

Te Ao Māori Prevention To Address Mental Health & Addiction Challenges.

Maramataka Māori, a prevention solution organising system for greater health and wellbeing

A Māori perspective to creating a holistic continuum of care



The Whanganui region continues to see an increase in mental health crisis presentations. In the last five years the region has recorded over 15,000 first point of crisis response, with an estimated cost of \$448 million.

"And there has always been another intellectual tradition in this land which cherishes different values and defines the concepts of power and democracy in a different way. There has also always been more than one way of making a nation, and Te Tiriti only ever saw a relational nation in which politics was never just the art of the possible but the promise of reconciling difference across what was only ever meant to be an intimate distance." [Moana Jackson, Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Porou, and Rongomaiwahine]

Te Ao Māori World View as a Strategic Priority

A Te Ao Māori worldview observes a system in its entirety. It contextualises whakapapa - relationship between all things. People, place, experience and narrative, through an indigenous framework can provide the relational constructs needed for deepening connections between whānau, community, and the ecosystem of support services. This human and eco-centric mindset sees everything as connected and inter-related. When we observe mental wellbeing or mental distress and addiction from this perspective we shift from a crisis-only response to an inclusive mindset of growing collective wellbeing.

The Challenge

Whānau are experiencing the accumulation of stress from social and economic issues, intergenerational trauma, and / or childhood trauma

Practitioners feel stretched with not enough time and resource to respond to the demand.

Police feel they are not capable of responding to mental health (MH) crisis, as well as feeling under resourced to do so.

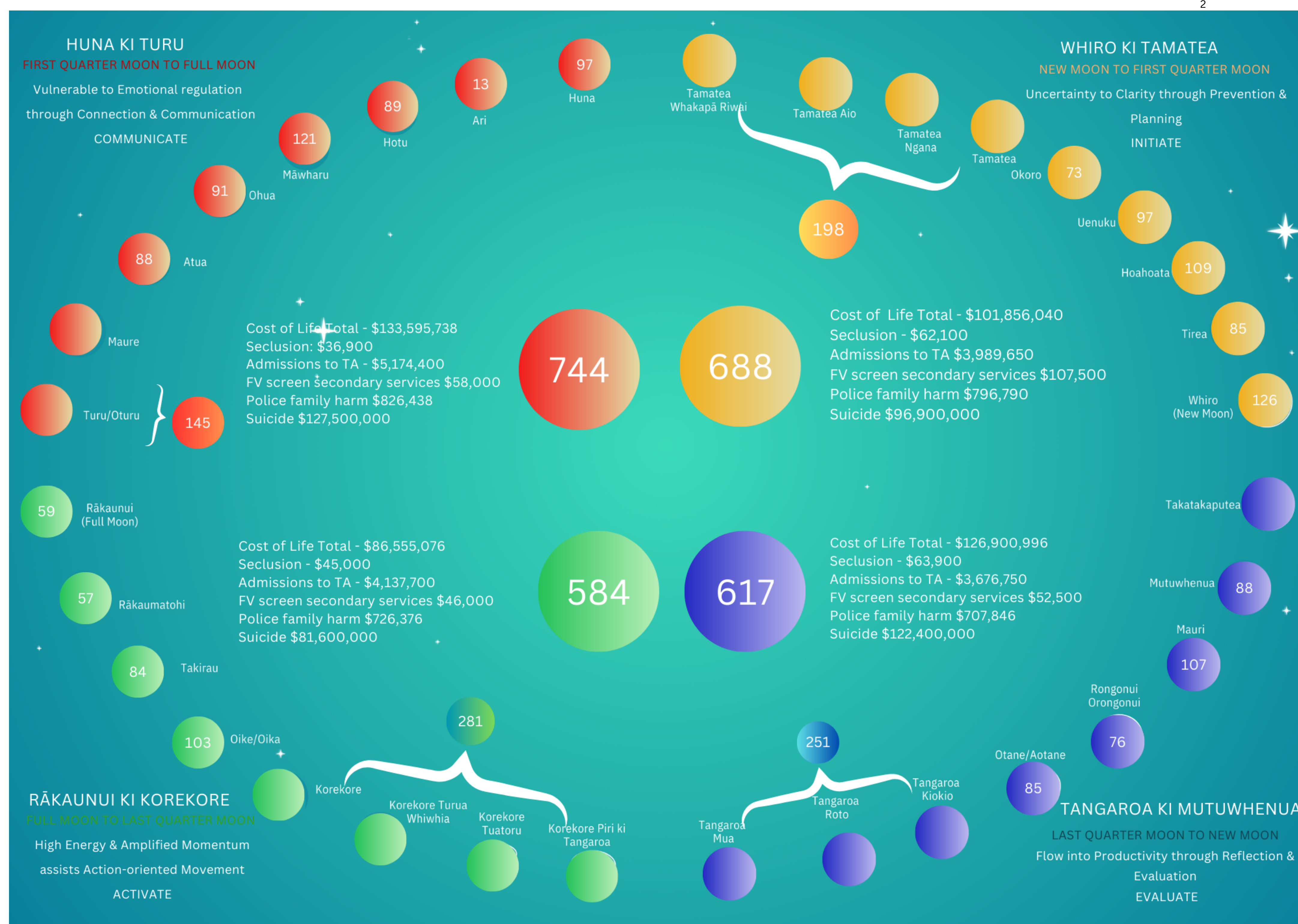
Iwi, Māori services have been underestimated and often excluded as an important partner in the mental health response, even though Māori statistics in crisis intervention exceeds 50%.

