



## **A New Discussion Paper**

# **Collective Action to Strengthen and Unify Health Promotion in Aotearoa-New Zealand**

“The health promotion sector is exploring the notion of a Collective Identity/professional association as a unification mechanism through which to enable purposeful action and progress (particularly in respect of workforce and other health promotion developmental aspirations and obligations).” Grant Berghan 2007.

## **Introduction**

This paper considers how the sector might continue the journey towards a Collective Identity for health promotion to

- ◆ support, unify and strengthen the workforce,
- ◆ advocate reduction of inequalities in the workforce,
- ◆ uphold and improve the standard of health promotion training and practice.

A “Collective Identity” refers to an organized group, or entity that will strengthen the health promotion workforce. The entity will be based on respect for everyone’s right to hauora, collective rights and individual perspectives. It will support and encourage ethical health promotion practice, and model and mediate understanding, respect and goodwill within the workforce, all the while grounded on collective aspirations, shared values and an agreed purpose.

This paper builds on earlier discussion papers ‘A Collective Identity for Health Promotion in Aotearoa-New Zealand’ written by Helen Rance, 2006, and a companion paper ‘What does a collective identity mean from a Māori point of view?’ written by Grant Berghan, 2007. Both papers are available on the Health Promotion Forum (HPF) [web site www.hauora.co.nz](http://www.hauora.co.nz) and they provide a clear picture of the journey so far.

## **The Task**

At all stages of this journey feedback from the health promotion workforce supports the concept and encourages the development of a Collective Entity and for the Health Promotion Forum to take the lead role. It is time to build on the past and now focus to the future.

The task is to design an entity that will provide leadership to enhance and strengthen health promotion practice. It requires an agreed focus, able to bring together shared values, knowledge and experience to support and professionally care for health promoters.

## **The Challenges and Questions**

To establish a Collective Entity for health promotion a number of challenges and issues have to be resolved and questions answered.

This entity must honour Maori aspirations for self determination, control of Maori matters and accommodate different Maori realities. A way needs to be found to support and respect a collective orientation and allow for individual realities. This entity must also respect and accommodate different world views, enable meaningful participation whilst supporting the different realities of Pacific Peoples and other identifiable sectors within the health promotion workforce.

Here are some key questions:

- ◆ Can we agree on a universal set of values?
- ◆ What might the functions of a collective be?
- ◆ Do we have a shared understanding of the agenda and are we all heading for the same goal?
- ◆ How can we build a Collective Entity made up of small groups and inclusive of the aspirations, knowledge and values that each group brings?
- ◆ Do we agree on common ethical principles for health promotion practice?
- ◆ How can we care for each other as a workforce?
- ◆ What commitment and time can we each bring to establish and grow a collective?

## Next Steps

The HPF is taking proactive steps to further the development of a Collective Entity for health promotion in Aotearoa-new Zealand.

### Step one

The discussion paper has been revised and made available at the HPF symposium 'Ethics and Evidence in Health Promotion' in September 2007. It will be posted on the HPF website and published in Hauora, the HPF newsletter.

### Step two

The HPF is preparing funding applications to enable consultation workshops and hui and future developments.

### Step three

The HPF is planning consultation workshops and hui and we hope to come to your rohe. These workshops will tease out shared values and goals, explore a possible structure for the entity and determine what time and commitment might be available throughout the workforce.

### Step four

Further action will be planned following consultation, considering your feedback, commitment and shared goals.

## What do you think?

Don't wait until the workshops - your feedback and ideas are valued at any time. We want to hear your concerns or ideas, just contact one of the HPF staff.

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As we start to construct a Collective Entity we need to identify the shared values and goals, ascertain if there is enough commitment to build the process and decide what the structure will be, and determine the way forward.

## Appendix One Definitions

The following terms in this paper are defined as;

- ◆ Entity - Something that exists as a particular and discrete unit,
- ◆ Collective - Of, relating to, characteristic of, or made by a number of people acting as a group,
- ◆ Identity - The set of behavioural or personal characteristics by which an individual is recognisable as a member of a group.

Source <http://www.yourdictionary.com>

## Appendix Two Possible Purpose/Functions of a collective might include:

- ◆ Establish agreed standards of health promotion, definitions of best practice and ethical practice.
- ◆ Develop an advisory group to promote standards in the training sector and provide coordination between the training and practice sectors.
- ◆ Promote health promotion competencies including Maori and Pacific competencies and establish implementation pathways.
- ◆ Benchmark health promotion activity and action as a guide for new provider organizations.
- ◆ Develop the ethical guidelines into a code of practice and establish an implementation pathway.
- ◆ Recognise and reward excellence in the sector.
- ◆ Research and write a strategic plan to guide health promotion workforce development to ensure a future workforce that is trained to meet a variety of work settings and environments.
- ◆ Develop nationally consistent pay and qualification processes and other strategies to address inequalities in the workforce.

## Appendix Three Significant Moments in the Journey so far:

**1997** The journey started at the 4<sup>th</sup> HPF conference '**Creating The Future**' where the focus was the health promotion workforce, our stories and strengthening our future. (HPF Newsletter # 42 December 1997).

**2000** ***Ngā Kaiakatanga Hauora mō Aotearoa, Health Promotion Competencies for Aotearoa-New Zealand*** were published in May and included the first effort to identify our common values and ethics.

**2002** ***TUHA-NZ*** was published in June 2002 a framework to operationalise Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

An '**action statement**', calling for the establishment of a professional body, was accepted by the final plenary session at the HPF conference 'Making the Connections' 2002.

**2005** ***A Review of the use and future of Ngā Kaiakatanga Hauora mō Aotearoa, Health Promotion Competencies for Aotearoa-New Zealand*** was submitted to the Ministry of Health and the workforce. Several recommendations supported the concept of collective action to strengthen health promotion practice, ethics and training.

**2006** ***A Discussion Document on Draft Generic Competencies for Public Health Practitioners in Aotearoa-New Zealand*** was published and widely consulted on.

### ***Strategies to Strengthen the Health Promotion Workforce in Aotearoa-New Zealand.***

Seven discussion papers commissioned by the Ministry of Health explored the same topic from different perspectives. All papers supported the concept of a collective identity and several identified the HPF as "the best placed organisation from which to establish a national focal point for the health promotion workforce."

***A Collective Identity for Health Promotion in Aotearoa-New Zealand***, this discussion paper was consulted on at the HPF conference October 2006. Subsequently it was published in newsletters and on websites where feedback was invited.

**2007** *Generic Competencies for Public Health in Aotearoa* was published in February.

***What does a collective identity mean from a Maori point of view? How would the collective identity fit with a Maori worldview and the realities of Maori health promotion?*** Grant Berghan's companion paper to *A Collective Identity for Health Promotion in Aotearoa-New Zealand*, was published in Hauora and on the HPF website.

***Public Health Workforce Development Project (PHWDP)*** July 2007 published by the Ministry of Health. Development of the Health Promotion workforce is one of the identified priorities.

***Collective Action to Strengthen and Unify Health Promotion in Aotearoa-New Zealand*** July 2007. A new discussion paper raising the issues and setting the scene to move forward.