

**Office of the Minister for Crown Māori Relations: Te Arawhiti
Office of te Minita mō Whānau Ora**

**Chair
Cabinet [Committee]**

**COVID-19 Response: Responding to Community need through Whānau Ora
Commissioning Agencies and Iwi Connections**

Proposal

1. This paper seeks approval for funding from the COVID-19 Response and Resilience Fund to support the work of Whānau Ora providers and iwi to meet the increased whānau and community need for immediate support and services in response to the outbreak of the COVID-19 Delta variant.
2. It is proposed the funding sought covers:
 - 2.1. immediate needs of whānau for four weeks delivered through Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies, including support for the vaccine rollout, while parts of New Zealand are expected to remain at Alert Level 3 and 4
 - 2.2. funding for Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies to address exceptional emerging priorities associated with containing virus spread in areas of high need, such as self-isolation accommodation
 - 2.3. iwi-led response planning, communications outreach, and support for vaccine uptake particularly to Māori in more rural and isolated areas.

Relation to Government Priorities

3. This proposal supports the Government's objective to keep New Zealanders safe from COVID and its priority of taking a broader view of success by prioritising wellbeing, particularly child poverty.

Executive Summary

4. The Delta variant of COVID-19 has several differences that make it a greater health threat and a greater challenge to contain. Supporting whānau wellbeing in this context requires greater attention to spread within and between households, impacting how essential needs for whānau can be met during times of increased stress. The Whānau Ora approach actively seeks to improve outcomes within and across households by engaging with Māori and

Pacific peoples, in their neighbourhoods, communities and homes when necessary.

5. During the current alert level 4 lockdown, Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies are well-placed with their provider network to respond effectively to increased demands for urgent and immediate support as they are very effective at reaching whānau in urban centres and key Māori and Pasifika communities. They are already providing whānau with access to essential services and often reaching those whānau that other agencies struggle to reach. Funding is sought to enable this to continue.
6. Funding is also sought to support emerging priorities associated with addressing and containing virus spread. Funding for Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies and iwi will include activities to support the vaccination drive and boost up Māori vaccination rates. Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies are also able to move quickly to support exceptional activities related to the Delta variant, such as helping whānau self-isolate in circumstances where it otherwise may cause stress on household experiencing other factors like overcrowding, lack of adequate ventilation, etc.
7. This will ensure that hard to reach whānau across urban and rural isolated communities are connected to main government and community supports that are already available, and they have access to accurate and clear information. To embed this, funding is also sought to support iwi to update their pandemic plans to ensure iwi are safe, and well and connected.

Background

8. While government agencies have a wide range of support for whānau members in crisis, there is difficulty ensuring this support gets to the right whānau who often have complex and overlapping needs.

Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies have deep connections into communities, particularly with whānau in urban areas

9. In contrast to mainstream social service supports that focus on addressing individual need or responding to single issues (i.e. income, food or health), Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies and their providers work with the entire whānau holistically to identify needs, and ensure relevant support and access to reliable information is forthcoming. They work to address issues within and across households. In this way, Whānau Ora gets support to whānau effectively and efficiently in the context of crises.
10. During 2020, an initial \$15 million was secured through the COVID-19 Māori Assistance Package that supported over 226,000 whānau members, the distribution of over 207,000 emergency support packs, and enabled communications campaigns to ensure whānau had access to accurate pandemic information. Their efforts were widely acknowledged and we considered they were very effective in supporting whānau during that time.

