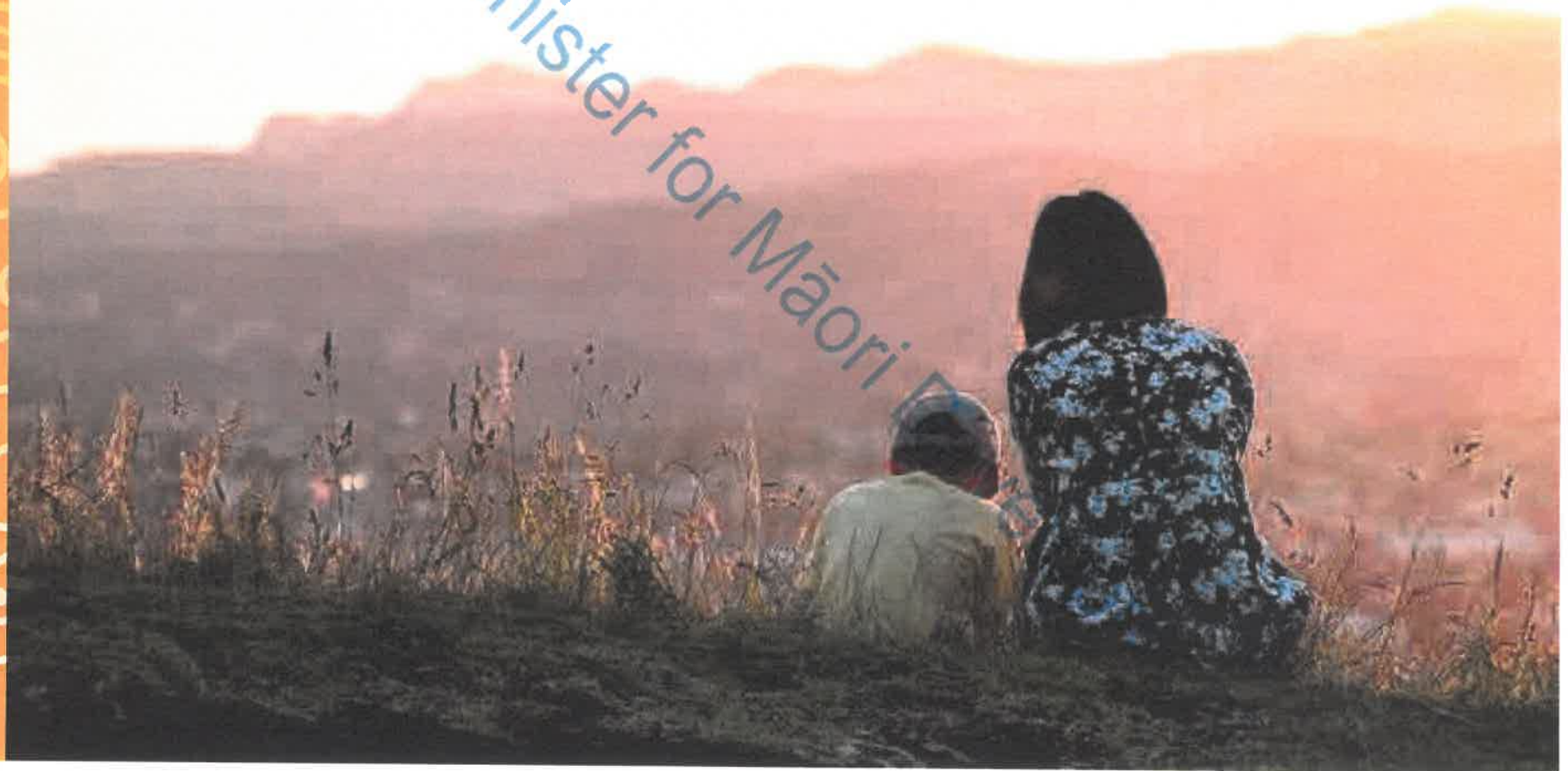




Te Puni Kōkiri
MINISTRY OF MĀORI DEVELOPMENT

**Te Puni Kōkiri Monitoring Report:
Review of Ministry of Social Development employment services
and programmes in Auckland**



Acknowledgements: He Mihi

This pilot effectiveness review would not have been possible without the invaluable support and participation of MSD Māori clients in Auckland who were willing to share their experiences and aspirations, the Ministry of Social Development, especially Mark Goldsmith, Auckland Regional Commissioner and his regional staff, and their Māori and community partners.

He mihi nui ki a koutou Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora ki a Tāmaki Makaurau. Ka nui te mihi ki a koutou mō te manaakitanga me te mahi tahi kei roto i te arotake nei.

Kei a koutou ngā rangatahi Māori, he mihi maioha ki a koutou mō tōu tohatoha ki tā mātou mahi.

Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou katoa ngā hapori o Tāmaki Makaurau mō te tautoko.

Mauri ora!

Ko koe ki tēnā,
ko ahau ki tēnei
kīwā o te kete

You at that, and I at this handle of the basket.

Released by the Minister for Māori Development

Released by the Minister for Māori Development

Forward from our Chief Executive

MAI TE TOIHAUTŪ | From the Chief Executive

Tuhia ki te rangi,
Tuhia ki te whenua,
Tuhia ki ngā ngākau o
ngā tangata,
Ko te mea nui
Ko te aroha.
Whano whano haranui
te toki,
Haumi e, hui e, taiki e!
Ko te kaupapa e kōkiri
ana a Te Puni Kōkiri, ko
te aweawetia te rāngai
tūmatanui me te tiaki mō
tā tātou whānau.
Kōkiritia!

I am pleased to present the findings of a review conducted of the Ministry of Social Development's (MSD) employment services and programmes in Auckland. This report marks a new phase for us at Te Puni Kōkiri, as we take a fresh look at our monitoring approach.

At the beginning of 2019, we began looking at monitoring through a new lens. The introduction of deep-dive reviews into the effectiveness for Māori of specific services and programmes represents the most intensive part of our monitoring approach. This review provides assurance of effectiveness in services and programmes. We are also looking to use the review process itself to strengthen knowledge, attitude and practice among agencies in the way they design and deliver services to or for Māori. This approach is time-consuming, requiring strong agency engagement, but we see this approach as a way to enable improved transparency, accountability, and outcomes for Māori.

Perhaps the most important element of our approach to the review has been placing Māori client perspectives at the centre. Engagement with Māori during the review has enabled us to keep the review focused on their perspectives and experiences. This has helped assess to what extent MSD's services and programmes align with these needs and interests.

Throughout the review, we witnessed a strong commitment from MSD as an organisation, and from individual staff, to supporting Māori to improve their social and economic wellbeing. The willingness of the MSD Auckland region to participate in the review, is itself an indication of this commitment, and I would like to thank them for their participation. We further witnessed this commitment through the release of the Ministry's national Māori strategy, and through an expansion of co-designed initiatives with Māori and iwi providers in Auckland. Te Puni Kōkiri saw many examples of promising practice by staff, service centres and specific programmes.

Lastly, alongside examples of promising practice, Te Puni Kōkiri found evidence that more improvements need to be made to enable better outcomes for Māori.

We look forward to working with the Ministry of Social Development to translate the review findings into practical actions, and we are pleased that discussions about what these improvements may look like have already begun.

Executive summary

Te Puni Kōkiri has a statutory role to monitor the effectiveness of government agencies' services and programmes for Māori. This is a monitoring review of the Ministry of Social Development's (MSD) employment services and programmes in the Auckland region. The review assesses the contribution of MSD's employment services and programmes to Māori wellbeing, with a particular focus on rangatahi Māori (aged 15-24 years old).

MSD HAS CLEAR PRIORITIES FOR MĀORI BUT THERE ARE ORGANISATIONAL INCONSISTENCIES IN EMBEDDING THESE

Te Puni Kōkiri found that leadership and direction for Māori is prominent in MSD strategic documents. However there was little evidence of resourcing or guidance to support and manage implementation of these priorities at a regional level in Auckland. There is no designated senior Māori role in MSD Auckland, creating gaps in oversight of strategic priorities, Māori responsiveness in service planning, expansion of cultural capability, and the protection of tikanga.

Performance and accountability measures for Māori clients do not necessarily translate into changes in service delivery. There is some co-design of community services with iwi and Māori providers in Auckland but Māori-responsive or targeted approaches do not appear to be in all service centres in the region.

Cultural capability is growing but demand exceeds available opportunities. Regional staff generally wanted more support to engage with Māori, and were genuinely interested in doing more. Te Puni Kōkiri learned that through Te Pae Tata, MSD's new Māori strategy, MSD is reviewing its processes to strengthen cultural capability, recruitment processes and performance assessment.

MSD IS STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS IN THE REGION, AND THESE NEED CLEARLY AGREED GOALS, CAPABILITIES AND RESOURCING FOR GREATER EFFECTIVENESS

MSD is signalling commitment to its partnerships through its Statement of Intent 2018-2021, Te Pae Tawhiti. The Auckland regional office has steadily strengthened its commitment in prioritising partnerships with iwi and Māori providers. Iwi and Māori providers now have more involvement in the support clients receive from MSD.

There are also partnerships with community organisations to support clients to 'prepare for work'. MSD Auckland has been expanding these partnerships in response to clients' job aspirations. MSD Auckland has also increased 'social investment' contracts for community providers to provide wraparound support for clients with complex needs, and strengthened engagement with employers to better place clients into work.

Everyone acknowledged the expansion of partnerships and MSD's move to more social investments as a positive shift. Te Puni Kōkiri found evidence of gaps in partnerships at key stages of the client journey. Senior MSD Auckland staff acknowledged the need to fill these gaps, emphasising the importance of partnerships, including whānau-centred services delivered by iwi and Māori providers.

RANGATAHI REQUIRE A TAILORED APPROACH TO MEET THEIR NEEDS

Rangatahi Māori are one of MSD's priority groups. Rangatahi face challenges in obtaining and remaining in employment, but there is evidence of a number of approaches working to support them into training or employment.

Within contact centres and service centres, where most rangatahi use MSD services, there are no designated, tailored approaches to working with rangatahi (or youth) after they turn 18. Our interviews with clients, staff and Māori partners found that many rangatahi find it hard to navigate these services.

There are national and regional initiatives targeting rangatahi – from support with drivers licensing to the recently announced youth employment training initiative, Mana in Mahi. Most rangatahi that Te Puni Kōkiri spoke to had positive feedback about the accessibility and positive approach of MSD's services. However many rangatahi recounted challenges in finding work from MSD, related to either system or personal barriers.

MĀORI CLIENTS WANT RESPECT, AND ACCESSIBLE, CONSISTENT SUPPORT AND INFORMATION. MSD AUCKLAND IS MAKING SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN SUPPORTING MĀORI, BUT EMBEDDING MANA MANAAKI IS A WORK IN PROGRESS

Under Te Pae Tawhiti, there is a call to demonstrate 'mana manaaki – a positive experience every time'. MSD's regional and national approach has been to identify and respond to client needs as early as possible. Te Puni Kōkiri found evidence of mana manaaki in MSD with streamlined information and services, consistent follow up from staff, and changes to service centre environments.

Those rangatahi and older Māori clients that Te Puni Kōkiri interviewed shared the goal of wanting support from MSD that met their basic needs and helped them find work. There was agreement among clients, staff and Māori partners that in spite of changes in MSD, client experience was still variable. Most clients that Te Puni Kōkiri interviewed highlighted the range in attitude and experience they received depending on who they interacted with.

Trusting relationships are key to mana manaaki, but establishing rapport is inconsistent due to factors including the soft skills of case managers, caseloads, time pressures and the complexity of issues Māori clients face.

CHANGES TO SERVICES AND PROGRAMMES COMBINED WITH POOR INTERNAL INFORMATION SHARING MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO PROVIDE A CONSISTENT SERVICE

Te Puni Kōkiri found that Māori disproportionately face complex poverty-related issues that affect their ability to work, while also facing difficulties in navigating MSD's services to alleviate these issues. Clients recounted variability in the services and information they received. Service Centre Managers and frontline staff reflected similar views – that the experience of clients depended on the case manager they worked with. Te Puni Kōkiri also identified large variations in services and approaches across service centres.

Te Puni Kōkiri saw repeated evidence that changes to services and programmes are constant but not always accompanied by appropriate support to Service Centre Managers and frontline staff, or clearly communicated. With heavy caseloads, staff have limited time to get up to speed, leading to varied understanding of services and products.

WHĀNAU-CENTRED APPROACHES WORK FOR ENABLING MĀORI TO MEET THEIR NEEDS AND ACHIEVE THEIR ASPIRATIONS

Whānau-centred approaches align with the direction of both Te Pae Tawhiti and Te Pae Tata. They are growing in some of MSD's services and partnerships. They also seem to be a normal approach used by many MSD Māori frontline staff. MSD Auckland articulated a desire to expand whānau-centred approaches across its practice. These approaches need time and capability. To support the growing number of clients facing complex issues, they could best be achieved by Māori partners through community-based services, provided they are adequately resourced.

Alongside expanding partnerships, Te Puni Kōkiri considers MSD needs to integrate whānau-centred approaches into day-to-day practice, and review how different forms of case management can better support these.

FRONTLINE STAFF DISPLAY COMMITMENT TO DOING THEIR BEST FOR CLIENTS BUT SUPPORT FOR STAFF IS NOT CONSISTENTLY IN PLACE

Te Puni Kōkiri found strong evidence of a clear and continued commitment among frontline staff and managers in doing their best for Māori clients. Clients, as well as community providers, reflected concern for staff wellbeing in some high-stress service centres, and the flow-on effects for clients. MSD recognises this at a national and regional level and is taking steps to support staff wellbeing.

Te Puni Kōkiri found support is not extensively in place for enhancing staff cultural capability, or strengthening practice on complex issues, and the organisational learning culture is not strong. Lack of cultural capability at an organisational level has led to some expectations that Māori staff will deliver beyond their role. A shortage of Māori frontline staff exists with minimal development opportunities specifically targeting Māori staff.

MSD AUCKLAND HAS IMPROVED IN ASSISTING CLIENTS TO FIND MEANINGFUL WORK. MĀORI ARE BENEFITING BUT A MORE TAILORED APPROACH IS NEEDED

MSD Auckland has made significant improvements in supporting clients into their work of choice through the creation of employment zones. MSD Auckland is also in the design phase of targeting youth employment initiatives with iwi providers, schools and others. Māori clients reported positively about the vibe, approach and support received. Staff also highlighted the positive environment and increased autonomy.

While Te Puni Kōkiri encourages the positive changes, it is too early to determine whether the region's employment efforts will reduce inequities. There is no tailored approach to working with Māori clients in the zones, even though sustainable 'exits' off the benefit and into work for Māori and youth are two Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and there are indications a targeted approach may be needed to ensure equitable and sustainable outcomes.

IMPROVEMENTS ARE BEING MADE IN PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR CLIENT 'INDEPENDENCE' BUT MORE EMPHASIS ON THIS OUTCOME NEEDS TO OCCUR

Te Puni Kōkiri found that there have been improvements in providing in-employment support for clients and businesses with a view to enabling 'independence' for clients. However there was little evidence of planning and assistance to enable independence and achieve sustainable employment outcomes for Māori clients, when considered against the number of factors that inhibit employment 'resilience' among Māori and lead to unemployment.

Te Puni Kōkiri believes that there is an especially high need for transitional support and ongoing coaching and mentoring with rangatahi during employment. Lack of transitional support can lead to negative experiences in both employment and benefit assistance, and affect social and employment outcomes.



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RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Based on the nine review findings and the 'opportunities for consideration' set out in this report, Te Puni Kōkiri has identified a set of cross-cutting recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of MSD's service delivery to Māori. Te Puni Kōkiri believes that some of these recommendations are Auckland-specific, some are the responsibility of national office, and some have the potential to be considered by other MSD regions across New Zealand.

The recommendations are intended to be a starting point, and some have financial implications. Te Puni Kōkiri expects that MSD will consider these within the context of its work planning and resourcing priorities. With the support of Te Puni Kōkiri, MSD will develop an action plan, which identifies specific immediate and long-term actions that MSD identifies are relevant and a priority. Te Puni Kōkiri's ongoing relationship with MSD is critical in enabling changes to occur.

