

KA PIKI TE WAI KA HEKE TE UA KA PUTA TE PUNA HEI RONGOĀ

The mists ascend to the heavens, the rains fall from the clouds, a spring appears and becomes sustenance for all.

President's Report 2013

Well that year has gone quickly! It doesn't feel that long ago when I was nominated to fill the position that had for so long been well looked after by Leanne. Feeling very inadequate (and still feeling so now), I accepted the nomination and now can't believe a year has already passed. While I still struggle at times to fulfill the role I am slowly finding my feet.

This year is a special year for us. Ngā Kaitiaki o Te Puna Rongoā o Aotearoa - The Māori Pharmacists' Association (MPA) as an organisation now celebrates 10 years since the meeting of those few Maori pharmacists in Wellington, 2003. Leanne, Arthur and other founding members have done so much groundwork to bring us to where we are today and for that we must be truly grateful. The support now that can be provided to our students, interns and new pharmacists is fantastic. The opportunities to be involved and exert influence at strategic levels nationally have come about because of the work they have put into building relationships of trust during those tough early years, even when support for such an organisation was hard to find. Their work has provided the way for many good relationships to blossom internally within MPA and externally with other organisations and their leaders. It has helped and enabled us as members to feel supported in the roles we have within the pharmacy sector and given us confidence in the sector as Māori and as an association; all thanks to the great work that has been done by those founding members who started with an idea back in 2003. It is now upon us to continue this legacy that has been left and push forward to help our organisation grow and thrive.

While our sector continues to reflect Te Ao Hurihuri with all that is happening around us now in 2013, MPA can feel secure and steadfast as we continue to be guided by the moemoeā of those who founded our association:

"To lead Māori responsiveness in the pharmacy sector".



As we each bring our baskets of knowledge and skill to the roopu, let us reflect gratefully on that which we have been blessed with. As we then combine our efforts with the knowledge and skills we hold as a collective, we will come even closer to achieving our vision and will gain more confidence in leading Māori responsiveness in the sector.

"Ma whero ma pango ka oti ai te mahi"

With red and black the work will be complete

We are certainly grateful and must acknowledge the work that is done by those of the executive and members who give of their time, talents and service to further the work. We are grateful for your sacrifice. Pauline must be acknowledged for all the work that she does behind the scenes that many of us do not know about and that I have only been learning about this year. She has certainly been a blessing to me this year transitioning into the role as President. We are also sincerely grateful for Darryn who has and continues to play significant roles in supporting MPA and our vision, many times without remuneration. Dee is another who has also been a pillar of strength and helped carry us in our journey.

This year we've also welcomed some of the newer pharmacists of our roopu on to the executive and we want to thank Danielle and Nora-Jayne for their involvement and stepping up to the plate so to speak. We've also had Anna and Jo take on new roles as Vice President and Treasurer respectively and are thankful for their work over the past year in these roles.

We are indeed grateful for any and all help and support that you as members have contributed to MPA whether great or small. As we continue to all contribute in whatever way we can, MPA will continue to grow and thrive even in the current conditions and enable us to then help those of our whānau throughout the motu.

"Nā tō rourou, nā taku rourou, ka ora ai te iwi"

With your basket and my basket the people will thrive

Achievements and Involvement

I feel it would be good to give a brief outline of key things we have been involved in over the past year that have contributed to the overall mission and moemoeā of MPA. It is not my intention to report on everything that we have done in this report but rather outline some key items we have been involved in as an association.



- The student hui was a great success again and we look forward to the one this year to be held in Auckland. Abbie, Mark and Jade and others that supported them in organizing the hui down in Dunedin must be congratulated for a well run student hui that enabled positive relationships to blossom.
- We continue to be involved in mentoring our students in both schools of pharmacy. We are pleased to also congratulate Andy, Aleshia, Anstey, Jade and Abbie who have successfully graduated and are now in their internship placements.
- Leanne and Arthur continue to be involved with Otago and Auckland Universities as liaisons for MPA and meet with the Schools of Pharmacy and Board of studies as well as attend student events including the white coat ceremony that has become a regular feature in Dunedin.
- At a strategic level we are involved in the Heads of Schools and Professional Organisations of Pharmacy (HOSPOP) hui which enable us to have some influence on what the schools are doing and how they support our tauira. Leanne and I were able to attend a hui in Wellington to discuss the curriculum for pharmacy schools and subsequent to that Leanne and Darryn were also able to influence the curriculum of Australian Pharmacy Schools as they were invited over to participate in workshops there! Ka rawe!
- Cultural competence workshops are another way we have been involved in supporting our members and leading the sector. Darryn and Leanne continue to facilitate the best cultural competence workshops available in the pharmacy sector (only ones running workshops who are Māori AND pharmacists), and are having great success with them and thankful participants! The level at which these are run far exceeds anything else in the market. Their commitment and dedication must be acknowledged and indeed we are grateful they are part of us!
- Attendance and participation in various hui throughout the year such as HOSPOP, Pharmacy Board of Studies, Pharmacy Reference Group for the Implementation of the Strategy for Māori Health (PRISM), Pharmacy Industry Training Organisation (PITO) and other informal meetings with lecturers, tutors and students. PRISM is still the only forum where all stakeholders in pharmacy meet regularly so I feel it is important to continue to be involved in these to be seen by the other members of these organisations, and reinforce the fact that we can and do make valuable contributions to the sector.
- Leanne was also involved in the Pacific Region Indigenous Doctors' Congress Conference (PRIDOC) this year, is part of the Rheumatic Fever Committee and still visits marae around the country regularly as part of He Rongoā Pai He Oranga Whānau with PHARMAC.