11. An additional \$136 million over two years was then provided through Budget 2020 to support whānau to manage the impacts of COVID-19, to build whānau resilience, and to support new ways of working. This included:
 - 11.1. \$20.514 million in 2019/20 and \$32.822 million in 2020/21 (in addition to their baseline funding) for immediate COVID-19 response activities which focussed on preventing and surviving the impacts of the spread of COVID-19 (response funding)
 - 11.2. \$38.028 million in 2020/21 and \$40.028 million in 2021/22 (in addition to their baseline funding) to support whānau to build their resilience post-COVID-19. Activities to build resilience include longer-term support such as improving employment prospects for the whānau (resilience funding).¹
12. As a result, Commissioning Agencies and their providers pivoted their usual operations to support that was tailored to the needs of whānau.² A dashboard focussed on previous Whānau Ora response activities is attached at **Appendix 1**.
13. Commissioning Agencies and their providers have since shifted their focus to whānau resilience activities. This includes the Commissioning Agencies entering into contracts with providers, resulting in resilience activities such as supporting food security initiatives like māra kai, and supporting employment development opportunities through job hubs.

Iwi and hapū also have highly trusted connections into communities and access to whānau in need

14. Whānau ora Commissioning Agencies and their partner providers are particularly effective in addressing urgent and immediate needs for whānau in urban areas and in key communities. Outside of the areas where they are most effective there is a need to draw in iwi to support efforts to get services to Māori in more rural and isolated communities quickly.
15. The ability to directly connect with iwi on matters of significant importance such as the Government's COVID-19 pandemic response is also a critical success factor for ensuring that any targeted support aligns with the needs of iwi Māori. In previous lockdowns, Te Arawhiti provided direct funding of \$470,000 support to iwi to support their own COVID-19 responses, as part of the government's wider Māori COVID-19 assistance package.

Current Situation

There are increased volumes of whānau seeking support since the beginning of the current Alert Level 4

¹ The remaining \$4.6million was tagged to supporting navigator training and a review of administration arrangements.

² For example, Te Pou Matakana Whānau Direct initiative saw a significant increase in resource demand for food during COVID-19 and alert level restrictions, with 25% of investment going towards food and nutritional supplies (up from below 2% in Q4 2018).

16. Aotearoa New Zealand entered alert level four at 11:59pm on 17 Hereturikōkā 2021 following the discovery of a COVID-19 community case in Devonport, Tāmaki Makaurau. The impacts of the emergence of the COVID-19 Delta variant in New Zealand and resultant immediate Alert Level 4 measures, including more people self-isolating at home and additional restrictions in movement, have led to an increase in demand for support with food access and other essential services.
17. In response to the lift in alert levels, Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies and their providers have once again pivoted their activities and resources to support vulnerable whānau across Aotearoa during the lockdown period.³ For example, Commissioning Agencies have mobilised their provider and partner networks (comprised of over 180 providers) to redirect resources and operations to support immediate needs, including:
 - 17.1. re-establishing Rapid Response Teams to immediately respond to whānau needs
 - 17.2. supporting whānau with kai, utilities, connectivity and other necessary goods
 - 17.3. standing up support through food, church and school hubs
 - 17.4. supporting whānau to attend vaccination, testing and other health appointments
 - 17.5. redeploying staff to support vaccination and testing stations
 - 17.6. proactively contacting whānau and kaumatua on their books to check-in
 - 17.7. supporting whānau who are required to self-isolate away from their usual residence with accommodation. There is a high proportion of Pacific peoples identified as close contacts in this outbreak required to self-isolate along with their families, which is a challenge due to household size
 - 17.8. increasing communications across navigator and partner networks to keep whānau informed and up to date with important health information, and
 - 17.9. re-establishing testing sites and 0800 support lines.
18. The ability of Whānau Ora providers to respond to community need is enhanced by their connections into communities of high need due to their location and reach (**Appendix 2**). In the current lockdown, Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies are already seeing increased numbers of whānau seeking whānau ora services.
19. For example, Pasifika Futures notes that it is covering increasing demand from families for essential needs while they are self-isolating and there is pressure for them to increase accessibility to emergency housing. Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu received 189 new applications for essential good grants on day 1 of Alert Level 4 lockdown. The number of applications has consistently and significantly increased, with 689 new applications received on day 11 of Alert

³ Whānau Ora has coverage across the motu, but operates within resourcing constraints which may mean coverage and available support is variable between particular localities.