MSD national office has advised that some of the opportunities and recommendations identified in this review will be progressed through MSD's Welfare Overhaul Work Programme and through implementation of Te Pae Tata – both of which will take time to embed. The recommendations that follow include an asterisk (*) for those that MSD has advised will be addressed in part through the Welfare Overhaul Work Programme or Te Pae Tata. Te Puni Kōkiri encourages MSD to consider how the findings of this review can further inform these efforts.

Te Puni Kōkiri recommends that:

- 1 MSD consider how to strengthen guidance and accountability mechanisms to give effect to Te Pae Tawhiti and Te Pae Tata. Options may include:
 - guidance and resourcing for implementation of Te Pae Tata at Auckland regional and frontline levels*
 - human resource mechanisms like job competencies and performance reviews*
 - organisational performance standards like KPIs and associated resourcing*.
- 2 MSD consider how to strengthen and expand partnerships with iwi, hapū and Māori providers in Auckland to meet the needs of Māori clients. Options may include:
 - developing more strategic partnerships with existing iwi/Māori partners to ensure more mutually aligned objectives
 - forming new strategic partnerships with iwi/Māori providers, communities and government organisations to better respond to the needs of Māori
 - identifying opportunities for expanding and resourcing whānau-centred approaches, including through community-based services*
 - developing new and innovative partnerships to support Māori clients with complex needs and to support rangatahi as they transition into employment.
- 3 MSD continue to build staff capability to be effective for Māori. Options may include:
 - reviewing and strengthening generic training modules to be more effective for Māori
 - increasing availability of training and courses in Auckland in different aspects of Māori effectiveness*
 - having a designated senior position to oversee Māori strategy, accountability, and cultural capability in Auckland.
- 4 MSD consider how to strengthen its learning from its practice in Auckland. Options may include:
 - enabling more peer-to-peer support and observation-based learning for all frontline staff and managers on aspects of Māori effectiveness*
 - asking Māori staff what support they want and need, and use their feedback for improvements*
 - formally connecting with Māori partners in Auckland to learn about best practice approaches to meeting the needs of Māori
 - reviewing practice in Auckland employment zones to ensure the organisational value of mana manaaki is consistently demonstrated.

Te Puni Kōkiri recommends that: (CONT.)

- 5 MSD Auckland consider how to use feedback from Māori to target performance improvement. Options may include:
 - regularly refining practices in Auckland employment zones based on feedback from Māori staff, partners and clients, and based on Māori client outcomes
 - supporting Auckland service centres and case managers that receive regular complaints from Māori clients with actions that strengthen their effectiveness for Māori.
- 6 MSD consider how to expand a targeted approach to working with rangatahi Māori in Auckland. Options may include:
 - establishing dedicated rangatahi case managers to provide consistent support to rangatahi
 - continuing initiatives that overcome barriers to employment for rangatahi (e.g. drivers' licensing)
 - identifying how to expand transitional support to rangatahi in employment.
- 7 MSD consider how service planning and design could better meet the needs of Māori clients and partners. Options may include:
 - expanding Māori-specific expertise, participation and considerations in national policy and regional planning
 - reviewing case management models and client information sharing to better enable frontline staff to establish rapport with Māori clients
 - reviewing how employment services can be strengthened to build resilience and achieve sustainable employment outcomes for rangatahi*.
- 8 MSD consider how to strengthen its guidance and communication to managers and frontline staff when it introduces new services and products. Options may include:
 - expanding opportunities for involving a diverse range of frontline and regional staff in planning of new services and products before they are introduced
 - increasing managers' access to the guidance and support that they need when new services and products are announced
 - reviewing and improving communication methods around services and products based on feedback from managers and frontline staff.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSIE MCCLUTHIE

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Acronyms

JSWR	Job Seeker Work Ready
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LET	Liability Estimator Tool
LSV	Limited Service Volunteer
MUMA	Manukau Urban Māori Authority
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSD	Ministry of Social Development
NEET	Not in Employment, Education, or Training
SEM	Service Effectiveness Model
SLP	Supported Living Payment
SPS	Sole Parent Support
WEAG	Welfare Expert Advisory Group



1. Introduction

1.1 CONTEXT

Te Puni Kōkiri is a government agency that works within government and communities to achieve a vision of *Thriving Whānau*. One of the ways that Te Puni Kōkiri progresses towards its vision is to support agencies in enhancing the quality of their policies, programmes and services for Māori. Te Puni Kōkiri has a legislated monitoring function to assess the 'adequacy' of agency services delivered to or for Māori.

In late 2018, at the direction of the Minister of Māori Development, Te Puni Kōkiri began refreshing how it gives effect to its legislated monitoring function. Monitoring reviews are examinations of programmes and services to determine their effectiveness for Māori. The purpose of the reviews is to provide a view of the adequacy of services and programmes for Māori, and through the process strengthen agencies' knowledge and practice in designing and delivering services/programmes for Māori.

The government's focus on wellbeing, together with increased transparency and accountability to Māori, sets the context for Te Puni Kōkiri for a renewed, collaborative monitoring approach that is focused on supporting agencies to progress towards improved wellbeing for Māori. Te Puni Kōkiri opted to pilot its approach to monitoring reviews, with a view to developing an approach that enhances agency engagement, knowledge and practice around effectiveness for Māori as a result of the review process.

1.2 REVIEW OVERVIEW

In February 2019, the Minister of Māori Development agreed that Te Puni Kōkiri undertake a pilot monitoring review of MSD's employment services and programmes in Auckland. This pilot review (the review) was selected based on the following key factors:

- the implementation of the employment services and programmes in Auckland had progressed sufficiently to enable a pilot review to be undertaken
- the services and programmes have the potential to have a significant impact on Māori employment and wellbeing outcomes
- the services and programmes are delivered across diverse urban settings with high proportions of Māori clients, and in particular rangatahi Māori, and
- MSD Auckland regional leadership expressed a keen interest to take part in the review to inform their assessment of how national and regional priorities are performing for Māori.

The review was also an opportunity for Te Puni Kōkiri to trial the review approach and methodology, and assess the extent to which both were fit for purpose and replicable for future reviews. Te Puni Kōkiri will use the lessons learned from the pilot review to inform the future review methodology.

The objectives of the review were to:

- ① assess the contribution of MSD Auckland's employment services and programmes to Māori wellbeing
- ② support MSD to examine its knowledge, attitudes and practices related to the design and delivery of its services and programmes for Māori
- ③ identify learnings with MSD for strengthening its knowledge and practice related to its design and delivery of its services and programmes, and
- ④ trial the approach to monitoring reviews as a mechanism for strengthening knowledge and practice around programme/service effectiveness for Māori.

To respond to these requirements, the review team developed more specific focus areas, detailed below. These were agreed and documented with MSD Auckland, and used as the basis for gathering evidence.

1.3 REPORT OVERVIEW

This report contains nine sections:

SECTION 1: Introduction to the review and the report

SECTION 2: Review approach, focus and methodology

SECTION 3: Background to summarise key issues related to Māori, employment and welfare assistance

SECTION 4: Intended journey of clients through MSD's employment services and programmes in Auckland

SECTION 5: Findings – Strategy for Māori, the first focus area of the review

SECTION 6: Findings – Partnerships with Māori, the second focus area of the review

SECTION 7: Findings – Responding to the needs of Māori clients, the third focus area of the review

SECTION 8: Findings – Improved Māori wellbeing, the fourth focus area of the review

SECTION 9: Conclusion and recommendations for MSD.

1.4 HOW TO READ THE REPORT

Te Puni Kōkiri has nine main findings, which are presented according to the four focus areas of the review. The focus areas and the intended journey of clients, described in Sections 2 and 4, form the assessment frameworks that led to these findings. The findings are based on the perspectives of clients, MSD staff, Māori partners, other community partners, MSD documentation, MSD administrative data, and other relevant literature.

Each finding contains "opportunities for consideration" that Te Puni Kōkiri thinks are needed to enhance effectiveness for Māori. These opportunities are consolidated into eight recommendations at the end of the report. Some of these are already in progress as a result of other work programmes, including MSD's Māori Strategy and Action Plan (Te Pae Tata) and the Welfare Overhaul Work Programme.

Te Puni Kōkiri expects that the findings and recommendations will form the starting point of the action plan to be co-developed with MSD in response to the review. This includes consideration of which findings and recommendations are relevant at an Auckland, cross-regional or national level.



2. Review approach, focus and methodology

2.1 REVIEW APPROACH

Te Puni Kōkiri carried out the review over the period, May to October 2019.

This pilot review focused on how effectively MSD's Auckland employment services and programmes have contributed to Māori employment and wellbeing outcomes, with a particular focus on rangatahi Māori (aged 15-24 years old).

Te Puni Kōkiri intends for learning from the review to inform service planning and practice within MSD Auckland, and identify aspects of policy and planning at a national level that may need to be changed based on regional findings¹.

The approach of the review was essentially 'bottom up', focusing on the experiences and needs of Māori clients, capabilities of frontline staff and managers, and key aspects of service delivery to understand how high-level commitments for Māori are being materialised.

Te Puni Kōkiri adopted this approach as a way to ensure that the review remained centred on the wellbeing of Māori clients and staff, rather than on agency processes. Financial analysis and policy analysis were considered to be out of scope.

Te Puni Kōkiri employed a transparent, participatory approach to the review. Recognising that agency buy-in is essential for success, this approach was based on a commitment to building strong engagement and ownership from MSD national office and regional leadership. Te Puni Kōkiri demonstrated this approach by co-developing focus areas of the review with MSD Auckland, recognising promising practice by MSD, and sharing interim findings throughout the review with MSD Auckland and national office for their feedback.

Te Puni Kōkiri was explicit with MSD about the values, skills, capabilities and knowledge it brought to the review, as well as the limitations. The value-add that Te Puni Kōkiri brought to the review included:

- an understanding of tikanga, kawa and te reo me ōna tikanga and how these are applicable in the review
- an understanding of the significance of partnerships in te ao Māori and what this means in the context of the review
- a network of whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori providers across the Auckland region facilitated by the Te Puni Kōkiri Auckland regional office
- a whānau-centred view of Māori wellbeing
- respect for the cultural capabilities and competencies of MSD staff, and
- demonstration of māramatanga, creating the space for discussion and dialogue to facilitate change and build shared understanding, including with Māori leaders and senior leaders of MSD.

1. During this report, 'regional' refers specifically to the Auckland region.

Te Puni Kōkiri applied a five-stage review process to give effect to its approach (see Figure 1, below):

- The review began in May 2019 with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Te Puni Kōkiri and MSD signed by the Chief Executives of both Ministries, and an agreed implementation plan with MSD Auckland and national offices. During Phase 1 of the review, Te Puni Kōkiri also engaged in a process of mihimihi and developed the review focus areas with MSD Auckland. The focus areas formed the first part of the assessment framework for the review.
- During Phase 2, Te Puni Kōkiri developed an 'intended client journey' with MSD Auckland (described in Section 4), which formed the second part of the assessment framework for the review.
- During Phase 3, Te Puni Kōkiri gathered client, MSD and Māori partner insights about the 'actual journey'.
- During Phase 4, Te Puni Kōkiri produced two rounds of interim findings with MSD to enable deeper reflection of the issues; and summative findings that were validated with MSD regional and national offices.
- During Phase 5, Te Puni Kōkiri summarised findings into a final report, which will form the starting point of an action plan to be co-developed by Te Puni Kōkiri and MSD.

Figure 1. Monitoring review process



2.2 REVIEW FOCUS

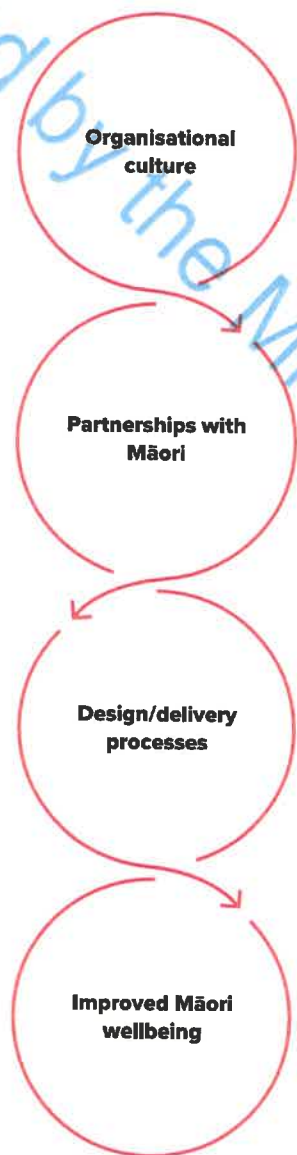
Te Puni Kōkiri defines 'effectiveness for Māori' as services and programmes that contribute to Māori wellbeing and respond to the needs and interests of Māori clients.

To achieve this, three overarching features are important (see Figure 2, on page 05):

- 1 **Organisational culture** – Agency strategy, leadership, policy, resources and ways of working that uphold Māori values, needs and interests
- 2 **Partnerships with Māori** – Mutually developed and resourced partnerships with iwi and Māori stakeholders throughout service design and delivery, and
- 3 **Design/delivery processes** – Services/programmes with engagement and delivery approaches that are culturally appropriate, respond to the needs and interests of Māori clients, are delivered by a capable workforce, and include relevant monitoring and feedback processes.

Te Puni Kōkiri believes that if agencies can demonstrate these features, they are more likely to be effective for Māori and strengthen Māori wellbeing.

Figure 2. Features of effectiveness for Māori



During the first phase of the review, Te Puni Kōkiri worked with MSD to identify focus areas to the review, based on these aspects of effectiveness and based on key priorities for MSD. Four focus areas were agreed on:

①  **Strategy for Māori across MSD's work**

The first focus area was on MSD's high-level strategy and commitments to Māori, and to what extent they have been implemented at a regional level in Auckland. MSD's strategy and commitments to Māori are articulated through its Statement of Intent 2018-2022, Te Pae Tawhiti, through its Employment and Social Outcomes Investment Strategy 2018-2021, and through the Māori strategy, Te Pae Tata, which was launched during the time period of the review. Te Puni Kōkiri examined the extent to which the values of Te Pae Tawhiti have been demonstrated in practice in the Auckland region, and the support and capability in place to enable commitments to be fulfilled. Given that Te Pae Tata was launched during the time period of the review, it was too early to examine implementation of this strategy.

②  **Forming effective Treaty partnerships with Māori**

The second focus area was on MSD's partnerships with iwi, hapū, Māori providers and communities, and how these have shaped MSD's approach to working with Māori clients in the Auckland region. Te Puni Kōkiri examined MSD's stated commitments with regard to partnerships with Māori (as articulated through Te Pae Tawhiti), the intended goals of and reflections on these partnerships according to MSD and Māori, and to what extent they are responding to the needs of Māori clients.

③  **Responding to the needs of Māori clients**

The third focus area was on how services delivered in Auckland are responding to the needs of Māori clients, and what factors have enabled or hindered this. Te Puni Kōkiri examined MSD's intended journey for clients, how the needs and aspirations of Māori clients are met through this journey, and how design and delivery processes, staff capability, learning and feedback mechanisms, and other factors enable culturally appropriate responsiveness to Māori client needs/aspirations. Te Puni Kōkiri listened to the voices of a sample of Māori clients to understand their needs and aspirations, and their experience of MSD's services, as well as the voices of a sample of MSD staff and Māori and community partners.

④  **Contribution to Māori wellbeing**

The fourth focus area was on social, employment and other outcomes being achieved for Māori clients through MSD's services. Te Puni Kōkiri examined a range of outcomes being achieved for Māori clients against MSD's intended client journey, by drawing on client perspectives, MSD administrative data and other stakeholder feedback. Te Puni Kōkiri also reflected on factors enabling a contribution to Māori wellbeing, including MSD staff capability and wellbeing, and targeted approaches and services.

Te Puni Kōkiri and MSD Auckland agreed to focus the review on rangatahi Māori because of their representation as clients of MSD, and the potential for MSD's services and programmes to have a significant impact on their social and economic outcomes. MSD Auckland requested that the review concentrate on the work of eight Auckland service centres² based on their numbers of Māori clients (together these centres make up 12% of all Māori clients nationally). To a lesser degree, the review explored the work of the contact centre and Job Connect³, and the review did not focus on Youth Services⁴.