- Were invited to meet with Pharmacy Council in August 2012 to develop our relationship with them and let them know what we are doing and find out more about what they are doing. Anna Kyle was also able to attend this as VP so it was good that the council could meet the new leadership and vice versa.
- MPDS funding hui as well as participation in the Hauora Māori Health Scholarships hui. We were successful again in getting some funding from MPDS to go towards the costs of various hui and other activities that we are involved in. The Hauora Māori Health Scholarships hui give us the opportunity to have a say in how that funding is distributed.
- Applied for Te Ao Auahatanga Innovation funding (were unsuccessful). Considerable time and resource was put into this initiative however, it could still be used for the upcoming MPDS application.
- Externally facilitated strategy / business review and planning meeting was held April 2012 for the entire executive to attend. This was a great chance for us to introduce the new executive members, realize how far MPA has come and to discuss the way forward. We've also had a follow up executive hui in person in October along with regular teleconference hui.

A way forward

The challenge now for us is building up from the foundations that have been set. We need to now rally together and bring whatever skills, talents and abilities we have to the building up of our roopu over the next 10 years and beyond. There is something that we all can do; something each one of us can contribute. The question is what will you personally do to help us achieve our vision. If we all just lift where we stand we can raise the bar and provide a better health and wellbeing for our whānau, te iwi Māori throughout Aotearoa.

We need to continue to build solid relationships nationally and particularly with other Māori health professionals to work together to improve the overall health of our people. Why should we restrict ourselves to the system that has been set up by others?

Perhaps our tupuna put in place a system for health when they talked of people being the most important thing in the world – relationships with each other and with Papatuanuku being crucial to our obtaining optimal health. When we put people first health will improve. When people become more important than funding, bureaucracy, disease states, and systems we will move closer to achieving real health. Sadly the current system has not supported us well as Māori. Time has shown that to us.



Our people have gone from being described by Weston A Price (a visiting health professional who studied numerous indigenous peoples) as the most physically perfect race on earth in his book *Nutrition and Physical Degeneration* printed in the 1930s to where we are today – some of the highest rates of diabetes, cancer, and heart disease to name a few. In the past people have focused on the negative but times have changed. It seems there is a huge movement now across the board towards reclaiming that health, knowledge and mana we once held as Maori, and in more aspects than just physical health. It is the dawning of a new day.

I suggest that part of the movement includes a reconnection. A reconnection with Papatuanuku and reclaiming the gift of health that she has always offered us. Back to the whenua to plant, grow and eat our own food. This movement may also include reconnecting with extended whānau in both directions of our genealogical lines. It may mean finding and reconnecting with our spiritual selves to find the balance and interconnection between hinengaro, wairua, whānau with tinana in a way that others are only now rediscovering. It may also mean a reconnection with each other as a people. It seems ironic that in the age of connectivity with everything at the touch or swipe of a smart phone, people can have a thousand friends on facebook and still be lonely and crying out inside for help from friends, neighbours and whānau. It seems we've become so disconnected. Disconnected from the whenua, from each other and from the other aspects of who we are as a people.

What can be done? It requires the willingness of us all to start with ourselves. Surely in order to encourage others to be healthy and whole, we first must be the example. Reconnecting with and learning about our tupuna will give us a stronger sense of identity and the confidence to be more and to do more. Reconnecting with extended whānau and understanding more the interconnection between wairua, hinengaro, and tinana within ourselves will empower us to live more authentically. Once we are on the path ourselves it will naturally be shared with others around us in our whānau, when they are ready and in a way that empowers them. It will grow organically from there as the influence of improved health spreads from person to person, whānau to whānau in the way that has served our people for so long – kanohi ki te kanohi, wairua to wairua. Let's be examples of health to all those around us, connect with the source of health and show through our actions that true health is attainable for all.

He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata, he tangata, he tangata. What is the most important thing of this world? It is people, it is people, it is people.

No reira, tēnei te mihi aroha ki a koutou, koutou mā, te whānau o Ngā Kaitiaki o Te Puna Rongoā o Aotearoa. Kei te mihi, kei te mihi, kei te mihi.

Wiremu Matthews