

Te Hiringa Mahara Transparency Statement

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1. Introduction

Te Hiringa Mahara exists to contribute to better and equitable mental health and wellbeing outcomes for people in New Zealand.

We engage with a wide range of stakeholders and collect and publish information as we perform our role, including assessing, monitoring and advocacy.

This Transparency Policy outlines our approach to the collection and publication of information. This policy should be read in association with our Privacy and Security Policy ([link](#)).

Te Hiringa Mahara – Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission is established by the Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission Act 2020 (the Act). The Act establishes Te Hiringa Mahara’s mandate and responsibilities, including key provisions related to our publication practices.

Te Hiringa Mahara’s functions are broad – including to assess and report publicly on the mental health and wellbeing of the people of New Zealand, on factors that affect the mental health and wellbeing of the people of New Zealand, and on the effectiveness, efficiency and adequacy of approaches to mental health and wellbeing.

Our functions further include making recommendations to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and adequacy of approaches to mental health and wellbeing, to monitor services and advocate improvements to services, to promote alignment, collaboration and communication between entities involved in mental health and wellbeing, and to advocate for the collective interests of people who experience mental distress or addiction (or both) and persons (including family and whānau) who support them.

The Commission has the power to publicly report on any matters concerning the mental health and wellbeing of people in New Zealand, to make recommendations to any person (including any Minister) on any matters concerning mental health and wellbeing, and to obtain information.

1.1 Use of information supports our purpose and functions

Our use of information and publication practices support the achievement of our statutory purpose and functions. We believe that by sharing information openly, we can contribute to better and more equitable mental health and wellbeing outcomes for all people in New Zealand.

In the following sections, we will detail our power to gather information, publication practices, how the public can access our published information, our engagement practices, our use of social media, and how to contact us for further information.

2. Power of Te Hiringa Mahara to gather information

Te Hiringa Mahara may request certain entities to supply to the Commission any information that is necessary or desirable to enable the Commission to perform its functions. Such entities include most government departments and crown entities, as listed in section 14(6) of the Act.

The Act provides that Te Hiringa Mahara must not request, and an entity must not supply, information that is:

- a) Personal information as defined in section 2(1) of the Privacy Act 1993; or
- b) Information held by the Government Statistician that was collected under the Data and Statistics Act 2022; or
- c) Information that a revenue officer must keep confidential under section 18 of the Tax Administration Act 1994.

Te Hiringa Mahara has rigorous approval processes in place to ensure that all requests made pursuant to these powers are consistent with the Act.

Some personal information is provided to us by the public and stakeholders as they engage with us, or when using our website. Please refer to our Privacy and Security policy ([link](#)) to see how we protect personal information.

3. Publication Practices

Te Hiringa Mahara is committed to providing accurate, timely, and relevant information to the public and our stakeholders. Our publication practices are designed to support this commitment.

3.1 Types of Information We Publish

We independently monitor, assess, report and share findings on mental health and addiction services and approaches that support people's mental health and wellbeing in Aotearoa.

We publish a wide range of information, including but not limited to, reports on the mental health and wellbeing of people in New Zealand, factors affecting mental

health and wellbeing, and the effectiveness of approaches to mental health and wellbeing. We also publish calls to action and recommendations for improving these approaches, updates on our advocacy work, and information about our engagement with the sector. We do not publish personal identifying information in our public reports. Case studies where used are anonymised.

Recent examples of our reporting include our He Ara Āwhina Framework, He Ara Āwhina dashboard, and Te Huringa (our mental health and addiction service monitoring reports). See Te Huringa Tuarua: Mental Health and Addiction Service Monitoring Reports 2023 ([Te Huringa \(Mental health and addiction service monitoring\) | Te Huringa Mahara—Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission \(mhwc.govt.nz\)](#)).

The Act provides that Te Huringa Mahara must not publish or disclose information obtained under our information gathering powers unless one or more of the following apply:

- a) The information is available to the public under any enactment or is otherwise publicly available
- b) The information is in a statistical or summary form
- c) The publication or disclosure is with the consent of the entity from which the information was obtained
- d) The publication or disclosure is made under the Official Information Act 1982 or is otherwise required by law.

We have rigorous review and approval processes in place to ensure that these, and other relevant legislative requirements, are complied with.

3.2 Publication Platforms

Our primary platform for publication is the Te Huringa Mahara website. Here, we make available our reports, recommendations, updates, and other relevant information. We also use social media platforms and other digital communication tools to share updates and engage with the public.