2.3 REVIEW METHODOLOGIES

Te Puni Kōkiri employed three primary methodologies in the review:

- **Kaupapa Māori** – Kaupapa Māori research and evaluation is done by Māori, with Māori and for Māori. It is informed by tikanga Māori, emphasising principles of whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, aroha, māhaki, mana, titoro/ whakarongo/ kōrero, kia tūpatō, and he kanohi kitea (Smith, 1997). Te Puni Kōkiri adopted this methodology throughout its engagement with all stakeholders during the review, with a commitment to demonstrating its own values as an organisation⁵, as well as principles of inclusivity and transparency.
- **Critical inquiry** is linked to a Kaupapa Māori approach and based on principles of critical theory, with an aim to challenge assumptions, ideologies, norms, power imbalances, knowledge and behaviours through a critical lens (Given, 2008). Te Puni Kōkiri held wānanga with MSD Auckland staff over the course of the review to enable a space where critical inquiry, or māramatanga, could occur. The regular documentation and sharing of interim findings with MSD Auckland and national offices also strengthened critical inquiry.
- **Outcome mapping** – Outcome mapping is a methodology for monitoring and evaluating initiatives in order to bring about sustainable social change. Its purpose is to create a complete picture of intended and actual outcomes, including outcomes that emerge 'downstream' from an initiative's activities but 'upstream' from longer-term economic, environmental, political or demographic changes (Earl et al, 2001). Te Puni Kōkiri conducted outcome mapping with MSD to develop an intended client journey. A collaborative process for developing this intended journey was important to enable agency engagement and buy-in. The journey formed an agreed assessment framework for the review.

2. Glenfield, Glenn Innes, Queen St, Waitākere, Manukau, Māngere, Manurewa, Papakura.

3. Job Connect provides an end-to-end phone-based recruitment service for job seekers and employers. Job Connect manages vacancy opportunities sourced by MSD's work brokers and account managers, undertakes skills matching of job seekers, then screens and refers suitable applicants directly to the employers. Job Connect operates a dedicated employer line, supporting all regions as well as providing reactive support across the country.

4. Because the review focused on employment, the Youth Services Support Unit was not a focus of this review.

5. Te wero – pursuing excellence; manaakitanga – valuing people and relationships; He toa takitini – working collectively; and Ture tangata – creative and innovative.

Te Puni Kōkiri employed these methodologies through mixed-methods data collection over the period, May 2019 to October 2019. Sources of data included:

- a literature review of relevant national and regional Māori and rangatahi Māori employment initiatives
- a desktop review and analysis of key MSD strategic documents and employment reviews
- semi-structured interviews with 18 Māori clients and 11 iwi providers and community organisations
- semi-structured interviews and validation sessions with over 80 MSD Auckland and national staff, and
- quantitative analysis of MSD's administrative data.

The timeframes for obtaining approvals from MSD to approach clients for interview were longer than anticipated and limited the number of clients Te Puni Kōkiri was able to interview. Delays in receiving administrative data from MSD also limited the extent to which this data was able to inform qualitative data collection.

Qualitative data was coded and analysed thematically in order to identify key themes related to the intended journey and the review's four focus areas.

Te Puni Kōkiri verified interview data with Māori clients, iwi providers and community organisations, and checked accuracy of preliminary findings with regional and national office MSD staff at validation sessions. The quantitative analysis was sent to MSD for verification.



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3. Background

3.1 MĀORI IN EMPLOYMENT AND WELFARE ASSISTANCE

Employment growth is generally strong nationally and in Auckland, but disparities continue for Māori. Recent national unemployment rates have Māori at 10.8% and non-Māori at 4.9%. The Māori unemployment rate is particularly high for rangatahi (20.4%) and Māori women (12.0%) relative to the national average (Statistics New Zealand, March 2019).

The Māori workforce is younger and more likely to be in low-skilled, low-paying jobs that are first to get hit in economic recessions. Nationally, Māori have a higher proportion of workers employed in lower-skilled occupations, and in industries particularly vulnerable to changes in technology and economic cycles (e.g. manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade and construction) (MBIE, 2017).

Māori make up 36% of all working age benefit recipients, and don't benefit equitably from strong labour market conditions. According to a 2016 MSD actuary report, 'the average future lifetime cost for Māori clients is \$55,000 higher (about 50%) than for non-Māori clients' (Taylor Fry, 2016, p.5). An MSD 2017 Benefit System Performance Report states:

“Whereas non-Māori client numbers have been decreasing, Māori client numbers have remained relatively stable. Māori appear not to be benefiting from strong labour market conditions as much as other ethnicities. Māori are also more prominent in the client group that cycle in and out of the benefit system (MSD, 2018a, p.6).

Our analysis showed that at June 2019, Māori comprised 31% of all people on a main benefit in the region (compared with 19% of the population in Auckland). Māori were overly represented on Sole Parent Support at 40% of all recipients. Of all Māori clients, 29% were on Sole Parent Support, 51% on Job Seeker Work Ready and 20% on Supported Living Payments. Twenty-six percent of Māori clients were in the North of Auckland, 23% in Central and 40% in the South of Auckland.

3.2 RANGATAHI IN EMPLOYMENT AND WELFARE ASSISTANCE

Youth are a key priority for MSD. Nationally, rangatahi make up 56% of youth service clients. Of all those who engaged with MSD Auckland in June 2019, rangatahi Māori represented 39% of all youth and 20% of all Māori clients. Of these rangatahi, 31% were in the North of Auckland, 18% in Central and 52% in the South.

Supporting youth into employment or training is a priority – the alternative is known to be associated with a range of poor outcomes, including greater risks of substance abuse, suicide, criminal offending, mental/physical ill health, low earning and long-term poorer employment outcomes (Auckland Co-design Lab, 2018; NZ Government, 2019). In Auckland, rangatahi Māori are twice as likely to be not in employment, education or training (NEET), compared with all youth (17.3% compared with 8.7%) (Auckland Council, 2018).

The earlier youth enter the system, the longer they remain in it. People who enter the benefit system at an early age tend to spend much longer on benefits over their lifetime than other people. This disparity is increasing, despite youth benefit client numbers continuing to decrease (MSD, 2018a).

There are key trends that make rangatahi Māori more vulnerable to finding and remaining in sustainable employment. Trends include an increasing number of casual contracts and part-time jobs, a rise in automation disrupting jobs, a rise in workers coming from overseas, people working for longer – meaning less jobs for new entrants to the labour market, difficulty in getting an entry-level job with no experience, and the need for qualifications and soft skills to get a job (Auckland Co-design Lab, 2018).

There is substantial evidence that a tailored approach is needed to get rangatahi into employment to respond to these trends. Key success factors include targeted training, pastoral and culturally grounded assistance, support with soft skills, support through recruitment and induction processes, developing clear development pathways with supported transitions, partnerships with players in the employment journey and whānau-centred environments (Auckland Co-design Lab, 2018; McKendry, 2011; Ako Aotearoa, 2011; NZ Government, 2019).



4. Intended journey for clients through MSD Auckland's income and employment services

MSD Auckland's 'intended journey' for meeting the needs of and improving outcomes for clients is summarised in the image on page 12. Te Puni Kōkiri developed this intended journey with MSD Auckland staff and based on key MSD strategic documents. Te Puni Kōkiri used the journey as a basis for understanding and assessing the experiences of clients, MSD staff, and Māori and community partners during the review.

MSD's intended journey is focused on supporting families to be safe, strong and independent by demonstrating the values of mana manaaki, kōtahitanga and kia takatū tātou. These are all key features of MSD's Statement of Intent, Te Pae Tawhiti.

- **Safe**
Meeting immediate income, housing and other social needs of individuals and families, with the aim of ensuring clients have their 'full and correct entitlements' and are referred to services for additional support. In Auckland, MSD has broadened its approach to 'safe' to make sure a range of needs beyond just income and housing are identified and addressed early on.
- **Strong**
Preparing those who are ready and want to work, for the job of their choice, by identifying their aspirations, building their skills, removing barriers to work and connecting them with employment opportunities. In Auckland, MSD is focusing on tailoring job searching and preparation around each client's job aspirations.
- **Independent**
Assisting clients to remain in sustainable employment through ongoing income support and assistance to employers to provide training and mentoring to clients.
- **Mana manaaki – A positive experience every time**
Looking after the dignity of people with warmth, listening, respect, compassion, openness and fairness.
- **Kotahitanga – Partnering for greater impact**
Allowing others to take the lead in some services so clients can connect directly with trusted partners who are better placed to meet their needs.
- **Kia takatū tātou – Supporting long-term social and economic development**
Taking a long-term approach to community, regional and economic development, supporting people to acquire skills for current and future job markets, and broadening work to support people who are volunteering, training or caring for whānau and families.

Numerous products are designed to support clients at each stage. This includes different benefits and types of financial assistance depending on client needs:

- **Main benefits** – Intended to provide an income to meet the general cost of living (essential costs). The three main benefits are Job Seeker Work Ready (JSWR), Sole Parent Support (SPS) and Supported Living Payment (SLP).
- **Supplementary assistance** – For specific ongoing costs such as accommodation, disability and children (including Working for Families).
- **Targeted hardship assistance** – Generally provided in relation to an immediate need, and available only for costs considered 'essential'.
- **Emergency assistance** – A range of specific grants and assistance to meet 'hardship' around temporary accommodation, food and other needs.
- **Youth-specific support** – Youth Parent Payment is for teen parents up to 19 years, and Youth Payment is for those under 18 who no longer receive support from caregivers. Young people on these payments receive support of the Youth Service.
- **Skills building for employment** – A range of different types of assistance for clients to prepare for work, including job search support, seminars, expos, driver licensing and certification, in-work mentoring and other training.
- **Post-employment support** – Non-beneficiary assistance supporting those off the benefit and in employment by providing extra financial help in specific circumstances, mentoring and counselling services to help sustain their current employment, In-Work Support service that proactively contacts clients providing information, and advice and referrals to appropriate agencies for support when they move into employment.





Online Services



Standard Services



Intensive Services



Community-based Services



Employment Zone Services

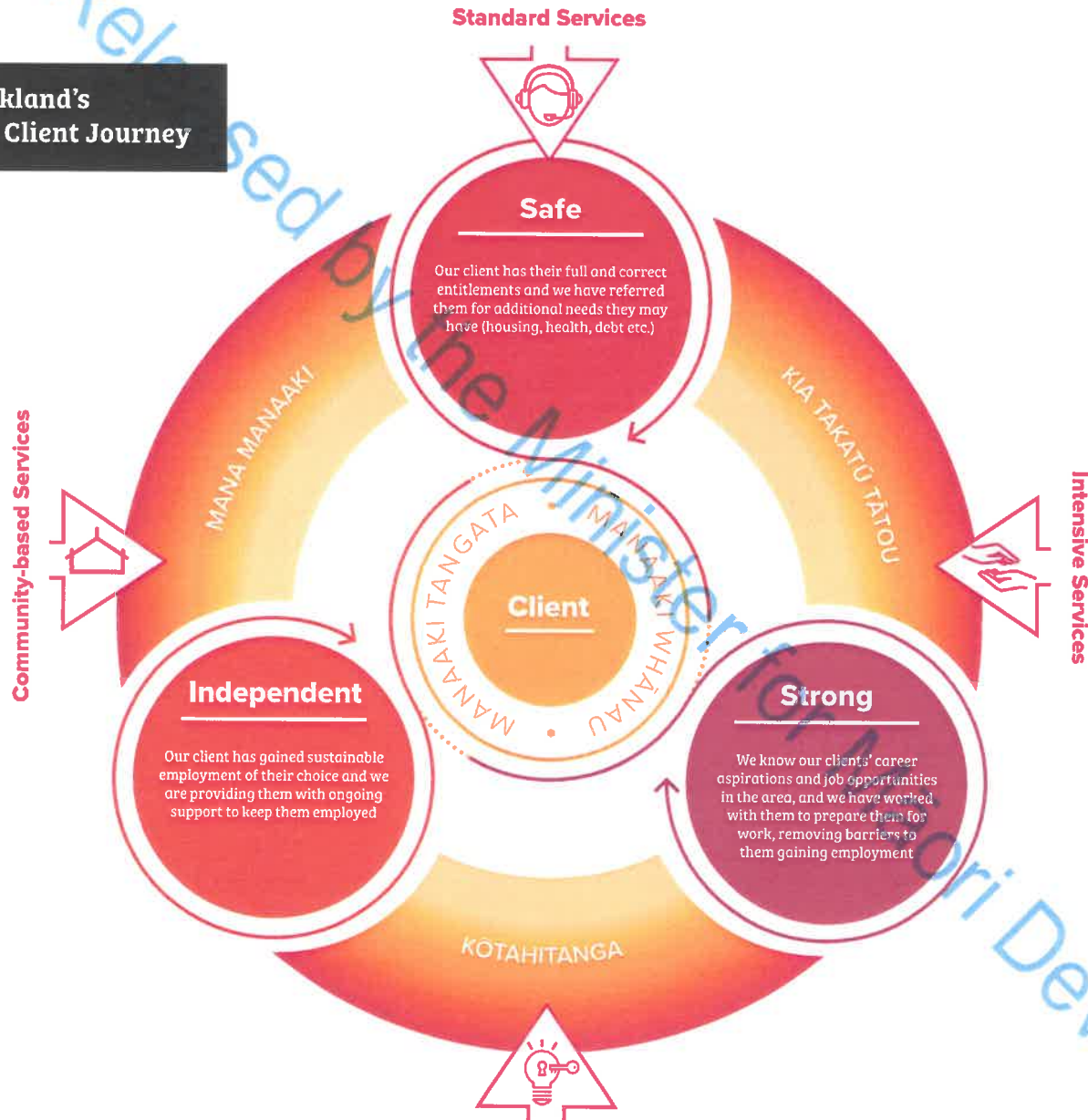
MSD delivers this support to clients in a number of different ways, designed to meet the needs of different populations:

- **Online** – The 'My MSD' website and app provide information on different products and links to application forms.
- **Contact centres** – Respond to calls from clients, employers and members of the public across New Zealand. They provide work and income assistance, Working for Families information and assessments, a dedicated Job Connect service to assist jobseekers and employers and manage immigration vacancies, and Youth Service Support to support administration of Youth Payments. MSD has increased the income support services available to clients through its contact centre.
- **General case management** (all of the above termed 'standard services' in the Intended Journey) – Default case management service if people have not been assigned to any other service, primarily for income support. Clients in General Case Management don't have a designated case manager.
- **Active and intensive case management** (termed 'intensive services' in the Intended Journey) – Some clients are 'streamed' into more intensive case management through predictive modelling at a national level⁶. Active and intensive case management provide designated case management for those deemed 'work ready' (includes many on JSWR or SPS benefits). Case managers in this category have caseloads between 60 and 180, depending on the type of case management.
- **Community-based services** – In Auckland, MSD is shifting some services out of its service centres and into the community through co-design with Māori and community providers. This is occurring with Te Pūea Marae, which is a transitional housing provider and where an MSD case manager is based, and soon to be with Papakura Marae and Manukau Urban Māori Authority (MUMA). Other community services are based in Auckland City Mission, Kaipatiki Community Trust in Glenfield, and Waipareira Trust.
- **Employment zones** – In Auckland, MSD has introduced employment zones and employment expos in its service centres. Zones are supported by work brokers and case managers, allowing individuals to drop in without an appointment, regardless of whether they are registered clients of MSD. People who go to an employment zone can get support with applying for jobs. Employment expos bring employers face to face with clients who are work ready.

MSD articulated that success in the intended journey for Māori is dependent on leadership and strategy, accountability and learning, staff capability and support, and Māori and community partnerships. These are discussed further under the findings sections.

6. Two types of predictive modelling are used to prioritise clients within each service. The Service Effectiveness Model (SEM) uses information about clients, such as age, gender and history of receiving a benefit. The Liability Estimator Tool (LET) prioritises clients into Work-focused Case Management for Integrated Services, because the SEM model has too little information about this group to reliably predict the people who will benefit from this service.

MSD Auckland's Intended Client Journey



MSD's foundations for success...