Level 4 lockdown. The majority of requests (96%) have been for kai with whānau stating less family income or income uncertainty as the primary reason for needing support.

20. Iwi and hapū, have also mobilised to help connect whānau to government supports such as the wage subsidies and vaccination services. We are, however, hearing from iwi that the Delta variant is necessitating more serious and extensive activities, and that their ongoing pandemic planning requires updating to, for example, allow iwi to anticipate regional lockdowns, quick changes to alert levels, and so on.

Additional funding will ensure Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies can continue to meet the immediate needs of whānau arising from the current lockdown

21. Additional funding is needed to support the work of Whānau Ora providers with whānau that are currently not or only partially supported by mainstream community-based providers. Ensuring these whānau remain engaged with Whānau Ora providers and navigators is critical to ensuring their access to mainstream services (such as foodbanks), ensuring whānau are safe and connected including mental health supports, and seeking and utilising vaccination services.
22. Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies receive devolved funding to address the needs of whānau they support. Te Puni Kōkiri has no ability to reprioritise funding allocated to Commissioning Agencies as contracts are already in place and Te Puni Kōkiri has limited resourcing available to reprioritise within the broader appropriation. The cost structure of Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies also leaves minimal discretionary funding available to fund an emergency package necessary to respond to the immediate needs of whānau during the current lockdown.
23. We are aware that Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies have already exhausted the majority of their response funding, and prior to this lockdown, had also committed the majority of their resilience funding into contracts with providers for a wide range of initiatives. Nonetheless, Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies have sought to reprioritise from their remaining resilience funding to cover the immediate needs of whānau. In doing so, however, this will diminish the ability of the Commissioning Agencies to maintain their existing contracts for resilience activities, resulting in the removal of the services currently being received by whānau.
24. Whānau Ora is appropriated \$149.25m through Vote Māori Development. \$136.087m of this is committed to the three national Commissioning Agencies. The remaining \$13.163m is committed to other contracted Whānau Ora initiatives, including Paiheretia Te Muka Tangata, Localised Commissioning and data and analytics. There is presently no funding available for reprioritisation within the Whānau Ora appropriation.
25. To fund the level of investment required for Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies from other Vote Māori Development appropriations would require reprioritisation from government priorities that received recent Budget funding, namely Māori Housing. Therefore, a material response cannot be funded from

within the Vote Māori Development baseline without significant reductions to funding for priority areas and deliverables.

Despite a huge surge in vaccination uptake since day two of Alert Level 4, vaccination coverage for Māori and Pacific peoples requires additional targeted investment

26. Māori overall rates of vaccination remain lower than all other population groups, and as last reported, remain below 30% (i.e. 293 people per 1,000, compared with 447 per 1,000 for the total adult population). Some, but not all, of this disparity relates to the younger median age of Māori adults which means fewer Māori have been eligible for earlier vaccination cycles. All those aged over 12 years old will be eligible for vaccinations from this week and there will need to be additional effort required from Māori communities to quickly lift rates.
27. In the Cabinet paper last week, *Progress of the COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunisation Programme roll-out*, the Minister for COVID-19 Response noted that Te Puni Kōkiri and Te Arawhiti are working closely with the Ministry of Health on the vaccination programme and will develop a funding package directed at targeted communication and intervention strategies for the vaccination rollout progresses, including via Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies.
28. Since that time Whānau Ora navigators have been sought to support the vaccine rollout and propel increased uptake by Māori through local Māori health leadership. The approach Whānau Ora navigators are taking builds on the resources, knowledge, skills and resilience of Māori communities, and on existing relationships with local Māori health leadership.
29. Key activities and infrastructure to support vaccination rollout and uptake include:
 - 29.1. establishing and supporting mobile and pop-up vaccination sites
 - 29.2. providing wrap-around support to whānau at vaccination sites to ensure their holistic needs are understood and met
 - 29.3. supporting whānau to access vaccinations by helping them book their appointments and transportation to and from appointments
 - 29.4. delivering kai and water to whānau as they wait in queues for their vaccinations, and;
 - 29.5. communication campaigns and activities that keep whānau informed and encourage vaccination uptake.
30. Additional funding from the COVID-19 Response and Resilience Fund for Whānau Ora to respond to the current COVID-19 resurgence will also fund ongoing vaccination support proffered by the Commissioning Agencies and their providers. Any additional targeted support, beyond the current whānau-centred holistic support, that may be required from Whānau Ora

