*“Investigation/follow up should be:*

- Clearly communicated*
- Done at my pace (not rushed, not drawn out)*
- Simple and streamlined (diminishing chances of retraumatisation by having to tell my story just once, and to as few people as possible),*
- As private as possible,*
- Flexible and holistic (understanding the whole person and how the experience has impacted daily life considering other life circumstances),*

- *Outcome to be made known to me (if a health professional had harmed me I would want to know what actions were taken, e.g., if they were stood down),*
- *Immediate support provided (at no expense)."*

Feedback we received has been woven throughout our submission. We heard that what makes a mental health system ideal is its actions. People spoke of wanting to feel believed and heard, that they would be kept informed and that any remedial actions or changes to the system are meaningful to Tāngata Mātua ā-wheako.

*"I would like to understand the process from start to end – once feedback is given, where does it go and who sees it, who is responsible for actioning it and feeding back on what the outcome is? Being able to access Peer Support or advocacy services during this process would be incredibly valuable."*

*"I would like to have the process explained to me clearly, and to be given a chance to say what remediation/changes would be meaningful to me. I'd like to be kept informed of the progress and to know what changes have been made / how these will be implemented universally."*

We would also like to highlight that feedback we received from a member of the Deaf community has centred on the need to address systemic barriers to access which extend beyond the health or mental health systems.

Their observations examined the value of representation and diversity when engaging with a system or service, particularly having access to leaders and clinicians who have experienced a similar journey. When building an ideal and haoura based system, all aspects of our wellbeing must be interwoven and supported.

## Further Consultation

Changing Minds have also been asked to address the accessibility of consultation ahead of the next phase of He Ara Āwhina. We are glad to see the Commission has included easy to read, large format, Te Reo and New Zealand Sign Language copies of this consultation. However through discussions, some of our community either were not aware that these existed, or found the webpage and navigation required to access these overwhelming.

*"Zoom was really, really hard. Deaf need more time, yeah? And the time limits really restrict us and just to be frank here though, we need to clarify, we need things fleshed out broken down, explained. Just a suggestion would be... each part would be explained and worked through. And it might take a bit of time and then [people engaging in the consultation] feel like okay, foundationally I've got it, you're building on something, you know."*

*"I know that it's more work. I realise that. But you'll appreciate at the end, like what you build into it in that way you know later on it'll...well... it'll be good, like workshops and that kind of thing. Yeah, it'll pay you back."*

## Recommendations for Future Consultation

The recommendations we received to ensure people with Lived Experience, the Deaf Community and others can actively engage in this process included:

- More time to consult. Four weeks was not considered to be enough for individuals to understand what the consultation is for, what the document says, engage within their own communities and then provide feedback. Other areas of Government consultation are typically released for six weeks and we urge the Commission to factor this into its next release.
- Simplified media/social media promotion.
- An easy to read website landing page to assist people in finding the accessible version of the consultation that is right for them.

# Appendix 1: Comparing He Ara Āwhina (Pathways to Support) and He Ara Oranga (Wellbeing Outcomes) Frameworks

## He Ara Āwhina (Pathways to Support) Framework

Purpose: to describe an ideal mental health system

### Te ao Māori Perspective

#### Mana Whaka Haere

We (whānau) want a mental health and addiction system to demonstrate commitment to te Tiriti o Waitangi and be accountable. This will support us to express our authority

#### Mana Motuhake

We lead and self-determine our pathways through distress, substance, or gambling harm to wellbeing and recovery

#### ‘Manawa Ora’ / ‘Tūmanako’

We have the right to choose supports and services that respond to our experiences, needs, and aspirations, and that support our mana motuhake

#### ‘Mana Tangata’ / ‘Tū Tangata Mauri Ora’

We want a mental health and addiction system that is culturally, spiritually, relationally, and physically safe for Māori

#### ‘Mana Whānau’ / ‘Whanaungatanga’

We want a range of supports to work collectively and cohesively, and to acknowledge the interconnection of whakapapa

#### ‘Kotahitanga’

We want supports to make a meaningful difference for Māori, and to unify the collective voices of whānau

## He Ara Oranga (Wellbeing Outcomes) Framework

Purpose: to describe wellbeing from te ao Māori, and shared perspectives

### Te ao Māori Perspective

#### Tino rangatiratanga me te mana Motuhake

Legal, human, cultural, and other rights of whānau are protected, privileged, and actioned. Rights are in line with Te Tiriti o Waitangi and te ao Māori, which includes application of tikanga tuku iho. Māori exercise authority and make decisions about how to flourish. Tino rangatiratanga is expressed in many self-determined ways. Upholding whānau rights is recognised as beneficial to Aotearoa.