- Leadership and Strategy
- Accountability and Learning
- Staff Capability and Support
- Māori and Community Partnerships



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5.0 Findings – Strategy for Māori

This section describes findings around:

- MSD's high-level strategy and commitments to Māori,
- to what extent they have been demonstrated and implemented at a regional level in Auckland, and
- what support and capability is in place to ensure these commitments are fulfilled.

Te Puni Kōkiri expects that to accelerate improved outcomes for Māori, there is a clearly articulated strategy for Māori, which is supported by leadership, ownership, accountability, guidance, and capability at all levels of the organisation.

Key Finding 1: Māori are a clear strategic priority for MSD. The leadership, accountability, capability and guidance required at all levels to embed this commitment are inconsistent.

MSD HAS SHOWN COMMITMENT TO MĀORI THROUGH STRATEGY DOCUMENTS

In response to its Treaty obligations and the disproportionately high number of Māori clients, MSD has demonstrated an increasing commitment to Māori. Te Puni Kōkiri found that leadership and direction for Māori are prominent in key strategic documents.

The high-level values of Te Pae Tawhiti (mana manaaki, kōtahitanga and kia takatū tātou) indicate an intended shift from MSD to be more responsive to Māori, and Te Puni Kōkiri understands a significant part of implementation of Te Pae Tawhiti is an intended demonstration of these values. Te Pae Tawhiti also spells out MSD's role as a Treaty partner. Te Pae Tawhiti was launched in July 2018.

In July 2019, MSD launched Te Pae Tata, a Māori strategy and action plan for strengthening responsiveness to Māori. Te Pae Tata includes key strategic objectives and actions that will ultimately support MSD in their endeavours to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi and achieve the strategic direction of Te Pae Tawhiti. Te Pae Tata has been supported by the establishment of a national Māori Leadership Forum, comprising MSD representatives from each region.

MSD's 2018–2021 Employment and Social Outcomes Investment Strategy also prioritises embedding approaches that are more effective for Māori into all services through internal capability, client-facing relationships and partnerships. Te Puni Kōkiri notes that this priority sits alongside six others.

Finally, MSD is completing its Māori language strategy, Mahere Reo.



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LIMITED RESOURCING AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS AT A REGIONAL LEVEL

Te Puni Kōkiri found little evidence of resourcing or guidance to support and manage implementation of Te Pae Tawhiti at a regional level in Auckland, and many regional staff emphasised that the strategy has had minimal impact on frontline staff.

Within Auckland, the strategic priorities have not resulted in a targeted approach at a service centre level. Frontline and service centre managers interviewed acknowledged that the region takes the same approach to working with all clients – any variety in approaches comes from case managers or Service Centre Managers themselves.

Frontline staff and managers interviewed wanted more support in understanding what the values of Te Pae Tawhiti mean and how to apply them. Frontline staff felt with the lack of support around implementation, there was variable interpretation of these values, that they were 'Māori words and *little more*'.

Te Puni Kōkiri notes that it is too early to determine resourcing and guidance for implementation of Te Pae Tata, although frontline staff highlighted they had not heard much about its release. Resources for Te Pae Tata have been determined nationally, and we emphasise that dedicated resourcing and capacity are also needed at a regional level to support implementation at the frontline.

THERE IS NO DEDICATED RESOURCE TO OVERSEE STRATEGY DELIVERY FOR MĀORI AT A REGIONAL LEVEL

The current approach to Māori leadership in the MSD Auckland region combines partnerships with iwi and expertise from key Māori staff. There is no designated senior Māori role in the region, and Māori leadership comes from three Māori staff who are represented on the national Māori Leadership Forum, but have other substantive roles. Te Puni Kōkiri observed that while these leaders are called on for strategic and cultural guidance, they are not positioned to oversee implementation of strategic priorities, Māori responsiveness in service planning, expansion of cultural capability, monitoring and accountability to Māori, or the protection of tikanga. Staff at all levels consistently highlighted the need for a designated role that encompasses these functions.

There was concern among most Māori partners we interviewed about the lack of cultural capability and tikanga at the senior leadership level of MSD in Auckland. They saw the need for cultural capability, to not only strengthen the relationship with them, but also to be able to more effectively design and deliver services in a way that would meet whānau needs.

Ministry of Māori Development

PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES FOR MĀORI CLIENTS EXIST NATIONALLY BUT THESE HAVE NOT TRANSLATED INTO CHANGES IN SERVICE DELIVERY IN AUCKLAND

Te Pae Tawhiti includes six measures of MSD's performance. 'Clients who remain off benefit in sustainable work' is a recent priority articulated through MSD's employment charter, with a KPI of the number of Māori clients who 'exit' MSD into work and remain off the benefit for 24+ weeks (called sustainable work exits). The Employment and Social Outcomes Investment Strategy also seeks to learn about the factors that contribute to successful outcomes for Māori clients, and make changes accordingly.

Within Auckland, while co-design of community services with iwi and Māori providers is occurring, Māori-responsive or targeted approaches do not appear to be central to service delivery within service centres in the region, where most Māori clients receive MSD services. Managers and frontline staff emphasised that no targeted approaches or guidance have accompanied the introduction of the KPI on Māori work exits. Te Puni Kōkiri understands that MSD is strengthening its Māori lens within policy and service design processes, and note that this shift is positive.

CULTURAL CAPABILITY IS GROWING BUT DEMAND FOR SUPPORT EXCEEDS AVAILABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Te Puni Kōkiri learned that through Te Pae Tata, MSD is reviewing its recruitment processes to strengthen emphasis on cultural capability. Te Puni Kōkiri notes the importance of these changes as currently, capability and commitment to Māori are not prioritised in job descriptions or the recruitment process, and performance for Māori is not incorporated into staff performance reviews, nor into components of regional induction trainings.

Regional staff interviewed at all levels generally wanted more support to engage with Māori, and were genuinely interested in doing more. There was a general lack of understanding around tikanga, and many staff did not know who to approach for support. Te Puni Kōkiri was told that the availability of relevant training in Auckland is far exceeded by need and demand, although opportunities are increasing nationally through Te Pae Tata within the Auckland region and regionally with cultural competency training co-designed with Te Puea marae.

Managers and Māori staff also highlighted the importance of increasing recruitment and building capability of Māori staff, including re-introducing an earlier cadetship programme.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSIDERATION

Following are opportunities for MSD's consideration to help enhance leadership, accountability, capability and guidance for Māori. Some are already being progressed through other work programmes, and some have financial implications. Te Puni Kōkiri expects that MSD will consider these within the context of its work planning and resourcing priorities.

- 1 Consider how organisational performance standards like KPIs and associated resourcing can be used to achieve equity for Māori*
- 2 Strengthen oversight of Maori strategy, capability building and accountability in Auckland, for example by creating a dedicated senior position in the Auckland office
- 3 Ensure guidance and resourcing for implementation of Te Pae Tata at Auckland regional and frontline levels**
- 4 Consider how human resource mechanisms like job competencies and performance reviews can be used to achieve equity*
- 5 Increase availability of training and courses in Auckland in different aspects of Māori effectiveness**
- 6 Expand Māori-specific expertise, participation and considerations in national policy and regional planning.

* Some or all of this opportunity is likely to be addressed in MSD's Welfare Overhaul Work Programme

** Some of this opportunity is being addressed through Te Pae Tata

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PHOTO BY MADISON HENRY

6.0 Findings – Partnerships with Māori

This section describes findings around:

- MSD's national and regional commitments with regard to partnerships with Māori,
- reflections on regional partnerships with Māori as 'Treaty partnerships', and
- the extent to which partnerships are responding to the needs of Māori clients.

Effective Treaty partnerships with Māori are a key part of demonstrating commitment to Māori. Te Puni Kōkiri expects that these partnerships are clearly defined and agreed by both MSD and Māori, that they are sufficiently resourced to meet anticipated outcomes, and that they respond to the needs of Māori clients and communities (rather than the needs of MSD).

Key Finding 2: MSD Auckland is strengthening its partnerships with iwi, Māori and other community providers. To enhance effectiveness, the partnerships need clearly agreed goals, capability and resourcing.

MSD IS STRENGTHENING ITS COMMITMENT TO PARTNERSHIPS AT A NATIONAL LEVEL

Through Te Pae Tawhiti, MSD is signalling commitment to strengthen its partnerships with iwi, Māori and community providers. MSD recognises that partnerships are essential to meeting the needs of clients, including Māori clients. As part of its strategic shift towards kōtahitanga, MSD notes that 'we recognise that we do not always have the answers and are not always the best people to offer some services. By allowing others to take a lead in some services, our clients could connect directly with our network of trusted partners' (MSD, 2018c, p.22).

MSD AUCKLAND IS TAKING INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO ITS PARTNERSHIPS WITH MĀORI, IN RECOGNITION THAT MSD CAN'T DO IT ALL

The national commitment to partnerships is being reflected in Auckland, where the regional office has steadily strengthened partnerships with iwi and Māori providers. MSD Auckland is prioritising these partnerships to enable regional Māori leaders to have more involvement in the support whānau receive from MSD. In addition to partnerships for community services at Te Puea, Manurewa and Papakura marae, MOUs are in place with Ngāti Whātua Ōrakei Whai Maia to strengthen employment opportunities and assistance for whānau, and with Waipareira Trust (as the lead in a regional Māori collective, Te Pae Herenga o Tāmaki) to co-design a pilot whānau-centred approach to supporting rangatahi into employment and training. Te Puni Kōkiri notes this is the first time that MSD Auckland has established MOUs with iwi providers and Māori providers.



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“ [The Regional Commissioner] has been fabulous. He came to us and introduced himself. He’s gone to many providers. He is just listening. The way he is wanting to help and his approach – ‘just go do it, however you want to do, do it, as long as it’s done and done right’ MĀORI PROVIDER

“ We are increasingly based in communities. It allows clients to feel more comfortable talking to us about their situation. They are disarmed.

MSD SERVICE CENTRE MANAGER

Partnerships are also expanding with other community organisations. Nationally, MSD has contracts with community organisations to support clients to ‘prepare for work’, and MSD Auckland has made a concerted effort to expand these partnerships in response to clients’ job aspirations. This includes engagement and support on important issues like drivers’ licensing and other barriers to work. MSD Auckland has also increased ‘social investment’ contracts to fund community providers with wraparound support for clients with complex needs. Through these, MSD Auckland is making some improvements to the way it tenders for contracts to support smaller providers in being competitive, including allowing video submissions. Finally, MSD has partnerships with employers in key industries to better place clients into work, by understanding their recruitment needs and processes and providing financial incentives to employers nationwide to provide training/apprenticeships for clients.

Māori partners and regional staff at all levels acknowledged the expansion of partnerships and move to more social investments as a positive shift. Those Māori partners who have relationships with MSD’s senior regional leadership acknowledged the Regional Commissioner for his ‘results focus’, and for listening and responding to the needs of iwi and Māori providers. Staff saw community-based services like Te Puea as supporting whānau to achieve significantly positive outcomes, including enabling whānau to receive MSD support without the traditional stigma associated with going to service centres.

CAPABILITY AND GOALS NEED TO STRENGTHEN FOR THESE TO BECOME TREATY PARTNERSHIPS

Te Puni Kōkiri heard from most Māori providers that their partnerships with MSD are still more ‘transactional’ than a true ‘Treaty’ partnership. A Treaty partnership would require greater resourcing, shared decision making, representation at the MSD leadership level, and be of longer duration. Partners were familiar with the ‘ebb and flow’ of priorities from MSD and wanted to see sustained partnerships, but did not necessarily have a goal of having a partnership with MSD long term.

Māori providers indicated their desire to support their whānau, provided they are properly resourced and have a say in the design of initiatives. Many Māori providers saw the importance of being able to have greater access to MSD specialist services, including co-location to bring MSD services to their people. This was a driver for their partnership with MSD.

Iwi and Māori providers acknowledged that the relationship with MSD was heavily dependent on the Regional Commissioner at the time, and the risks to the sustainability of this relationship with a change in leadership. Some partners at service centre level expressed similar thoughts about the tenuousness of these partnerships. Iwi and Māori providers also identified that MSD’s cultural capability needs to strengthen at a regional leadership level to manaaki the relationships, strengthen Treaty partnerships and further develop relationships with other Māori providers. They emphasised not wanting to be ‘leaned on’ to help build cultural capability at MSD.

MORE PARTNERSHIPS ARE NEEDED TO SUPPORT MĀORI IN MEETING THEIR NEEDS

Te Puni Kōkiri found evidence of gaps in partnerships at key stages of the client journey and within specific parts of the region. Of note are gaps in partnerships with taura here that are predominant in Auckland (e.g. Tainui, Ngāpuhi) or in specific geographic areas (far South Auckland). Te Puni Kōkiri also heard that the quality of partnerships across service centres is variable.

Senior MSD Auckland staff acknowledged the need to fill these gaps, emphasising the importance of partnerships in the 'safe' space (i.e. for clients receiving income assistance), including whānau-centred services delivered by iwi and Māori providers, to meet the complexity of poverty-related and social issues faced by whānau. There are also discussions around strengthening partnerships to enable more community-based MSD services like at Te Puea and Papakura marae. Te Puni Kōkiri sees the opportunity for expanding partnerships in other areas, including the 'independence' stage to provide ongoing support to rangatahi throughout employment.

Māori providers reflected on the importance of understanding the needs of rangatahi and Māori, and Te Puni Kōkiri heard mixed reports as to what extent MSD Auckland is listening and responding to the voices of communities. Some providers felt that MSD could improve in recognising and appreciating the solutions and initiatives already in place within communities. Te Puni Kōkiri notes that a new MSD-funded initiative, being co-designed and delivered with Te Pae Herenga collective in Auckland, is focused on understanding the needs and barriers to employment for rangatahi.

“ Creating independence is our responsibility as a community service. For us it's about showing rangatahi and whānau that there are services designed to get you ahead. It's important that we [MSD, whānau and community groups] are giving the same consistent message around being independent from living on the benefit long term. MĀORI PROVIDER

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSIDERATION

Following are opportunities for MSD's consideration to help strengthen partnerships with iwi, Māori and community providers in Auckland. Some are already being progressed through other work programmes, and some have financial implications. Te Puni Kōkiri expects that MSD will consider these within the context of its work planning and resourcing priorities.

- 7 Consider how to strengthen oversight of Auckland partnerships with Māori, for example by creating a dedicated senior position in the Auckland office
- 8 Consider how to develop more strategic partnerships with existing iwi/Māori partners to ensure more mutually aligned objectives
- 9 Consider how to form new strategic partnerships with iwi/Māori providers, communities and government organisations to better respond to the needs of Māori**
- 10 Consider how to develop new and innovative partnerships to support Māori clients with complex needs and to support rangatahi as they transition into employment
- 11 Consider how to develop ways to support 'champion' staff who are partnering well to share learning and mentor others.

** Some of this opportunity is being addressed through Te Pae Tata

7. Findings – Responding to the needs of Māori clients

This section describes findings around:

- Māori clients' needs, aspirations and experiences of MSD Auckland services
- how MSD Auckland services are responding to the needs of Māori clients, and
- what factors enable and hinder responsiveness to the needs of Māori clients.

Te Puni Kōkiri expects that MSD's services and programmes in Auckland are designed and delivered in a way that is culturally appropriate and responds to the needs and aspirations of Māori clients. This involves an understanding of the social and employment needs and aspirations of Māori clients, and responding to this understanding through a clearly defined mix of services and programmes – both those that are Māori specific and not. This also involves staff capability, and learning and feedback mechanisms that prioritise Māori.

Te Puni Kōkiri captured the needs, aspirations and experiences of Māori clients through an 'actual client journey' (detailed on page 22), and through profiles of rangatahi that were interviewed during the review (detailed on pages 23-28). Their perspectives, which have formed a central part of our assessment of MSD's services and programmes, are reinforced by complementary perspectives of MSD regional staff and Māori partners. Pseudonyms have been used to maintain the confidentiality of clients.