3.3 Frequency of Publication

The frequency of our publications varies depending on the type of information. Some information, such as reports and updates on our work, are published as they become available. Other types of information, such as recommendations and advocacy updates, are published on an ongoing basis.

3.4 Accuracy and Reliability

We strive to ensure that all information we publish is accurate, reliable, and up to date. Before publication, all information undergoes a rigorous review and approval process. We regularly review and update our published information to ensure it remains current and useful.

4. Access to Published Information

Te Hiringa Mahara is committed to ensuring that our published information is easily accessible to all.

Our website and other digital platforms are designed to be accessible and comply with New Zealand's Web Accessibility Standards. If you have any issues accessing our information, please contact us, and we will endeavour to provide the information in a format that meets your needs.

4.1 Social Media Access

We also share updates and engage with the public through our social media platforms. These platforms allow us to disseminate information quickly and engage in real-time with our followers. We encourage the public to follow our social media accounts for the latest updates and opportunities for engagement. See Section 6 of this policy for further information about our social media practices.

4.2 Request for Information

If you cannot find the information you are looking for on our website or social media platforms, you can request it directly from us.

5. Engagement Practices

Te Hiringa Mahara values the perspectives and insights of our stakeholders.

5.1 Stakeholder Engagement

We are committed to being a genuine, courageous and effective advocate for communities with lived experience of mental distress and addiction.

In performing our functions and exercising our powers we use a range of means so we can effectively seek the views of

- a) Māori,
- b) people who share a common identity, experience, or stage in life that increases the risk that they will experience poor mental health and wellbeing. The Act includes the following groups – Māori, Pacific peoples, refugees and migrants, rainbow communities, rural communities, disabled people, veterans, prisoners, young people, older people, children experiencing adverse childhood events, children in state care,
- c) People who have experienced mental distress, and the persons (including family and whanau) who support them,
- d) People who have experienced addiction, and the persons (including family and whanau) who support them,
- e) Any other group we consider may help us to meet our objective.

Our engagement with stakeholders may involve hui, meetings, workshops, conferences, and other collaborative activities. We are committed to ensuring our engagement practices are inclusive and respectful. We strive to create safe and welcoming spaces where all voices can be heard.

5.2 Public Consultations

We regularly conduct public consultations to gather views on various aspects of mental health and wellbeing. These consultations may take the form of surveys, hui, public meetings, focus groups, or online forums. We encourage all interested parties to participate in these consultations to help inform our work. For current consultations see the following link to Whai kupu atu – Have your say: [Have your say | Te Hiringa Mahara—Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission \(mhwc.govt.nz\)](https://www.mhwc.govt.nz/whai-kupu-atu).

6. Social Media Practices

This section outlines how Te Hiringa Mahara uses and engages on social media, in accordance with the Public Service Commission's [Guidance for public servants' official use of social media - Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission](#).

We use social media to share:

- a) Our assessments and reports on the mental health and wellbeing of people in New Zealand.
- b) Information about factors affecting mental health and wellbeing, and the effectiveness of approaches to mental health and wellbeing.
- c) Updates on our advocacy work and engagement with the sector.
- d) Opportunities for the public to provide feedback on specific issues.
- e) New content from our other digital channels (news, publications, events, etc).
- f) Insights about our work and what it's like to be part of Te Hiringa Mahara.
- g) Information about careers and job vacancies at Te Hiringa Mahara.
- h) Other posts, articles, or publications of interest which are relevant to our key messages, objectives, promotions, or updates.

We value the feedback and ideas from our followers and endeavour to participate in these conversations where possible. However, we may not be able to reply individually to every post.

Our social media accounts are monitored from 8.30am – 5pm on weekdays and sporadically outside these hours. We aim to respond to private messages as soon as we can during business hours. If you have an urgent query, please contact us directly.

We may follow/like organisations and individuals that are relevant to our work. This does not imply endorsement or guarantee the accuracy of their information.

At times, people employed by Te Hiringa Mahara may engage in forums on social media and other online channels. Any opinions or views expressed on these forums belong to the individual staff member. Our staff acting in an official capacity will identify themselves and state that they are representing Te Hiringa Mahara.

Where we have a social media presence, we invite anyone with an interest in the mental health and addictions systems to share their perspectives. Through the exchange of ideas and experiences we hope to strengthen understanding of the issues and potential solutions.

7. Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns about this Transparency Policy, or about the way in which Te Hiringa Mahara publishes and shares information, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us.

You can contact us in the following ways:

By Post:

The Transparency Officer
Te Hiringa Mahara
DX Box SP22502
Wellington

By Email: kiaora@mhwc.govt.nz