The Hypotheses

Maramataka, [the traditional Māori lunar science for navigating and managing existence], has its own vast and complex understanding of the environment we live in, and therefore, may offer new insight to inform the conditions for change.

If we are able to identify the phases where crisis occurs, we may also be able to determine when earlier intervention takes place.

The narrative within the Maramataka phases provides practical insight for leveraging the environmental energies to encourage wellbeing practices. Can the narrative also inform the design of earlier intervention?



"A Mātauranga Māori approach encourages us to discover that the language of our ancestors does not just exist on our tongues, but also in the palms of our hands, in its active application." [Meretini Huxtable-Bennett, Rautaki Māori, Healthy Families WRR]

A paradigm shift is needed towards a system grounded in tikanga in Māori values; one that is holistic, whanau-centred - which takes a life-course approach to wellness. The medium of wairua facilitates an expression of relationships, the maintenance of balance and healing." (Valentine, 2009)

"Kaupapa Māori approaches, Te Ao Māori world view, and Mātauranga Māori practices provide a much deeper and inclusive frame for shifting the system from a clinically led model to a human and eco-centric continuum of care." Rebecca Davis, Impact Strategist.

Design thinking is a methodology that is focused on solving problems and creating innovative solutions through a human-centred approach. One of the critical steps in indigenous design thinking is to be inclusive of the environment [eco-centric]. Design prototyping involves creating a tangible representation of the solution.

The prototyping process in design thinking typically involves the following steps:

The first step in the prototyping process is to identify the core problem that needs to be solved. This requires a deep understanding of the user's needs, pain points, and challenges.

Generate ideas: Once the problem has been identified, the next step is to generate ideas for potential solutions. This can be done through brainstorming sessions, user research, or other ideation techniques.

Create a rough prototype: The next step is to create a rough prototype of the solution. This can be a simple sketch, a cardboard model, or a basic digital prototype.

Test and refine: The prototype is then tested with users to gather feedback and insights. Based on this feedback, the prototype is refined and improved.

Repeat: The process of testing and refining is repeated until a final solution is developed that meets the needs of the user.

The Findings: New Intelligence Offers New Insight, Maramataka Patterns and the Cost of Crisis

Rautaki Māori, Meretini Bennett-Huxtable and Lead Systems Innovator, Chy Potaka-Osborne, Waiora Whānau, Healthy Families Whanganui Rangitīkei Ruapehu have been exploring the use of Maramataka for analysing mental health and family harm crisis data. This has included collating and mapping 5 years of admissions to the acute psychiatric inpatient unit, seclusion, positive screening at the hospital for family harm, police family harm call outs, and suicides. The indigenous narrative within Maramataka provides more depth of insight into the human mindset and environmental energies. Clinicians and practitioners working in mental health and addictions have confirmed they have never found consistent patterns before when analysing the region's data

A total of 15,208 regional incidents were collated and mapped in this initiative. The mapping process has identified significant patterns:

- Crisis occurs in four particular phases of the Maramataka: Tamatea, Turu, Korekore and Tangaroa
- Earlier intervention and prevention can be identified from the crisis data
- Crisis data demonstrates the lived experience and evidence in the Whanganui region.

1. <https://www.treasury.govt.nz/information-and-services/state-sector-leadership/investment-management/plan-investment-choices/cost-benefit-analysis-including-public-sector-discount-rates/treasurys-cbax-tool>

2. Elkington B. (2020). Imagining decolonisation. Bridget Williams Books. <https://doi.org/10.7810/9781988545783>

3. Valentine, H. (2009). Kia Ngawari Ki Te Awatea : the Relationship Between Wairua and Māori Well-being: a Psychological Perspective : a Thesis Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Clinical Psychology at Massey University: Palmerston North. Unpublished thesis. Massey University



Healthy Families Whanganui Rangitīkei Ruapehu are always looking to connect with Prevention Partners
Connect with our team by scanning the QR codes and access our reports while you are there!