PHOTO BY JOSIE MCCLUTHIE

Actual Journey: Voices of Clients

Mana manaaki: A positive experience every time

- Services and experiences have improved over the past year
- Most clients had variable experiences across sites and case managers around: attitudes towards clients, assistance provided and information provided
- Above all, clients want to be treated with respect. They are increasingly so, but embedding mana manaaki across all sites will continue to grow and develop over time
- Most clients felt some shame about being on a benefit

Independent

- Clients have aspirations to work, and for rangatahi, independence is being off the benefit
- Rangatahi achieving independence get help to do so from support people, mentors and navigators (in and out of MSD)
- Those rangatahi who receive in-work support valued it
- Some rangatahi found it difficult to navigate through MSD and into sustained work. While displaying resilience, the difficulties became barriers to getting work, especially when whānau weren't working themselves

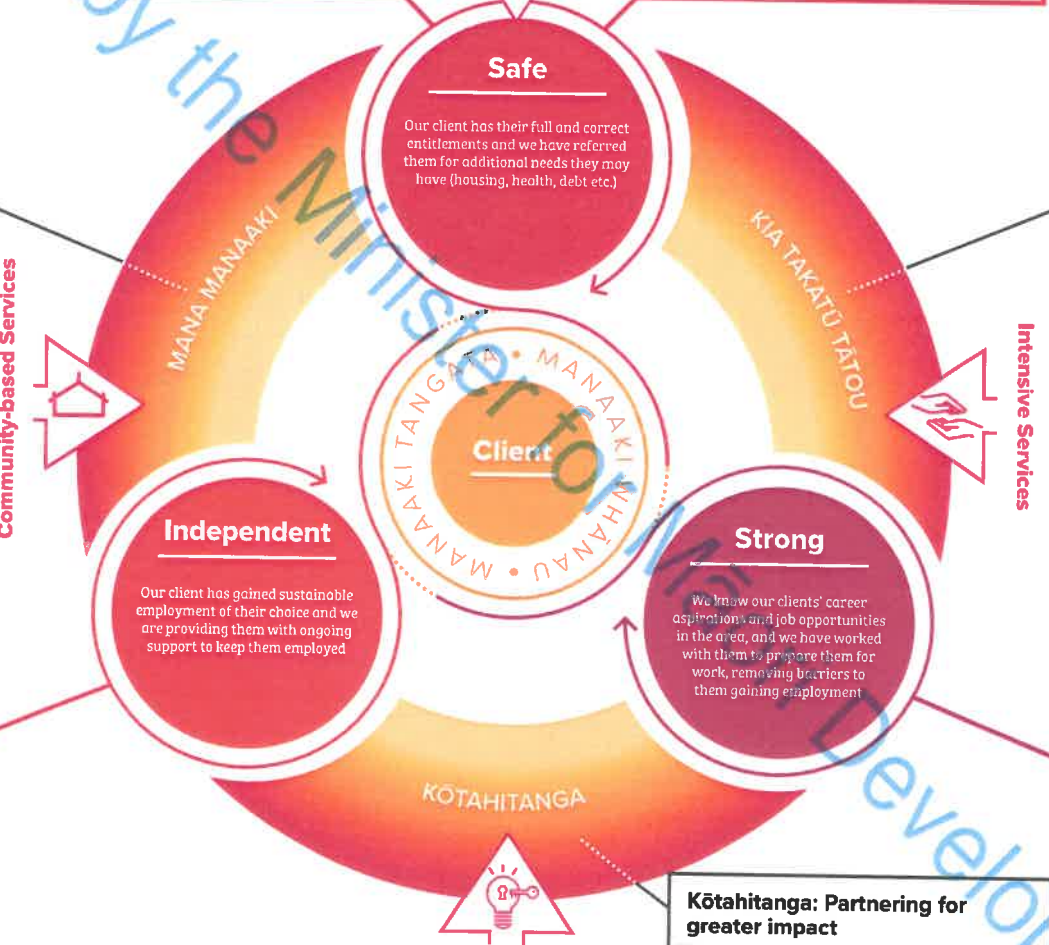
Safe

Standard Services

- MSD is improving in providing "safety" around income, housing and food, although assistance is still inconsistent and sometimes more process driven than need driven
- Some older clients become 'system literate', developing navigational skills but mostly in meeting immediate needs
- Clients experience a lack of safety in their personal life across many realms – physical, whānau and cultural
- Clients have to repeat their story and receive different information, leading to frustration and confusion
- Clients experience case managers under stress, which impacts on them and other clients

Kia takatū tātou: Supporting long-term social and economic development

- A spectrum of client challenges, needs, resilience and services lead to 'independence', 'dependence' or cycling between the two
- Many are moving in and out of the system due to external life factors, and do not reach a point of sustained employment



Kōtahitanga: Partnering for greater impact

- Rangatahi experiences in finding a job are shaped by their own whānau and community, as much as MSD services

Strong

- Rangatahi generally were positive about the type of support received at employment zones and expos
- Some case managers went above and beyond to support rangatahi into work
- Rangatahi want to work. MSD supported some to find a job of their choice
- Rangatahi are either supported or hindered by whānau to work
- Some rangatahi were supported by MSD more with courses and less with finding a job
- Courses, job opportunities don't always align with rangatahi needs/interests
- Variable support received to overcome barriers to work (eg transport, certification, uniforms, clothing)
- Communication from staff and employers is variable
- Rangatahi want support with building confidence and they are getting it from some employment zone staff or case managers

Jack – This is me

Growing up in Auckland, the big city with opportunities, I thought I could follow my passion and get work out of it. But that wasn't the case for me.

After studying 3D Animation for three years, I spent months looking for work within the broader design industry and had no luck. I was biding my time working in a physical job when I got injured playing sport. I had no choice left but to reach out to MSD for help. After a couple of months, the opportunity to apply for Limited Service Volunteer (LSV) came up.

My motto in life is "give it 110%", and that's exactly what I did on the LSV programme. I went into the programme wanting a job and I gave it my all. I smashed the programme and ended up getting a job with Fulton Hogan.

Almost two years on and I'm still there. Concreting isn't my dream job but I'm grateful to be working in an organisation where I can learn new things and get exercise every day.

I haven't lost sight of my passion; I still do the odd bit of design work on the side when it comes up. I don't know where I will be in the future, but I do know I'll be happy as long as I'm not just gliding along.

My journey through MSD

Safe



My mum helped me navigate MSD. I can't remember if she came with me to my first appointment, but I think it would help to have a support person with you the first time. My experience going to MSD for help was pretty good.

Strong



MSD provided me with the opportunity to go on the LSV programme shortly after going on the benefit. We did different trainings like traffic control and first aid. Apart from all the physical stuff, we did different types of work seminars like how to write a CV and how to groom for work. LSV gives you valuable knowledge to help you get a job. Through the LSV programme, I was introduced to Fulton Hogan and straight after LSV ended I walked into a job with them. MSD gave me the tools I needed to move forward. I got what I wanted – a job.

Independent



I haven't needed anything else from MSD since getting a job. But I keep in touch with LSV staff and I'm happy to share what I gained from LSV if it will encourage other young people to go for it.

At a glance

Age:

22

Occupation:



Aspirations:



What I think MSD could focus on

Consistent support with transport and other barriers to work

“ For me, I had a positive experience with MSD. I went to them wanting a job and I got one. Transport is not an obstacle for me. But some rangatahi don't know what they want and I don't know if they have a way to cope with transport.

Continue LSV and consider how to support rangatahi with motivation

“ Rangatahi, they need to want the help and help themselves. I saw other people on the LSV course and lots of us went well. But you can see if someone doesn't want the help, then they won't get much out of it.

Consider how to expand the job pool available through MSD

“ Some people might not know what they want. MSD definitely explained a variety of things they could do. There are lots of jobs MSD offers that people don't want to do. But I don't think it's easy for MSD to find jobs that people want to do because often those types of jobs you can't get straight off the bat.

Tarina – This is me

People who don't know me personally call me by my birth name, Harry. But people who know the real me, my friends and whānau, they call me Tarina. That's who I really am.

My dream is to become a paediatric nurse. I left school at 16 to do a Level 3 Health Science course. I was so proud of myself when I completed the course; it was hard out but I made it. Once that finished, I didn't have work to go to. So I went to MSD to get help with finding a job. Now, almost two years later and I'm still in the same place.

I've grown up in this community out south, it's all I know. Isn't that sad? Lots of things have happened to me over the past five years. If I could go back in time, I would. I don't like to share the details about what was done to me with just anyone. That's why I struggle with MSD sometimes. How can I share who I am with a room of people surrounding me? It makes me feel uncomfortable.

I've got my sights set on the city but I need to get some things in order first. I want to continue studying and achieve my dream of becoming a paediatric nurse. But I need a job to support me through it. I don't want to be one of those struggling students, I want to be comfortable. I need a job, one that I can actually do. Like fruit picking and packing. MSD might think I can do scaffolding or labouring because of how they define me, but that's not who I am and I can't do that kind of work.

My journey through MSD

Safe

I was 18 when I went to MSD for help. I feel really respected by the people there. Particularly with my old case manager, she knew me as Tarina, because I shared my story with her. But now I don't have her anymore. I like to talk about my things individually and in private. But now I'm expected to share things with a group of people. It makes me feel really uncomfortable. When I need MSD to help, there's always a delay. If I call up needing a food grant or clothes, they always book me an appointment for the next week. So I'm waiting even if it's an emergency.

Strong

Every time I've been going to interviews and job appointments, it's kind of not relevant. You can write down what kind of jobs you want to do and they give you the opposite, I told MSD that I didn't want to do anything towards maintenance and manual jobs, but they keep referring me to these kinds of jobs.

I've been to some employment expos, but they don't have the kind of jobs I want to do and the jobs always require something that I don't have or am not good with. And I want to tell them but then, there's other people around.

Independent

Not there yet.

At a glance

Age:

19

Aspirations:

Occupation:



What I think MSD could focus on

Create a space where we can talk privately

“ I have questions that I need to ask on my own, which means I have to wait to the end of the seminar.

Help us with building our confidence

“ You can't just get up and do a speech and tell everyone to be comfortable and then we're comfortable. It takes way more than that.

“ At employment expos I ask the employers questions about how they help uncomfortable people to feel comfortable in their work area. They said you just have to be confident. But look around, most of us aren't confident.

“ If we had seminars where people liked the same kind of jobs and they were grouped together, that would be better. So that we can support each other.”

Help me find jobs that I can do and not ones that I can't

“ Look at me! Do you think I can do manual work? I have told MSD I can't do typical male jobs, I am not very strong. It's not who I am. Please listen and stop sending texts asking me to do work I can't do.

Hine – This is me

Born and raised in South Auckland, my whānau whakapapa to Ngāti Porou and Ngāpuhi. I live in the moment. I'm not the type to think ahead and plan five years down the track. When I left school in 2016, I was already working part time at McDonald's. I resigned from McDonald's after 18 months.

When I couldn't find other work, I had no choice but to go to MSD for support. I have a lot of pride so it was really hard for me to ask them for help. I felt embarrassed but you can't do much about that when you need the help.

MSD sent me on different courses, but they didn't help me to find a job. After one year on Job Seekers, I was tired of waiting around for MSD to find me a job, so I ended up finding my own job. My friend told me about Ara, an agency that helps you to get jobs around the Auckland Airport. Within a few weeks of applying with them, I got part time work as a conference attendant in the Novotel. I'm enjoying the job and hope to have full time hours soon so I don't need top-ups from MSD.

I'm not sure what I want to do in the future. I have experience in hospitality so I'll probably work in that for now. I don't want to do it for the rest of my life but it's all good for now until I know what I want to do long-term.

My journey through MSD

- Safe
- Strong
- Independent

My mum would come to my MSD appointments with me. MSD was good at helping with stuff that I need like getting reading glasses. I never had a consistent case manager and I would go months at a time without hearing from them. It didn't feel like there was any urgency for me to get off the benefit and I didn't like that.

I got sent on some courses to 'prepare me for work'. I didn't find the courses useful because I've had a job before – I knew how to dress, behave and I had my own CV. The employment expo I went to didn't have any of the kind of jobs I wanted to do. So I found my own job without help from MSD.

I've been in my job for a month now. I'm only working part time so MSD are topping me up each week. It's really easy to get the top up – I just go online to My MSD and declare my wages. I really want to increase my job to full time though, so that I don't need any more help.

At a glance

Age: **21**

Occupation: 

Aspirations:



What I think MSD could focus on

Send people on courses for skills they need

“ The course I went on didn't really help me. I thought it would be them helping me find a job but it was them helping me to prepare for a job. But I kind of already know what to do because I've worked before. It was a waste of their time.

Keep in contact with us and don't just let us sit on Job Seekers

“ I had been on WINZ for 4-5 months before I got called in for a seminar. After a year I still didn't have a job. That's way too long. MSD need to be more active in helping people find a job. I never got any help to find a job, just sent to courses.

Get a better variety of employers along to expos

“ I didn't really like any of the jobs at the expos. I don't think they had any of the jobs that I wanted around hospitality. They had like day-care and warehousing type of jobs. But I don't want to do that.

Tama – This is me

West Auckland is home for me. I'm currently living with my parents but I dream of owning my own house, one with a double garage and a man cave.

When I left school, I went straight into scaffolding with my uncle. When that ended, another uncle got me a job at Watercare where I worked for two years. I went back to scaffolding but lost my job shortly after because the company went under. I've been out of work since December 2017.

For months I had nothing. I was sleeping on my family's couches, doing odd jobs so I would feel better about staying with them. Finally, my sister gave me an ultimatum: go to MSD for support or get out. I had no other choice. I've been getting support from MSD for the past two years.

As a young man it doesn't feel good getting free money. I want a full time job doing something I enjoy, something that will challenge me. If I'm not being challenged, I would rather just stay at home. One day I want to be a big operator, running my own team and earning a decent income. Got to save up so I can buy the house with a double garage.

My journey through MSD

Safe



When I finally reached out to MSD for help, I was blown away with the support they gave me. It was such a great feeling, going from having nothing to getting \$200 a week. It meant I could pay my way and get places. I started a job in Mount Roskill but I had no transport. MSD put some money into my account so I could give it to my driver. It's easy to get the support I need.

Strong



With my previous job at Watercare, I got a number of qualifications like concrete cutting and a diggers' license. But those have lapsed now. MSD is supporting me to renew some of the certifications I had, but I don't want to do traffic control or some other mindless job.

Independent



My main priority is to up-skill, and up-skill as fast as I can and get a job as soon as I can so I can jump off this thing. I want to be able to provide for myself.

At a glance

Age:

23

Motivation:



Aspirations:



What I think MSD could focus on

Get straight to the point with rangatahi

“ My case manager, she's all good. She's the one that's been pushing me to go to my courses. She's a Māori lady so you know, she's straight up the guts. I like the no mucking around, straight to the point style.

Be up front in offering us help, because we won't ask

“ I get a bit shy asking them for things because it feels like too much. Cause they are already giving me money at least once a week. Any more feels like I'm pushing it and I don't really need it.

Give respect and you will get it in return

“ It doesn't matter where a case manager is from. Speak to me eye-to-eye, don't be rude and I'll treat you with the same respect you treat me with. If you give it, I'll give it back.

Cordelia – This is me

I've lived in South Auckland since I was six years old. My passion is dancing and performing arts. When I finished school I went on a performing arts course and loved it. When that finished, I went onto a hair dressing course.

I always wanted to become a hairdresser but it wasn't the right time for me to do the course. I've had enough of studying for now and I really just want to work and make some money. I've had one job selling merchandise but it was only commission based so I found it really tough. I'm keen to do any job that I can get.

For me, MSD has been great. I've been getting support from them the past three months while I look for a job. I don't need much support from MSD. I have my whānau who I live with and I don't have any kids to worry about. I know how to apply for jobs; I'm not sitting around waiting for MSD to do it all for me.

I'm going to become a hair dresser one day, it's what I've always dreamed of doing. I hope to continue my dancing for the rest of my life. At the moment I'm busy planning my 21st birthday. I just need to find a job ASAP so I can pay for it.

My journey through MSD

Safe

Getting help from MSD was easy. I signed up with My MSD and then a case manager called me and set up an interview. I went for the interview and my benefit got granted the day I went in. Everything was explained to me clearly and I had all the information I needed. I live at home with my whānau so all I need from MSD is some financial support while I'm out of work.

Strong

Eventually I would like to go back to studying hair dressing. But for now, I'm keen to find any work that I can. I have the SEEK app downloaded on my phone so I'm always scanning through jobs. I don't expect MSD to get me a job, it's a two way thing. I know they are there to help me if I need the help. But I'm ok trying to find a job myself.