#### Whakapuāwaitanga me te pae ora

Thriving whānau and equitable wellbeing are the norm. Whānau have the resources needed to thrive across the course of their lives – especially mokopuna, who are unique taonga. Whānau needs are met, and unfair and unjust differences are eliminated. Whānau live in a state of wai ora, mauri ora, and whānau ora, which enables pae ora.

#### Wairuatanga me te manawaroa

The mauri and wairua of whānau are ever-increasing, intergenerationally. While whānau are already resilient, whānau skills, capabilities, and strengths continue to grow. Taonga Māori are revitalised and nurtured – the unique relationship and spiritual connection Māori have to te taiao, whenua, whakapapa, and whānau is actively protected, enhanced, and strengthened.

#### Whakaora, whakatipu kia manawaroa

Whānau are culturally strong and proud – whānau flourish through the practical expression of ritenga Māori, tikanga Māori, and mātauranga Māori. Māori express connection through awhi mai, awhi atu and the use of te reo me ōna tikanga every day – starting from infancy. The beauty of Māori culture is celebrated and shared by all people in Aotearoa and globally.

#### Whanaungatanga me te arohatanga

Whānau flourish in environments of arohatanga and manaaki. Kaupapa and whakapapa whānau collectively flourish intergenerationally. The active expression of strengths-based whakawhanaungatanga supports positive attachment and belonging. Kotahitanga is realised.

#### Tūmanako me te ngākaupai

Whānau are hopeful. Whānau feel positive about self-defined future goals and aspirations. Whānau have the resources and capacity needed to determine and action preferred futures

## He Ara Āwhina (Pathways to Support) Framework

Purpose: to describe an ideal mental health system

### Shared Perspective

#### Equity

We (tāngata whaiora) want a mental health and addiction system that upholds equity and supports all of us and our whānau

#### Participation and leadership

We lead and self-determine our pathways through distress, substance, or gambling harm to wellbeing and recovery

#### Access and options

We have the right to choose supports and services that respond to our experiences, needs, and aspirations, and believe in our capacity to thrive

#### Safety and rights

We want a mental health and addiction system that understands and upholds our cultural, spiritual, relational, and physical safety, and our human rights

#### Connected care

We want supports to work collectively and cohesively for us, and see us as valued members of whānau, communities, and society

#### Effectiveness

Supports and services must make a meaningful difference in our lives, so that we are self-determining and thriving

## He Ara Oranga (Wellbeing Outcomes) Framework

Purpose: to describe wellbeing from te ao Māori, and shared perspectives

### Shared Perspective

#### Having one's rights and dignity fully realised

All people have their rights fully realised and are treated with dignity. People can fully participate in their communities and broader society, and live free from all forms of racism, stigma, and discrimination. Rights framed by Te Tiriti o Waitangi, other New Zealand law, and international commitments are fully met. The negative impacts of colonisation and historic breaches of rights are recognised and addressed.

#### Healing, growth, and being resilient

People and families experience emotional wellbeing. This includes having the skills, resources, and support needed to navigate life transitions, challenges, and distress in ways that sustain wellbeing and resilience. People and families can experience and manage a range of emotions – celebrating each other's strengths and practising empathy and compassion – personal and collective. Where adversity or trauma occurs, people experience support and belief in their capacity to heal and grow.

#### Having what is needed

People, families, and communities have the resources needed to flourish. This includes (among other things) enough money, financial security, access to healthy food, healthy and stable homes, safe physical activity, lifelong learning, creative outlets and time for leisure, including play for children. People have the support and resources needed to maintain their health across their life course, and experience equity of health. All people live in communities and environments that enable health and wellbeing

#### Being safe and nurtured

People have nurturing relationships that are bound by kindness, respect, and aroha (love and compassion). People of all ages have a sense of belonging in families and / or social groups. Where people experience disconnection, reconnecting or forming new positive connections is possible. People feel safe, secure, and are free from harm and trauma. People live in, learn in, work in, and visit safe and inclusive places.

#### Being connected and valued

All people are valued for who they are and are free to express their unique identities. People are connected to communities in ways that feel purposeful and respectful. People are meaningfully connected to their culture, language, beliefs, religion and / or spirituality, and can express important cultural values and norms. People experience connection to the natural world and exercise guardianship of the environment.

#### Having hope and purpose

People, families, and communities have a sense of purpose and are hopeful about the future. There is respect for people's voices, perspectives, and opinions. People make self-determined decisions about the future and have the resources needed to pursue goals, dreams, and aspirations. Communities of belonging make their own choices, have resources, and are trusted to develop solutions for themselves.