Commissioning Agencies or providers for the vaccination effort is more appropriately funded by the Ministry of Health.

31. The Ministry of Health is also reporting to COVID-19 Ministers to seek additional funding for community-based vaccination activity in line with the public health response. Their focus is to ensure that Pacific health providers, especially in Auckland and Wellington, have the continued capability to sustain public service responses, and provide an enhanced level of support including Pacific ethnic group specific services and communications. Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies are an important support for that work, providing aiga and whānau with wrap around supports including navigation to these and general government service delivery.

Iwi outreach points to funding gaps for communications and refreshed pandemic response plans, and signals ability to support the vaccine roll-out

32. In 2020, Te Arawhiti received 61 applications for funding to support iwi COVID-19 pandemic responses and provided funding to 43 of those applications, exhausting the \$470,000 fund. The funded groups were generally allocated between \$5,000 and \$10,000 per application. Allocations to collectives were generally higher.
33. In the current lockdown, Te Arawhiti stood up an immediate network for iwi engagement. The mechanisms for engagement involved daily phone check-ins across 15-20 iwi; weekly calls with iwi, urban authorities and marae chairs from the Auckland region; weekly calls with the 75 iwi who are members of the National Iwi Chairs forum and the 40 or so iwi who are not affiliated.
34. Through this engagement they are hearing that iwi require funding to support their connections to whānau in need. In particular, iwi seek to stay in regular contact with individual whānau, especially those with high needs, as well as to ensure the wider community has access to clear health and other messaging from a trusted authority.
35. Communications is an area where iwi can play a critical role by leveraging their strong community networks, ensuring people are able to access information in a culturally appropriate and trustworthy way. While the government has a strong national communications approach, we do not have the capacity to provide outreach support to individual whānau or the capability to tailor messaging to distinct Māori communities. In the context of the current lockdowns, iwi communications could play an especially important role in encouraging and facilitating vaccine uptake, that builds on the work that has already commenced through Te Puni Kōkiri and the Ministry of Health, linking to and utilising the Karawhina collateral wherever possible.
36. There is also a need for iwi to review and update their iwi pandemic response plans to reflect the current situation and the Delta strain complexities. This will likely require the procurement of specialist advice and support.

Funding for iwi would focus on responding to the Delta resurgence, developing flexible response plans, and supporting vaccination rollout

37. Additional funding to iwi would support the following initiatives;

Activity	Initiatives
Response planning	Producing or updating iwi COVID-19 response plans, including procuring specialist advice
Communications outreach	Developing bespoke communications material Website updates Manning phones for ring-arounds etc. Establishing 0800 phone numbers
Supporting vaccine uptake	Developing bespoke communications material Outreach to encourage and facilitate vaccinations Organising vaccination logistics

38. Te Arawhiti has advised it may be able to manage the administration of this funding from baselines, but would not be able to provide the funding itself from baselines without undermining existing work programmes.

Proposals

39. It is proposed that funding be allocated to support Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies to continue to address community emergency needs and support emerging priorities associated with addressing and containing virus spread, particularly in Māori and Pasifika communities.

40. It also proposes funding for Te Arawhiti to distribute to iwi to support them to plan and connect their efforts with government systems more effectively, ensuring they can access necessary supports for their people.