Independent

Next week I have an interview for a job through First Call Recruitment. It's for packing clothes. I really hope I get it. I want to be able to provide for myself and not need other people to help me. I'm all good with MSD helping me for a short time, but I don't want to get caught up and stay on the benefit for the rest of my life.

At a glance

Age:

20

Motivation:



Aspirations:



What I think MSD could focus on

Keep to appointment times

“ I had an appointment for 9am and didn't get seen until 12pm. That kind of thing is frustrating for people.

Don't allow clients to become dependent on the system

“ At first I wasn't too sure about doing it (going on a benefit) because sometimes people get caught up in it and end up staying on the benefit for the rest of their lives. And I don't want to be that person. I want to be the person that they can just help me in the meantime while I can get myself back up there. And yeah, go from there.

Let us meet you half way

“ For those that need the help, let them know you are there. But we don't expect you to do it for us. If we can help ourselves, then we will.

Wairangi – This is me

Life hasn't been easy for me. My upbringing was tough, surrounded by gangs and violence. But I'm trying to turn things around for the sake of my kids; I want better for them.

My goal is to get full time work but it's not easy. I can't read or write well so there's not much work I can do. Over the past 10 years, I've been in and out of work. When I take a job, it lasts a few months until the employer ends up having an issue with me, then I have to go back to MSD. There's a lot of racism out there, in the workplace and coming from employers.

Being around MSD long enough, I've learnt how the system works and what you need to do in order to get the help you need. I often support people I know who need something from MSD, I'll speak on their behalf and make sure they get the full story layed out. Some case managers make you feel really low. Like you are worthless and that they are better than you. But when our kids need something, we don't have any family to help us, we rely on MSD for that help. We have no choice.

I won't take just any job. It has to be something I can do and it has to be worth the added effort and stress on my partner and kids. I want to work with my hands, I'm good with them. I don't want to have to do any paperwork because it's too difficult for me.

My journey through MSD

Safe



Mine and my partner's benefits were recently reviewed to ensure we are receiving the correct amount. MSD bumped us up \$140 more a week. We were really struggling before. Now we have enough each week to feed our kids. Things have really improved with MSD over the past 12 months. It doesn't seem like such a battle to get the help we need.

Strong



I've been to employment expos and they are good. You can talk to the employers and get an understanding of what they want. Most of the jobs aren't suitable for me though. I got a job in Ellerslie but I couldn't get help with transport until the following week. I had to find the money to get there myself for the first week and we just didn't have it. So I missed out on that job.

Independent



I would rather stay on a benefit than take a job that I can't do and will eventually get fired from.

At a glance

Age:

27

Aspirations:



What I think MSD could focus on

Create a positive experience for clients across service centres

“ I've been to four different sites and there are some that are really bad and some that aren't. If the receptionist is rude, it affects your experience. For most young people just trying to walk in there, they don't make you feel welcome, they don't make you feel like you want to be there. We stopped going there and just struggled. Why go somewhere where we can't get the help?

Making sure clients don't have to repeat their story

“ Case managers should keep information about you. Not look at you with a blank face because they know nothing about you. Different branches need to work together and share information. It would save everyone's time.

Consistent responses to requests for help

“ We've gone to two case managers for something, the first one wouldn't help us but then the second one did. We were asking for the same thing [help with our water bill] each time. You wonder, do some of them [case managers] have more authority over others?

Released by the Minister of Māori Development

Key Finding 3: Supporting rangatahi into work or training is vital to their wellbeing and to the wellbeing of future generations, and they require a tailored approach to meet their specific needs.

THERE IS NO DESIGNATED APPROACH TO WORKING WITH RANGATAHI IN SERVICE CENTRES AND CONTACT CENTRES, WHICH IS A CONCERN

Within service centres, there is by and large no designated, tailored approach to working with rangatahi (or youth) after they turn 18. Te Puni Kōkiri found from clients, staff and Māori partners interviewed that many rangatahi who are receiving 'generic' income and employment services through service centres contact centres find it hard to navigate these services. Te Puni Kōkiri was told that rangatahi do not receive consistent support when engaged in 'general case management' or even some 'active case management' if the case manager is not passionate about supporting young people, and they become disengaged. Staff reflected that frontline staff who have the passion and skills to support rangatahi should be utilised, and rangatahi provided with ongoing support, including 'transitional support' throughout employment.

There was a consistent concern among staff and partners about the impact of not having a tailored approach for rangatahi within service centres or call numbers, given these are where the majority of rangatahi access services. Te Puni Kōkiri shared the same concern during interviews with rangatahi, especially as there was evidence that the barriers to rangatahi finding or remaining in work were often easily avoidable given more consistent mentoring and support. Concerns about support to youth were also identified by the Welfare Expert Advisory Group (WEAG), which recommended the introduction of youth case managers.

RANGATAHI ARE A PRIORITY GROUP FOR MSD, AND THERE IS EVIDENCE OF WHAT WORKS TO SUPPORT RANGATAHI

Youth (and, by consequence, rangatahi Māori) are a priority group for MSD, stating that 'long-term employment outcomes for young clients remain poor relative to other age groups' (MSD, 2018b, p.14). MSD strategic documents also state that the younger the age of entry onto a benefit, the longer the likelihood they will remain on the benefit over their lifetime (MSD, 2018a). Rangatahi clients face challenges in obtaining and remaining in employment, due to poverty-related factors, lack of qualifications and employment experience, and natural uncertainties about their employment goals given this stage of life. Entry-level, low-paying jobs are also more vulnerable to change in labour market fluctuations.

Te Puni Kōkiri is aware of evidence of approaches that work in supporting rangatahi in training or employment, especially clear, consistent assistance leading up to and during employment, with psychosocial support, training in job skills, and mentoring in life skills and cultural connectedness. This evidence comes from research and from MSD Auckland's learning while implementing a regional rangatahi Māori strategy in 2016 and 2017.

This strategy targeted getting rangatahi Māori into work. It led to improved employment outcomes for rangatahi but is no longer in place. The strategy worked intensively with rangatahi Māori in seven sites using a designated case manager, individualised approaches, regular tracking of performance indicators about rangatahi Māori, learning between sites, partnerships with community, staff capacity building and culturally appropriate interventions. Many staff reflected on opportunities to incorporate learning from these efforts into day-to-day practice.

“ Our rangatahi want independence. You know a hand up not a hand out. This starts at the home and school. Sadly, it's not there for many rangatahi because of their environment and leaving education early. So then it becomes important that agencies like MSD show their clients this isn't the end of the road but a temporary bus stop until they get off at their next destination. Sooner rather than later. MĀORI PROVIDER



Released under the Official Information Act 1982
Minister of Employment

“ I’d say most young people like me just want to be independent, to work, to earn a living and not have to be here.
RANGATAHI CLIENT OF MSD

“ This expo is really helpful ... I feel like everyone here, all of the staff, just want you to get a job.
RANGATAHI CLIENT OF MSD

RANGATAHI TOLD US THEY WANT TO WORK AND WANT TO BE INDEPENDENT

All rangatahi that were interviewed want to work and be off the benefit. Some had already found a job at the time of being interviewed. Rangatahi had first contacted MSD through the contact centre or by making an appointment at the service centre. Some had lost work and were on the benefit temporarily, and others had never worked. All clients older than 25 had been on and off the benefit for a number of years. Most expressed shame about being on a benefit.

Motivation to find work was stronger among rangatahi clients who had been on the benefit for less time. Clients who had received support from MSD for longer periods of time were less likely to take just any job available; the job needed to fit with their family commitments and be practical in terms of travel.

Māori providers reflected similar perspectives about the rangatahi they work with, emphasising how many of them are focused on independence, rather than a dependency on the benefit.

RANGATAHI TOLD US EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT FROM MSD IS GETTING BETTER, BUT MANY STILL FACE CHALLENGES IN FINDING WORK

The vast majority of rangatahi that Te Puni Kōkiri spoke to had positive feedback about the service and treatment they received from staff in the employment zones and expos. Rangatahi found that MSD staff were approachable, and the zones opened them up to employment opportunities. Some appreciated the support around building confidence, but others felt they wanted more support in this area. One rangatahi had been on the six-week motivational employment training course, Limited Service Volunteer, run by MSD and the Ministry of Defence, and he spoke positively about the skills and employment he gained from it, which he is still in 18 months later.

In spite of the perceptions of a more positive experience, many rangatahi recounted challenges in finding work from MSD, related to either system or personal barriers. Some emphasised the importance of personal motivation as a factor in getting work. Some clients described instances of ‘simple’ barriers, such as inability to pay for transport for a week or pay for a security course, as the reason they could not take a job. Others recounted ‘system barriers’, including MSD offering jobs that were practically impossible because of their skills (e.g. not being able to read/write), or MSD not texting them back after offering them a job.

Te Puni Kōkiri is concerned about these barriers not being consistently addressed, knowing the obstacles to employment faced by rangatahi, the long-term outcomes associated with remaining on the benefit, and the evidence of approaches known to assist them.

MSD AUCKLAND AND NATIONAL HAVE A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC INITIATIVES FOR RANGATAHI

MSD is providing some targeted support to rangatahi through initiatives. At a national level, this includes the Youth Services Support Unit, Limited Service Volunteer and Mana in Mahi to incentivise employers with mentoring and in-employment training for youth. At a regional level, this includes the initiative implemented by Te Pae Herenga (previously described), as well as rapidly expanding its funding of drivers' licensing and working with Police Youth Aid Officers in schools to hold conversations with youth about employment goals. Te Puni Kōkiri also notes that the approaches of employment zones and Te Puea marae, while not targeting youth, are seen to effectively enable engagement of many rangatahi.

Some service centres are engaged in community initiatives designed to support rangatahi into employment and training before they move onto a benefit. Te Puni Kōkiri encourages these to be expanded and for performance measurement, including KPIs, to act as incentives for these activities.

“ We have been very focused on supporting young people to have a license. If you don't invest up front in young people, they will end up on benefit and their outcomes will be pretty grim. MSD AUCKLAND LEADERSHIP

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSIDERATION

Following are opportunities for MSD's consideration to strengthen a tailored approach to supporting rangatahi in Auckland. Some are already being progressed through other work programmes, and some have financial implications. Te Puni Kōkiri expects that MSD will consider these within the context of its work planning and resourcing priorities.

- 12 Identify ways to provide consistent, targeted support to rangatahi clients, eg by establishing designated rangatahi case managers, and drawing on learning from Māori partners.
- 13 Consider in which Auckland locations to expand partnerships with Māori to support rangatahi into and through work or training.
- 14 Continue initiatives to overcome barriers to employment for rangatahi, eg drivers' licensing.



PHOTO BY VINCENT EGAN



Key Finding 4: Māori clients want respect, and accessible, consistent support and information. While MSD Auckland is making significant improvements, embedding mana manaaki is a work in progress.

MANA MANAAKI IS A PRIORITY FOR MSD

Under Te Pae Tawhiti, the national strategic direction calls for a shift to demonstrating 'mana manaaki – a positive experience every time'. Te Pae Tata has taken this a step further to talk about what mana manaaki means for whānau – respect and trust. The importance of mana manaaki was emphasised by clients, who wanted to be treated with respect and receive consistent information and support.

MSD's regional and national approach has been to identify and respond to client needs as early as possible upon engaging with MSD. Regional staff reflected on the importance of this for enabling clients to move to finding work – 'people can't concentrate on work unless they have the essentials taken care of' – and for improving social outcomes.

Te Puni Kōkiri found evidence of mana manaaki in place. Clients consistently fed back that respect, accessibility and information were improving over recent years – through better treatment from staff, follow-up calls, and being able to deal with things by phone and online.

Regional staff at all levels also reflected on the positive policy and service changes occurring over recent years to strengthen a client-centred approach to their practice and respond to each client's specific income and employment needs and interests. At a leadership level, this included funding to address a wider range of issues, such as drivers' licensing or health, known to affect an individual's social and economic outcomes but previously outside the focus of MSD. It also included an expansion of community-based services in recognition of client preferences. Frontline staff referred to recent decisions allowing them more autonomy and flexibility to help them support clients in finding work. Te Puni Kōkiri also learned about national and regional training on empathy and active listening, and improvements within some service centres to their office environment to be more welcoming for clients.

“ It's hit and miss with them [MSD]. It's definitely improved in the last 12 months. They are really starting to help us now so we are not scraping by.

RANGATAHI CLIENT OF MSD

“ Some branches are so tense, you feel like they [case managers] don't want to deal with you.

RANGATAHI CLIENT OF MSD



“ It’s a struggle with MSD. If a young person comes in hungry because they haven’t eaten in days, MSD doesn’t address their immediate need and give them money for food. They have to consider other factors, like when they got their last food grant.

COMMUNITY PROVIDER

“ They [clients] have been to local MSD offices and said they are the opposite of ‘mana-enhancing’ and even they felt sorry for the MSD staff.

MĀORI PROVIDER

FOR CLIENTS, MANA MANAAKI INCLUDES ACCESSIBLE, CONSISTENT SUPPORT BASED ON THEIR NEEDS

Rangatahi and older Māori clients who were interviewed shared a common goal of wanting support from MSD that met their basic needs and helped them find work. Clients displayed clear motivation to be in work and off the benefit, with some clients wanting work in a specific area and other clients happy to do any work available to them. They were eager to develop skills to get into employment, and wanted case managers to listen to their specific needs and preferences for both income support and employment.

INCONSISTENCIES IN MANA MANAAKI BETWEEN SERVICE CENTRES AND CASE MANAGERS

There was agreement among clients, staff and partners interviewed that in spite of these changes, client experience is variable from case manager to case manager, or service centre to service centre. Most clients who were interviewed highlighted the range in attitude and experience they received depending on who they interacted with. There were instances of clients experiencing negative attitudes from staff, receiving conflicting information or needing to repeat their story, and staff responding more to process than client need – all of which led to frustration and confusion.

TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS AND RAPPORT ARE KEY TO MANA MANAAKI

Te Puni Kōkiri heard directly and indirectly from clients, Auckland staff and Māori partners about the importance of trusting relationships and rapport to being able to identify and meet the needs of Māori clients. Managers and Māori staff emphasised that without rapport and a well-developed relationship, frontline staff don't know what services clients need, and clients don't know what services to ask for, leading to flow-on effects for their social and economic outcomes.

Frontline staff and clients validated the importance of rapport in the 'safe' stage of MSD's services (i.e. income support). Currently it is 'make or break' – it either goes well and clients can then be supported in getting a job, or critical needs are missed, hindering their ability to get a job.

Te Puni Kōkiri saw evidence that establishing rapport is inconsistent due to factors including the soft skills of case managers, caseloads, time pressures and the complexity of issues Māori clients face. General case management appears to be an especially challenging model for building rapport, given that clients in this cohort do not have a designated case manager. Yet we found from June 2018 – 2019 administrative data that 77% of Māori clients in Auckland are on general case management. Community and intensive services, as well as Māori and Pacific staff, report greater flexibility and ability in creating trusting relationships, and there are opportunities to learn from these staff.

“ It's quite difficult [having different case managers] because you have to explain everything again. They have their notes and everything but they still ask the same questions every time. Have to repeat yourself.

MĀORI CLIENT

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSIDERATION

Following are opportunities for MSD's consideration to provide a consistent service and consistently respond to the needs of Māori clients. Some are already being progressed through other work programmes, and some have financial implications. Te Puni Kōkiri expects that MSD will consider these within the context of its work planning and resourcing priorities.

- 15 Review and strengthen generic training modules (eg on soft skills and empathy) to be more effective for Māori
- 16 Enable more peer-to-peer support for frontline staff and managers on rapport and whakawhanaungatanga
- 17 Review case management models and client information sharing to better enable frontline staff to establish rapport with Māori clients.



Released by the Minister for Māori Development

Key Finding 5: Ongoing changes to services and programmes, combined with poor internal information sharing and guidance, make it difficult to provide a consistent service and consistently respond to the needs of Māori clients.

CLIENTS FOUND SERVICES AND INFORMATION VARIABLE ACROSS SERVICE CENTRES AND STAFF

Similar to the treatment they received from different staff, clients recounted variability in the specific services and information they received. They noted general improvements in accessibility of services (through online, phone and service centres) and follow-up calls from staff. However, they also described variability – including receiving different information or financial assistance for the same problem depending on the case manager they saw, or being sent on job preparation courses that were not relevant for their skills.

