



**Te Tāhū Hauora**  
Health Quality & Safety  
Commission

## A young person's perspective of consumer engagement

### Ngā Reo Māhuri Young Voices group

#### Joshua McMillan

An Expression of Interest (EOI) was promoted through the Consumer Health Forum Aotearoa opportunities page in 2023, seeking diverse youth consumer perspectives to join a newly formed Young Voices group (later named Ngā Reo Māhuri Young Voices).

Ngā Reo Māhuri is hosted by Te Tāhū Hauora Health Quality & Safety Commission (the Commission).

Applications for this EOI closed in September 2023 and, out of 35 applicants, Josh McMillan was one of the successful candidates for this group.

Josh shared his insights of the EOI application process and his experiences being part of Ngā Reo Māhuri Young Voices group. He said the EOI process was standard and easy to navigate, and the questions showed we are interested in consumer lived experiences.

At the group's first meeting, Josh shared the importance of whakawhanaungatanga and connecting with everyone from the get-go, understanding that each member has their own world and experiences in health and acknowledging these newfound connections.

Josh described that being part of this new group was an exciting challenge. Being able to explore and observe different perspectives that the other members brought to the table and being able to provide input to the group without the fear of being shut down was valuable.

Josh shared how he has grown and developed during his time with Ngā Reo Māhuri, being able to raise issues and speak up on matters that are important to him. Josh noted that for youth voices, there needs to be a clear purpose not a tick box situation.

Josh has learnt to take a step back to think and consider other perspectives, taking this time to reflect and make clear decisions. He noted this involvement showed that moving forward, even in small steps is effective, and to let others take the chance to share their voice and expertise.

For future Ngā Reo Māhuri members, Josh shared that if you are passionate about doing something in the health space, make your voice heard with this group. It can be growth for you, and you can help it grow. Before you join, ensure that this is the right thing for you to be doing and understand what you are getting into. Sometimes this work can be heavy, and it is important to take care of yourself.

We need to ensure we have safe spaces to ensure honesty and transparency, as we are learning together and understanding ways to improve for our consumers, whānau and communities.