Funding for Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies

41. A total of \$24.832m additional funding for one month is sought for Whānau Ora, to be administered by Te Puni Kōkiri.

Activity description	Funding	Allocation
COVID-19 immediate response activities (Week 1 – 2)	\$8.816m	Standard base allocation model
COVID-19 immediate response activities (Week 3 – 4)	\$8.816m	Managed by Te Puni Kōkiri and allocated based on need (locations and populations most impacted by alert level changes, as well as ongoing support for the vaccination rollout).
Exceptional support requirements (e.g. self-isolation accommodation)	\$5.40m	Managed by Te Puni Kōkiri and allocated based on need (locations and populations most impacted by the COVID-19 resurgence and requiring exceptional support, such as meeting self-isolation requirements)

Immediate response activities

42. The COVID-19 immediate response activities costing is based on a cost of \$4,500 per whānau (increased from \$4,000 per whānau in 2020 to reflect navigator salary costs, and increased whānau needs associated with the Delta variant) plus 5% for establishment and initial logistics. It also accounts for an expected 25% increase in engagement, reaching up to an additional 8,956

whānau. Requests have been made from Commissioning Agencies that align with this amount.

43. Under the Whānau Ora approach, support needs are determined by the needs of whānau themselves, so there is some flexibility in how the funding will be applied to address whānau needs. Based on early reports from Whānau Ora providers, funding is likely to be needed for kai, power, data, hygiene packs, mental health support, but also wraparound support for whānau accessing multiple services.

Distribution approach

44. Te Puni Kōkiri proposes that funding is distributed to support a national Whānau Ora response during Alert levels four and three, because we must be guided by the public health response while being responsive to communities' needs during periods where New Zealand is at higher Alert levels. The initial two weeks additional funding would be allocated using the existing allocation method to Commissioning Agencies as follows:

Commissioning agency	Funding amount ⁴	Allocation percentage
Te Pou Matakana	\$4.010m	45.49%
Pasifika Futures	\$2.934m	33.28%
Te Pūtahitanga o te Waipounamu	\$1.872m	21.23%

45. We anticipate that a further two weeks of response funding will be required, but that it will need to be targeted towards the areas of greatest need should the Government determine varying alert levels across the motu. This is based on the contagious nature of the Delta variant, the time required by other countries to eliminate it and that some psycho-social issues (such as mental health of children) are likely to manifest after lockdown, as happened during 2020.

46. Activities that this funding will cover would include:

- 46.1. supporting individual whānau members to self-isolate where they are considered a contact of an active case
- 46.2. funding the growing demand for necessary goods including food vouchers, utilities and connectivity
- 46.3. sustaining Rapid Response Teams to attend to or deliver support to whānau in kind and/or in substance

⁴ For the purposes of this paper, figures are rounded to the nearest \$0.001 million.

- 46.4. obtaining PPE equipment for frontline staff and whānau, given new COVID-19 guidance for whānau
 - 46.5. supporting COVID-19 testing, including supporting whānau with access and transport issues
 - 46.6. supporting whānau with the delivery of education packs, entertainment packs and/or devices to support remote connectivity, education and work
 - 46.7. proactively engaging with whānau while also supporting increased numbers of whānau engagement
 - 46.8. identifying and providing support for the long-term needs of whānau particularly in the areas of mental health, education and general health
 - 46.9. supporting whānau to access vaccinations by providing transport and access to information, providing wrap-around support to whānau at vaccination sites, and communication campaigns and activities that keep whānau informed and encourage vaccination uptake
 - 46.10. identifying new tailored support pathways for whānau including more effective use of the unregulated workforce, and
 - 46.11. increasing connections and the interface across social and health service systems to ensure the holistic needs of whānau are being met by leveraging existing governmental support more effectively.
47. On this basis, Te Puni Kōkiri seeks flexibility in the allocation of the second two-week tranche of funding, to depart from the standard base allocation model for the distribution of Whānau Ora funds, and enable targeting of this funding to areas with the greatest need.