Clients recounted which service centres to go to or avoid in order to receive a more positive experience. Service Centre Managers and frontline staff reflected similar views – that the experience of clients depended on the case manager they worked with.

In addition to these reports, Te Puni Kōkiri identified a large variation in services and approaches across service centres, evidenced in relation to partnerships and tailored initiatives, cultural responsiveness of Service Centre Managers and frontline staff, and training and learning opportunities in place. Organisational culture and practice seemed to depend on the environmental context of the centre, capability and priorities of the Service Centre Manager, and capacity of frontline staff. Te Puni Kōkiri is concerned at this variability and the inability to consistently meet the needs of Māori clients as a result, especially given that many Māori clients are transient.

CONSTANT CHANGE WITHOUT REGULAR SUPPORT IS DRIVING VARIABILITY

Te Puni Kōkiri saw repeated evidence that changes to services and programmes are the constant but are often not accompanied by appropriate support or clearly communicated. Te Puni Kōkiri found that devolved decision making means new services, programmes and strategies go to service centre level for implementation, but without consistent assistance given to Service Centre Managers from regional or national level. The environmental context of the service centre, and varied approaches and capability of managers, lead to large differences in implementation.

For frontline staff, the guidance around, or rationale for, new/discontinuing programmes and products was also minimal. Te Puni Kōkiri was repeatedly told that changes by regional and national leaders are communicated in weekly meetings or online, and with heavy caseloads, staff have limited time to get up to speed. This led to varied understanding and interpretation of services and products by case managers. This was seen to be the case with the strategic shift with Te Pae Tawhiti, although Te Puni Kōkiri notes more assistance is occurring with the new employment zones.

“ There are lots of products and services, lots of knowledge to know. Where things change, people have to know that. Some of those who have been in the job for a long time, they have to unlearn a behaviour.

SERVICE CENTRE MANAGER

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSIDERATION

Following are opportunities for MSD's consideration to provide a consistent service and consistently respond to the needs of Māori clients. Some are already being progressed through other work programmes, and some have financial implications. Te Puni Kōkiri expects that MSD will consider these within the context of its work planning and resourcing priorities. Expand co-design approach of new services and products between national and regional levels.

- 18 Expand opportunities for involving a diverse range of frontline and regional staff in planning of new services and products before they are introduced
- 19 Prioritise support for Auckland service centres and case managers that receive regular complaints from Māori clients with actions that strengthen their effectiveness for Māori
- 20 Review and improve communication methods around services and products based on feedback from managers and frontline staff.



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Key Finding 6: Whānau-centred approaches are known to work for enabling Māori to meet their needs and achieve their aspirations in a culturally grounded way, and opportunities for these need to be expanded.

A GROWING COMMITMENT TO WHĀNAU-CENTRED APPROACHES WITHIN MSD

There is now strong evidence that whānau-centred approaches are effective for Māori. Te Puni Kōkiri defines these as:

- placing whānau at the centre with an emphasis on collective rather than individual thinking
- acknowledging whānau values, aspirations, needs and strengths at the core
- applying holistic wellbeing approaches that include cultural and spiritual influences focused on measuring effectiveness based on outcomes
- enabling whānau to determine their own future
- using a strengths-based method based on whānau strengths and assets
- promoting cultural concepts while acknowledging whānau diversity
- enhancing collaboration and integration across government (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2019).

Whānau-centred approaches align with the direction of both Te Pae Tawhiti and Te Pae Tata (see Table 1, below). Whānau-centred approaches are growing in MSD's community services and partnerships, and in some forms of intensive case management, as well as among the Māori providers and iwi in Auckland that MSD partners with. They also seem to be a normal approach used by many MSD Māori frontline staff.

Table 1. Alignment of whānau-centred approaches with MSD strategic documents

	Te Pae Tawhiti	Te Pae Tata
Places whānau at the centre with an emphasis on collective rather than individual thinking	<p>Kotahitanga – Partnering for greater impact</p> <p>We will strengthen our connections with the wider social sector, other agencies and our network of partners to reduce barriers and make it easier for clients, whānau and families, and communities to access social services.</p>	<p>For whānau and hapū</p> <p>Create environments that are warm, welcoming and safe to support the formation of relationships and genuine partnerships.</p>
Acknowledges whānau values, aspirations, needs and strengths at the core	<p>Mana manaaki – A positive experience every time</p> <p>We want people to feel comfortable dealing with us, be aware of all the support that is available to them and be confident they will receive it.</p>	<p>For whānau and hapū</p> <p>Support the formation of relationships and genuine partnerships.</p>
Applies holistic wellbeing approaches that include cultural and spiritual influences focused on measuring effectiveness based on outcomes	<p>Kotahitanga – Partnering for greater impact</p> <p>We will work with a network of trusted partners to harness knowledge and expertise to contribute to shared goals and to encourage innovation and fresh thinking.</p>	<p>For staff and people who are providing services on behalf of the Ministry</p> <p>Show leadership to staff and clients by actively integrating Māori customary concepts and language into day-to-day operations.</p>
Uses a strengths-based method based on whānau strengths and assets Promotes cultural concepts while acknowledging whānau diversity	<p>Mana manaaki – A positive experience every time</p> <p>The cultural competence of our people is important, so culture and/or ethnicity is not a barrier to providing optimal service and support to everyone who needs it.</p>	<p>For staff and people who are providing services on behalf of the Ministry</p> <p>Create opportunities to acknowledge and share individual expertise in Māori customary concepts and language.</p>
Enables whānau to determine their own future Enhances collaboration and integration across government	<p>Kotahitanga – Partnering for greater impact</p> <p>We will look at ways our clients can connect directly with our trusted partners who are better placed to meet their needs, including whānau and families, hapū, iwi and community change agents.</p>	<p>For iwi and communities</p> <p>Build sustainable employment opportunities to enable whānau, hapū, iwi and communities to develop and grow.</p>



Released by the Minister of Māori Development



“ We came to this expo cause we heard it was good from our whānau. Nan and my two aunties are both here. They drove me cause they really want to support me to get a job.

RANGATAHI CLIENT OF MSD

CLIENTS TAKE A WHĀNAU-CENTRED APPROACH TO NAVIGATE MSD

When Te Puni Kōkiri spoke with clients, we saw evidence of how much they were operating within a whānau context, both positively and negatively, in the support they received from whānau to engage with MSD and find work. Most rangatahi interviewed were initially introduced to MSD by whānau, and some, but not all, had support from whānau in trying to find a job. Rangatahi who had strong whānau support, including support with transport, seemed more likely to successfully gain employment. Whānau also provided support to rangatahi in navigating MSD services or advocating for their rights, when their interaction with MSD proved challenging.

Those clients who did not have support from whānau developed other strategies for navigating MSD services, including identifying specific staff or advocacy organisations to talk to.

NEED FOR WHĀNAU-CENTRED APPROACHES THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS TO RESPOND TO THE COMPLEX NEEDS OF CLIENTS

MSD Auckland has articulated a desire to expand whānau-centred approaches across its practice, especially to support those clients who face complex, poverty-related needs. Māori providers agreed. Given the time and capability required for enabling whānau-centred approaches with this group, both also agreed that these could best be achieved by Māori partners through community-based services, provided these were adequately resourced.

Te Puni Kōkiri was told that whānau-centred approaches are less common in both general and active case management, and in some instances were discouraged by Service Centre Managers because supporting whānau members couldn't formally 'count' towards KPIs. Te Puni Kōkiri believes that, as a minimum, applying a whānau-centred approach should be seen as a strength, not a penalty, for Māori and Tauīwi staff who apply it.

Data supplied by MSD highlights that Māori are both heavily represented among clients in general case management (without a designated case manager) and among the most vulnerable clients. Between June 2018 and 2019, there was a 34% increase in the number of Māori clients in general case management and a 42% decrease in active case management. During the same year, the total number of clients with highly complex needs⁷ increased from 407 to 735, and 65% of those in June 2019 were Māori. Of all those with highly complex needs, over 70% were receiving general case management.

7. Defined as receiving at least five emergency housing payments, five food grants and five other grants.

Te Puni Kōkiri is concerned at the tension between the level of vulnerability of many Māori clients and the type of case management they receive, especially when considered against the evidence of 'what works' around whānau-centred approaches. Te Puni Kōkiri notes the challenges of applying whānau-centred approaches in general and active case management given time constraints faced by case managers. Te Puni Kōkiri highlights the need for MSD to review how different forms of case management can better support whānau-centred approaches, especially among vulnerable clients, alongside an accompanying expansion of partnerships adopting whānau-centred approaches to support the growing number of clients facing complex issues in this cohort. Te Puni Kōkiri emphasises the time and flexibility required to enable whānau-centred approaches, and for any partnerships to reflect this.

OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPAND IN DAY-TO-DAY PRACTICE

Te Puni Kōkiri notes that whānau-centred approaches to service delivery can be strengthened throughout day-to-day practice of frontline staff in service centres, and that this should occur through engagement and guidance from iwi and Māori providers that MSD partners with in Auckland. Practices that would enhance the possibility of whānau-centred approaches include:

- **staff understanding the realities and goals of rangatahi, Māori clients and their whānau** through engagement at appointments and enhanced community networks. This can also involve informing clients of local community organisations and resources to support them
- **building cultural capability of all staff** in areas such as strength-based approaches, kapa haka, facilitating connections to local marae, te reo and tikanga, and
- **strong community networks and regular engagement at local levels** to enhance collaboration and understanding of how MSD services can align with community needs (not the other way around). Partnerships can occur around capability building, as is currently occurring with Te Paea marae.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSIDERATION

Following are opportunities for MSD's consideration to expand whānau-centred approaches. Some are already being progressed through other work programmes, and some have financial implications. Te Puni Kōkiri expects that MSD will consider these within the context of its work planning and resourcing priorities.

- 21 Regularly check in with clients and broader whānau about their needs and aspirations and how MSD can support them.
- 22 Identify opportunities for expanding and resourcing whānau-centred approaches with Māori/iwi partners, including through community-based services and within service centres*
- 23 Regularly engage with iwi/Māori providers, communities and government organisations to understand community needs and how MSD can support them.

* Some or all of this opportunity is likely to be addressed in MSD's Welfare Overhaul Work Programme



8. Findings – Contribution to Māori wellbeing

This section describes findings around:

- social, employment and other outcomes being achieved for Māori clients in Auckland, and
- factors enabling a contribution to Māori wellbeing.

Te Puni Kōkiri expects that demonstration and implementation of a clear strategy for Māori, effective partnerships with Māori, and services/programmes that respond to the needs of Māori clients should lead to an equitable improvement in social and employment outcomes for Māori.

Key Finding 7: Frontline staff, including many Māori staff, display a genuine commitment to doing their best for clients, but support is not consistently in place for their own wellbeing and development.

GENUINE COMMITMENT FROM STAFF

Te Puni Kōkiri found strong evidence of a clear and continued commitment among frontline staff and managers in doing their best for Māori clients. This was demonstrated by some staff often going above and beyond their role to support clients in meeting their income and employment needs, and by feedback from clients. The commitment to Māori seen by staff was especially pronounced among Māori staff members, non-Māori staff with Māori whānau, and staff living in the same community where they are working.

THE WELLBEING OF STAFF AFFECTS THE WELLBEING OF CLIENTS

Managers noted that if staff are not experiencing mana manaaki, then they cannot do the same with their clients. Clients themselves, as well as community providers, reflected a concern for the wellbeing of staff in some high-stress service centres, and the flow-on effects for clients.

Te Puni Kōkiri identified that MSD recognises this at a national and regional level and is taking steps to support staff wellbeing. Through Te Pae Tata, MSD is prioritising new ways of supporting frontline staff. What this will look like at a regional level is not yet known. Within Auckland, both regional leaders and some Service Centre Managers are developing peer support and specific site initiatives to support staff wellbeing.

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- “ There is an expectation from other staff, if they have a Māori client, they bring her to us, especially if they play up. If you look at our staff, there aren't many Māori. I get three–four of those situations every week. But it doesn't count in our KPIs. MĀORI FRONTLINE STAFF MEMBER

GREATER SUPPORT NEEDED TO FRONTLINE STAFF TO ENHANCE CLIENT WELLBEING

While staff have a genuine desire to improve outcomes for Māori, support is not extensively in place for learning and development, enhancing cultural capability, or strengthening practice on complex issues. Staff articulated the desire for more opportunities to enhance capability.

Te Puni Kōkiri was told that lack of cultural capability at an organisational level has led to some expectations that Māori staff will deliver beyond their role. In addition, a shortage of Māori frontline staff exists in some service centres, and minimal development opportunities specifically targeting Māori staff are in place. Some mentioned the value of reintroducing the cadetships programme to enhance Māori development.

NEED TO ENHANCE THE ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING CULTURE

Te Puni Kōkiri was told that the organisational learning culture is not strong at the frontline because of time pressures and caseloads. Most regional training and capability building is focused on induction because of the high number of new staff in the region. Service Centre Trainers and Quality Officers vary in their ability to dedicate time to peer-to-peer support.

Staff and managers highlighted that observation and peer-to-peer learning was a great way to learn about new products and improve the quality of practice, but it did not occur because of time pressures. There was little evidence of regular review and reflection on approaches to service delivery occurring, including review of good practice for Māori. Staff emphasised the need for more peer-to-peer and observation-based learning to strengthen practice as a high priority.

Many staff also reflected on good practice in Māori-specific initiatives from the past, and highlighted that the learning and experience from staff involved in earlier effective initiatives remained but were not being utilised. This included a regional strategy targeting rangatahi Māori, Māori units and Integrated Services Coordinators.

“ If you are looking at a model, I'd say put in an opportunity for people to be able to sit down and look at what's on their caseloads and talk as professionals. Sharing the knowledge right across. We don't have the time to do that. SERVICE CENTRE MANAGER

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSIDERATION

Following are opportunities for MSD's consideration to further support staff wellbeing and development in Māori effectiveness. Some are already being progressed through other work programmes, and some have financial implications. Te Puni Kōkiri expects that MSD will consider these within the context of its work planning and resourcing priorities.

- 24 Ask Māori staff what support they need and want and use their feedback for improvements**
- 25 Develop a clear strategy and resourcing for the role of Maori staff in supporting Māori clients, and enhancing cultural capability at a service centre level
- 26 Alongside increased training opportunities, enable more peer-to-peer support and observation-based learning for all frontline staff and managers on aspects of Māori effectiveness.**

** Some of this opportunity is being addressed through Te Pae Tata





“ In zones, we are finding people jobs on the day. People can just come in if they want work. It makes it super easy, they don't need to sit waiting. We have had to change a culture of people feeling bad to walk in the door if they want help.

MSD WORK BROKER

Key Finding 8: The region has made significant improvements in orienting its assistance around enabling clients to find meaningful work of their choice. Māori are benefiting from this, but a more tailored approach is required to ensure equitable outcomes.

REGIONAL APPROACH TO EMPLOYMENT IS MAKING POSITIVE CHANGES TO ENGAGEMENT AND PRACTICE

In line with Te Pae Tawhiti, in which MSD calls for a shift to *kia takatū tātou* (long-term social and economic development), MSD Auckland has made a significant, positive shift to its service delivery and contracting to support clients into work of their choice when they are ready. Employment zones are being established across the larger service centres, with expos for employers and work brokers to support clients to meet and apply for jobs. Supporting these efforts is MSD's increased understanding of the labour market, partnerships with 'Preparation for Work' providers tailored to clients' job interests, and behind-the-scene support from Job Connect.