Emerging community needs due to the Delta variant

48. In communities experiencing higher infection rates in the current resurgence, there are emerging impacts on whānau that reflect the greater threat the Delta variant has to whānau health and the greater challenge for containment. The Pasifika community, for example, has raised the issue of support for Pacific people who need to self-isolate while waiting for COVID-19 test results. While there may be a range of strategies required on the ground to support whānau, immediate support is needed for those whose living situations make self-isolation difficult due to overcrowded homes and/or multi-generation occupancy.
49. Pasifika Futures is currently able to provide 40 spaces for whānau needing to self-isolate, a combination of hotel and motel arrangements. This support, combined with other facilities, is considered sufficient to cover the current need. If the outbreak continues as predicted, a scale up of accommodation support and associated funding will be required. Pasifika Futures has the ability to scale up their support, and is best placed to do so as they have the reach into the community and are an existing provider of both the

accommodation support and the wrap-around support essential to those required to self-isolate.

50. The self-isolation accommodation costing is based on supporting up to 900 spaces in emergency accommodation at an average cost of \$3,000 per person, including wrap around support for a 14-day period.
51. Te Puni Kōkiri seeks flexibility in the allocation of funding for exceptional emergency needs, such as self-isolation, that may arise in the course of the current COVID-19 resurgence, departing from the standard base allocation model for the distribution of Whānau Ora funds and enable targeting of this funding to areas and Commissioning Agencies with the greatest need.
52. The Ministry for Pacific Peoples strongly supports Pasifika Futures request for additional funding as the Pasifika community has higher numbers infected and Pacific people are overrepresented in housing that is overcrowded and there are substandard living conditions.

Funding for iwi communications, response plans, and vaccination support

53. \$1 million, appropriated into Vote Te Arawhiti, is sought for iwi-led response planning, communications outreach, and support for vaccine uptake. This reflects an average disbursement of \$20,000, and a similar level of interest as in 2020 (40-60 iwi groups).
54. To distribute this funding, Te Arawhiti will take the following steps:
 - 54.1. iwi submit funding proposals based on a provided template, and Te Arawhiti assesses and collates the proposals;
 - 54.2. Minister for Māori Crown Relations delegated authority to approve funding disbursements on the basis of Te Arawhiti advice.
55. The primary assessment criteria will be whether iwi have demonstrated that they have a coherent plan for deploying the funding to the prescribed activities.
56. We propose disbursements of \$10,000 to \$30,000 to each iwi, based primarily on size and need. This is comparable to the amounts provided in March 2020, and will allow iwi to undertake meaningful outreach, both to individual whānau and to the wider community.
57. As with last year, Te Arawhiti will encourage iwi to collaborate and coordinate their responses, including through iwi collectives.

Consultation

58. This paper was developed with input from Te Arawhiti and the Ministry of Pacific Peoples.
59. This proposal, and the ongoing need for collaboration between Whānau Ora and mainstream services, has been discussed with the Ministry of Social

Development, with support from the Ministry of Health and the Treasury. The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet has been informed.

Financial Implications

60. Agreement is sought to provide funding to support the work of Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies and Te Arawhiti, with funding being drawn down from the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund (CRRF) established as part of Budget 2020.
61. While additional funding does not impact overall demand for Whānau Ora services (i.e. there are no implications for baseline funding), based on 2020 experience we expect whānau will have additional support needs in the recovery phase, not just immediate response. It is also noted that, to respond quickly and effectively to the current COVID-19 resurgence, Commissioning Agencies have already had to reprioritise some of their funding for other activities, including for supporting whānau resilience. Building on the strengths of the Whānau Ora approach may also be considered through Budget 2022 discussions.

Legislative Implications

62. There are no legislative implications.

Regulatory Impact Statement

63. A Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) has not been prepared as there are no legislative implications.

Human Rights

64. There are no human rights implications.

Population Implications

65. Extending support from Whānau Ora to cover more families will help offset demand and complement mainstream services. While Māori are not visible in current positive COVID-19 cases, low vaccination coverage for Māori means Māori communities have a higher potential to become infected as case numbers spread. In addition, the restrictions on movement in Alert levels 4 and 3 will affect some people's ability to work and earn, as well as access food and cope with whānau living together for extended periods. It is also known that Māori disproportionately experience family and sexual violence, which may be exacerbated by lockdown.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi Implications

66. The Government is obligated, as the governing body of Aotearoa, to ensure provision and protection factors of its citizens are met. This proposal supports government's kāwanatanga obligations to enable all citizens to receive essential services, and recognises the additional needs to vulnerable

population groups (i.e., Māori and Pacific citizens). Meeting the additional needs of Māori citizens will likely enable greater outcomes for Māori.

67. Kaupapa Māori approaches to meeting whānau needs under Alert Levels 4 and 3 have a significant role to play in supporting tino rangatiratanga through the ability for citizens and their family and whānau to self-manage, care for, and protect their themselves and households. The greater control Whānau Ora gives whānau over their own lives enhances the rangatiratanga of whānau, allowing them to determine their needs over Alert Levels 4 and 3.
68. Evidence supports the effectiveness of responses led by Māori for Māori in promoting social wellbeing for Māori. In particular, Māori mobilisation and collective self-responsibility have been identified as largely responsible for low rates of COVID-19 transmission within the Māori communities, supporting the Government's equity and ōritetanga obligations.

Publicity

69. Should this proposal be agreed, a joint Minister for Whānau Ora and Minister for Māori Crown Relations press release will be developed to highlight the increased funding to support Whānau Ora and iwi over the next 4 weeks, during the current lockdown.

Proactive Release

70. Subject to Cabinet approval, please note our intention to release this Cabinet paper on the Te Puni Kōkiri website within 30 working days of Cabinet approval.

Recommendations

The Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti and te Minita mō Whānau Ora recommends that the Committee:

1. **note** that the impacts of the COVID-19 Delta variant in New Zealand and resultant Alert Level 4 measures are creating new challenges for access to food and essential services, and require more intensive responses to maintain whānau wellbeing;
2. **note** that Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies are in the process of reprioritising any uncommitted funding, including any remaining resilience funding received in Budget 20, to cover the immediate needs of whānau
3. **note** that at the time of the COVID-19 resurgence, most Whānau Ora commissioning agency funding was already committed through contracting and ongoing recovery and resilience supports through Whānau Ora will be necessary as alert levels are lowered;
4. **note** that responding early to meet specific community needs aligns with the Government's objectives to keep New Zealander's safe from COVID-19 and priority to take broader approach to success based on wellbeing;

5. **agree** to provide funding to support the work of Whānau Ora providers, meeting the increased community need for support and services, including accessing vaccinations, in response to the emergence of the COVID-19 Delta variant for four weeks;
6. **agree** that the second two-week allocation of funding in recommendation 5 depart from the standard base allocation model for the distribution of Whānau Ora funds and instead target areas with the greatest need;
7. **agree** to provide funding for Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies to undertake activities as a result of emerging priorities associated with containing virus spread, such as self-isolation accommodation;
8. **approve** the following changes to appropriations to give effect to the policy decision in recommendations 5 to 7 above, with the following impacts on the operating balance and net core Crown debt:

	\$m – increase/(decrease)				
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26 & outyears
Vote Māori Development Minister for Māori Development Non-Departmental Output Expense:					
Whakamahi i ngā Huanga a Whānau Ora Commissioning Whanau Ora Outcomes	23.032	-	-	-	-
Total Operating	23.032	-	-	-	-

9. **agree** to provide funding for iwi-led response planning, communications outreach, and support for vaccine uptake;
10. **agree** to establish the following new appropriation:

Vote	Appropriation Minister	Title	Type	Scope
Te Arawhiti	Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti	Support for iwi COVID-19 responses	Non-Departmental Output Expense	This appropriation is limited to the provision of funding to iwi and other Māori groups to support their responses to the COVID-19 pandemic

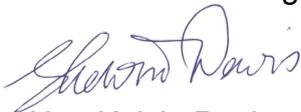
11. **approve** the following changes to appropriations to give effect to the policy decision in recommendation 9 above, with the following impacts on the operating balance and net core Crown debt;

	\$m – increase/(decrease)				
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26 & outyears
Vote Te Arawhiti Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti Non-Departmental Output Expense:					
	1.000				

Support for iwi COVID-19 responses					
Total Operating	1.000	-	-	-	-

12. **agree** that the proposed changes to appropriations for 2021/22 above be included in the 2021/22 Supplementary Estimates and that, in the interim, the increases be met from Imprest Supply;
13. **agree** that the expenses incurred under recommendations 8 and 11 above be charged against the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund (CRRF) established as part of Budget 2020.

Authorised for lodgement



Hon Kelvin Davis
Minister for Crown Māori Relations
30 / 08 / 2021



Hon Peeni Henare
Te Minita mō Whānau Ora
30 / 08 / 2021

RELEASED BY THE MINISTER
FOR WHĀNAU ORA



Te Puni Kōkiri
MINISTRY OF MĀORI DEVELOPMENT

Whānau Ora COVID-19 Response

As at 30 June 2021

\$136m
over two years

The Whānau Ora model, with its ability to provide rapid, wraparound support and to flex as whānau needs and aspirations change, was a key feature of the government's response since the onset of COVID-19.

Commissioning Agencies pivoted their operations and activities, redeployed their staff and hired additional staff to ensure they could effectively respond to whānau needs.

COVID-19 IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

\$20.514M IN FY19/20
\$32.822M IN FY20/21



COVID-19 immediate response activities:

- Increased funding for general commissioning activities to meet increased demand. These activities included navigator support (additional navigators recruited) and funding providers, many of which are social service and health providers trusted within Māori and Pasifika communities. For example, Te Pou Matakana (trading as the Whānau Ora Commissioning Agency) increased available funds for their Whānau Direct programme which enabled partners to provide financial assistance to whānau to meet urgent needs arising from COVID-19 restrictions.
- Established COVID-19 testing stations, 0800 support lines, and food hubs.
- Provided essential resources including kai, utilities, connectivity and PPE. For example, Te Pūtahitanga o te Waipounamu brokered and facilitated support between whānau with service providers including 16 electricity, 5 phone and internet and 4 food distribution providers.
- Supported whānau to access critical services including health appointments and housing.
- Supported accommodation for whānau who were referred to quarantine facilities. For example, Pasifika Futures provided beds for those living in over-crowded housing, or similar conditions, and needing to self-isolate. They also provided support for displaced people from 8 Pacific communities who were unable to return home over the lockdown period.
- Communication campaigns which kept their communities informed with consistent and accurate public health information and encouraged connectedness and improved wellbeing.



Whānau Supported
160,000+

*This support ranged from the provision of support packages to meaningful navigator support



Whānau Members Supported
326,000+



Support packs provided
260,000+



Essential resource payments
11,900

COVID-19 RESILIENCE

\$38.028M IN FY20/21
\$40.028M IN FY21/22

COVID-19 resilience activities:

- Community innovation funds that enable community providers to provide tailor-made support to meet medium to long-term whānau needs including food security and pastoral care and support into employment
- Mental health initiatives such as mauri ora wānanga, hauora sessions and one-to-one counselling.
- Sports, digital and employment strategies and initiatives that aim to support connectivity, upskilling and hauora.

Appendix 2: Location of Whānau Ora providers and deprivation index information, Tāmaki Makaurau area