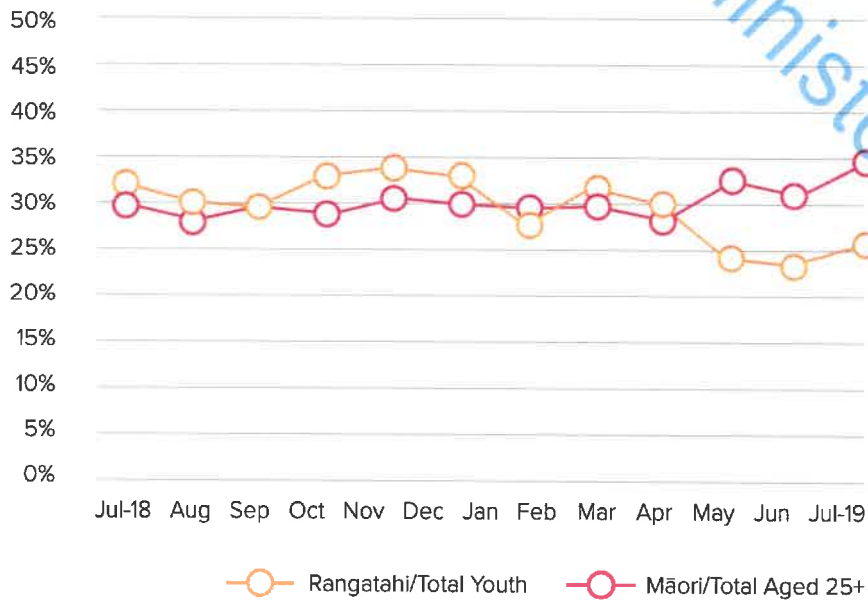
Many Māori clients have reported positively about the vibe, approach and support received through employment zones and expos. Some staff also highlighted that the positive environment and increased autonomy they have to 'do what it takes' to support clients into work is contributing to improve outcomes. They have recognised the Regional Commissioner as being a leader in enabling this shift.

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IT IS TOO EARLY TO SAY WHETHER THESE CHANGES ARE LEADING TO IMPROVED EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES FOR MĀORI IN AUCKLAND

The regional office has indicated a substantial shift in 'work exits'⁸ for Māori since July 2019 when the zones became embedded, but Te Puni Kōkiri was not able to obtain the data to verify this. Te Puni Kōkiri obtained 'work exit' data from MSD June 2018 – 2019, during the period when employment zones were introduced in Auckland. Data from this period show an increase in 'work exits' for Māori adults when compared with all adults, but not yet for rangatahi when compared with all youth. Figure 3 shows that the proportion of adult work exits who were Māori increased, especially after March 2019, but the proportion of youth work exits who were rangatahi decreased.

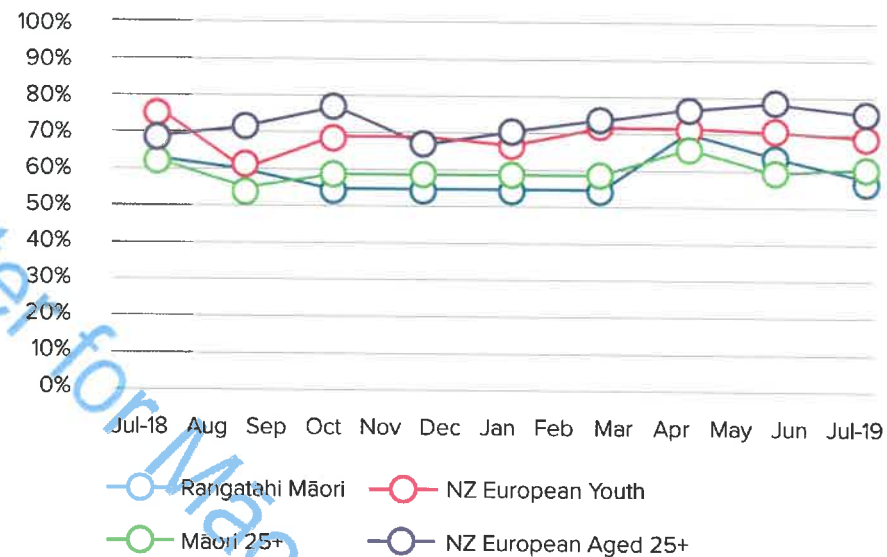
Figure 3. Proportion of Māori work exits per total exits by age; Auckland (June 2018 – June 2019)



8. 'Work exits' are when clients move off a main benefit and into work.

Between June 2018 and March 2019,⁹ there were consistently fewer Māori, compared with non-Māori, able to exit a benefit in order to gain sustainable employment¹⁰. The average proportion of Māori sustainable work exits was 61%, compared with a non-Māori proportion of 74% (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. Percent of all work exits that are 'sustainable', by age and ethnicity, Auckland (June 2018 – March 2019)



Among specific initiatives, there are positive outcomes. For example, Te Puni Kōkiri received regional data from the Limited Service Volunteer programme, stating that rangatahi Māori represent 55% of all programme attendees and 49% of all work placements following the course.

9. Sustainable work exit data was only available until March 2019 at the time of the report.

10. Measured by 'sustainable work exits', or not returning to a benefit within 24 weeks

A MORE TAILORED APPROACH MAY BE NEEDED TO ACHIEVE EQUITABLE OUTCOMES FOR MĀORI

While Te Puni Kōkiri encourages the positive changes from the employment zones, it is too early to determine whether the region's employment efforts will reduce inequities in work exits for Māori. The approach to employment zones has been to target those who want to work. There is no tailored approach to working with Māori clients in the zones, even though sustainable work exits for Māori and youth are one of two key KPIs. MSD is in the design phase with iwi providers of basing some employment zones in marae, and working with Police Youth Aid Officers in schools to hold conversations with youth about employment goals. These changes are positive, and a tailored approach is needed within service centres to complement these efforts and reach the majority of Māori clients looking to work. Te Puni Kōkiri notes learning is available from Te Pae Herenga collective and Auckland's previous rangatahi Māori strategy, which could support tailored approaches.

All the Māori clients Te Puni Kōkiri interviewed want to work, but some need additional support, and it is unclear whether the employment zones are reaching all of these clients. Some clients highlighted practical, but fundamental, barriers to employment opportunities around transport and certification costs. Other rangatahi fed back that they didn't have the confidence at expos or that expos don't have the jobs they want there. There was a tension between the lack of confidence and confusion many rangatahi described in engaging with MSD or with employers, and the lack of motivation that many frontline staff perceived rangatahi had. Māori providers and some frontline staff reinforced these challenges but also highlighted the motivation and drive that rangatahi display when provided enough support. Rangatahi clients interviewed often gained employment through their own networks or efforts.

Te Puni Kōkiri also notes that some process and communication issues remain around clients not hearing back about job offers or being offered jobs that don't match their skill sets or aspirations. These process and communication issues are important because they have direct impacts on clients' social and economic outcomes.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSIDERATION

Following are opportunities for MSD's consideration to ensure a tailored approach to supporting Māori clients find meaningful work. Some are already being progressed through other work programmes, and some have financial implications. Te Puni Kōkiri expects that MSD will consider these within the context of its work planning and resourcing priorities.

- 27 Review practice in Auckland employment zones to ensure the organisational value of mana manaaki is consistently demonstrated
- 28 Regularly refine practices in Auckland employment zones based on feedback from Māori staff, partners and clients, and based on Māori client outcomes.



Key Finding 9: Support to enable 'independence' appears more limited than the organisation's work on 'strong' to support clients into employment.

SOME EVIDENCE OF POST-EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT IN PLACE

A key component of MSD's strategic shift towards *kia takatū tātou* in Te Pae Tawhiti is providing in-employment support for both clients and businesses to enable 'independence' from MSD and sustainable employment outcomes.

Te Puni Kōkiri found that there have been some improvements in this stage of support in the Auckland region. Rangatahi commented on improvements in follow-up phone calls from case managers once they were in a job. In intensive services like Te Paea marae, whānau receive manaaki in a range of areas leading up to and throughout employment. Within service centres, administering supplementary benefits post-employment is becoming regular practice. The planned initiative led by Te Pae Herenga will also provide ongoing support to rangatahi while in employment, and is a learning opportunity for MSD. The national initiative, Mana in Mahi, is also being introduced to incentivise employers with mentoring and in-employment training for youth.

“ Our young people have a vision of wanting to change to get life skills like licensing, money management and other skills that can make them independent. Many of them make better decisions for their journey ahead once they realise what their options are. MAORI PROVIDER

RELATIVELY LIMITED ASSISTANCE FOR INDEPENDENCE WHEN WEIGHED AGAINST POVERTY-RELATED FACTORS THAT WHĀNAU FACE

Beyond the areas mentioned above, Te Puni Kōkiri found little evidence of support to enable 'independence' and achieve sustainable employment outcomes for Māori clients. Frontline staff and managers believed that support to clients post-employment was not strong, and more needed to be done to avoid the 'churning' of clients in and out of the system.

Te Puni Kōkiri is concerned about the limited support around independence, given the disproportionate number of Māori who are long-term beneficiaries and the relative lack of 'resilience' Māori have in remaining in sustainable, well-paying jobs (Department of Labour, 2009). Resilience is affected by a range of factors related to the labour market (recessions, shift to contract jobs in Auckland, move to automation), soft skills of individuals (confidence, motivation, understanding of employment process), and poverty-related factors (like money for transport).

Te Puni Kōkiri believes proactive planning on some of these factors is important to enable independence for Māori, and hopes this is occurring nationally or regionally. During the review, Te Puni Kōkiri did not identify what policy and planning was occurring at a national level to support Māori into independence.

Te Puni Kōkiri considers that there is an especially high need for transitional support and ongoing coaching and mentoring with rangatahi during employment. Rangatahi are in a life stage where it is 'normal' to be in short-term employment and where they are still developing job skills and soft skills. Lack of transitional support can lead to negative experiences in both employment and benefit assistance, and affect social and employment outcomes.

Te Puni Kōkiri notes that assistance while transitioning into employment and training is not the responsibility of MSD alone, and that partnerships are essential. The recently developed cross-agency Youth Employment Action Plan is one such example. Te Puni Kōkiri also notes the lack of emphasis of MSD on managing the transition into and during employment as a significant gap. This gap was highlighted by WEAG, as well as in a recent evaluation of the LSV programme, which highlighted the limited long-term outcomes associated with the programme (New Zealand Ministry of Defence, 2019).

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSIDERATION

Following are opportunities for MSD's consideration to expand planning and programmes on 'independence'. Some are already being progressed through other work programmes, and some have financial implications. Te Puni Kōkiri expects that MSD will consider these within the context of its work planning and resourcing priorities.

- 29 Consider whether, and how, services can be further enhanced for rangatahi to facilitate their successful transition from programmes into sustainable employment, eg programmes with longer term support activities, pastoral care, youth-oriented programmes, designated case managers, and partnerships
- 30 Review how employment services can be strengthened to build resilience and achieve sustainable employment outcomes for rangatahi*

* Some or all of this opportunity is likely to be addressed in MSD's Welfare Overhaul Work Programme



9. Conclusion and recommendations

Both nationally and regionally, MSD has demonstrated recent commitments to making changes to its business to improve outcomes for Māori. During the review, Te Puni Kōkiri found a number of examples of promising practice – from the creation of Te Pae Tawhiti and Te Pae Tata through to the co-design of initiatives with iwi in Auckland, the creation of employment zones and the commitment of many managers and staff. The investment of time by Auckland regional staff into the collaborative approach of the review is also a reflection of that commitment.

High-level MSD documents have highlighted that for Māori – rangatahi and adult – outcomes related to welfare assistance have not improved for a long time, noting that Māori are likely to enter the system earlier, and cycle in and out of the system for longer. This review has found that Māori disproportionately face complex poverty-related issues that affect their ability to work, while also facing difficulties in navigating MSD's services to alleviate these issues.

The strategic shift made by MSD through Te Pae Tawhiti signals that MSD's commitment is to improve social and economic development for all New Zealanders, including Māori. This review has highlighted the need for this commitment to be reflected in accountability mechanisms, resourcing and service design and delivery approaches at all levels. Increasing partnerships with iwi and Māori providers, and establishment of community services – provided they are jointly designed and adequately resourced – are also part of the changes that Te Puni Kōkiri sees is needed. Te Puni Kōkiri also sees the need for integrating approaches that work for Māori into mainstream settings, tailored approaches to working with rangatahi, and a broad expansion of cultural capability and learning culture.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the nine review findings and the 'opportunities for consideration' set out in the previous sections of this report, Te Puni Kōkiri has identified a set of cross-cutting recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of MSD's service delivery to Māori. Te Puni Kōkiri believes that some of these recommendations are Auckland-specific, some are the responsibility of national office, and some have the potential to be considered by other MSD regions across New Zealand.

MSD national office has advised that some of the opportunities and recommendations identified in this review will be progressed through MSD's Welfare Overhaul Work Programme and through other priorities like the implementation of Te Pae Tata – both of which will take time to embed. The recommendations that follow include an asterisk(*) for those that MSD has advised will be addressed in part through WEAG or Te Pae Tata. Te Puni Kōkiri encourages MSD to consider how the findings of this review can further inform these efforts. In particular, consideration of regional resourcing and support for implementation at a regional level are pivotal, given the key review finding that regular service changes have occurred at a national level with inconsistent support for change at the frontline.

Te Puni Kōkiri expects that MSD will consider these recommendations when developing the action plan following this review, and each recommendation includes options of how these recommendations could be actioned. Te Puni Kōkiri acknowledges that some of these have financial implications, and MSD will consider the feasibility of these recommendations within the context of its work planning and resourcing priorities.

Te Puni Kōkiri recommends that:

- ① MSD consider how to strengthen guidance and accountability mechanisms to give effect to Te Pae Tawhiti and Te Pae Tata. Options may include:
 - guidance and resourcing for implementation of Te Pae Tata at Auckland regional and frontline levels*
 - human resource mechanisms like job competencies and performance reviews*
 - organisational performance standards like KPIs and associated resourcing*.
- ② MSD consider how to strengthen and expand partnerships with iwi, hapū and Māori providers in Auckland to meet the needs of Māori clients. Options may include:
 - developing more strategic partnerships with existing iwi/Māori partners to ensure more mutually aligned objectives
 - forming new strategic partnerships with iwi/Māori providers, communities and government organisations to better respond to the needs of Māori
 - identifying opportunities for expanding and resourcing whānau-centred approaches, including through community-based services*
 - developing new and innovative partnerships to support Māori clients with complex needs and to support rangatahi as they transition into employment.
- ③ MSD continue to build staff capability to be effective for Māori. Options may include:
 - reviewing and strengthening generic training modules to be more effective for Māori
 - increasing availability of training and courses in Auckland in different aspects of Māori effectiveness*
 - having a designated senior position to oversee Māori strategy, accountability, and cultural capability in Auckland.
- ④ MSD consider how to strengthen its learning from its practice in Auckland. Options may include:
 - enabling more peer-to-peer support and observation-based learning for all frontline staff and managers on aspects of Māori effectiveness*
 - asking Māori staff what support they want and need, and use their feedback for improvements*
 - formally connecting with Māori partners in Auckland to learn about best practice approaches to meeting the needs of Māori
 - reviewing practice in Auckland employment zones to ensure the organisational value of mana manaaki is consistently demonstrated.
- ⑤ MSD Auckland consider how to use feedback from Māori to target performance improvement. Options may include:
 - regularly refining practices in Auckland employment zones based on feedback from Māori staff, partners and clients, and based on Māori client outcomes
 - supporting Auckland service centres and case managers that receive regular complaints from Māori clients with actions that strengthen their effectiveness for Māori.
- ⑥ MSD consider how to expand a targeted approach to working with rangatahi Māori in Auckland. Options may include:
 - establishing dedicated rangatahi case managers to provide consistent support to rangatahi
 - continuing initiatives that overcome barriers to employment for rangatahi (e.g. drivers' licensing)
 - identifying how to expand transitional support to rangatahi in employment.
- ⑦ MSD consider how service planning and design could better meet the needs of Māori clients and partners. Options may include:
 - expanding Māori-specific expertise, participation and considerations in national policy and regional planning
 - reviewing case management models and client information sharing to better enable frontline staff to establish rapport with Māori clients
 - reviewing how employment services can be strengthened to build resilience and achieve sustainable employment outcomes for rangatahi*.
- ⑧ MSD consider how to strengthen its guidance and communication to managers and frontline staff when it introduces new services and products. Options may include:
 - expanding opportunities for involving a diverse range of frontline and regional staff in planning of new services and products before they are introduced
 - increasing managers' access to the guidance and support that they need when new services and products are announced
 - reviewing and improving communication methods around services and products based on feedback from managers and frontline staff.



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