



Health Quality &
Safety Commission
Te Tāhū Hauora

Strengthening consumer and whānau engagement in health webinar evaluation report

Summary

The Health Quality & Safety Commission Te Tāhū Hauora (the commission) hosted an online webinar on 22 April 2026 that brought together 138 attendees, including health entities and providers across the country, to hear a practical introduction to strengthening consumer and whānau engagement in health and explore what good practice looks like in the context of the Tāpiri Mai project. The Tāpiri Mai project is a co-designed initiative with communities on Matakana and Mōtītī Islands, focused on overcoming geographic and systemic barriers to healthcare to improve equity and wellbeing.

This report outlines what we learnt from holding and evaluating the event and summarises how the day went for attendees and organisers.

We would like to thank all attendees for being part of the day and for sharing their time, insights and experiences.

Overall, the webinar successfully provided opportunities to:

- learn how to strengthen consumer and whānau engagement at a practical level
- learn about Tāpiri Mai and its impact on rural communities
- discuss, within interactive breakout sessions, ways in which the sector is engaging with consumers and whānau.

To view the presentations, please visit the Ō Mātou Reo: Our Voices page on the commission's website.

Introduction

On 22 April 2026, we hosted an online webinar on strengthening consumer and whānau engagement in health.

The webinar was a key deliverable for the 2025/26 statement of performance expectations, which sets out an expectation that we plan and facilitate consumer forums that support consumers to engage in health service improvement activities, including in primary care.

In planning for the webinar, we referred to feedback provided on the previous Ō Mātou Reo: Our Voices national event and the consumer and whānau engagement workshop, both held in 2025. Both events were focused on providing valuable opportunities to connect, learn and share narratives of strengthening consumer and whānau engagement across the health sector.

The key feedback we focused on calls for:

- interactive sessions that allowed shared learning
- practical workshops on how we can do better when it comes to engaging with consumers and whānau
- engagement with Māori and Pacific leadership and health professionals to share whānau-centred engagement models
- a hybrid option for inclusivity.

To read our previous event evaluation reports, please visit the Ō Mātou Reo: Our Voices page on the commission's website.

The Code of expectations for health entities' engagement with consumers and whānau is required under the Pae Ora (Healthy Futures) Act 2022 and requires:

- Health entities to work with consumers, whānau and communities to plan, design, deliver and evaluate health services

Health entities to report annually on how they have applied the code of expectations.

Promotion of the webinar

We promoted the webinar through a mix of communications and digital channels, including social media and direct outreach to key networks such as the Consumer health forum Aotearoa.

We engaged a social media company to help us design and promote content for the webinar, to improve reach and audience engagement. This company provided tailored promotional materials, helping us deliver a more consistent and effective approach. Due to strong early registration numbers, we did not need to run the full campaign and therefore could not analyse which promotional content had worked best to attract attendees.

The event website attracted 504 unique users. Traffic peaked between 24 and 26 March and again on 30 March, aligning with social media promotion and a direct email to Consumer health forum Aotearoa members.

Most visits occurred on weekdays between 8 am and 3 pm, suggesting professionals visiting the site during working hours. Visitors primarily accessed the page through direct traffic, likely through internal links or shared emails. LinkedIn was the strongest external referrer, followed by Google and Facebook; some traffic also came from the Hauora Aotearoa SharePoint site. Just over half of users (259) clicked through to the registration form, reflecting strong interest. Notably, all visitors arriving at the site from LinkedIn completed this action, indicating high audience relevance.

Visitors to the site came from across the country, particularly Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington. Registrations exceeded capacity before the event, so that we had to create a waitlist to attend. Overall, the strong engagement, click-through rates and sustained traffic indicate that the topic of the webinar resonated, and the page effectively supported registrations.

Webinar content and outputs

The webinar was structured around three sessions, including a breakout session, as follows.

First session: strengthening consumer and whānau engagement

The first session was presented by our senior consumer advisor, DJ Adams. It covered the following practical ways to strengthen consumer and whānau engagement:

- embedding lived experiences and voices within the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of projects
- addressing need and reducing inequity, to create a space within which to improve the quality and safety of our health system
- the importance of intentional, well-planned consumer and whānau engagement, with a clear purpose and objectives set
- accessibility and inclusivity: asking what support consumers and whānau require
- transparency and accountability: closing the loop, acknowledging contributions and providing consistent updates to everyone who was involved.

Second session: Tāpiri Mai

The second session featured Moira Lomas, an external speaker who had previously presented at our Ō Mātou Reo: Our Voices event, Moira talked about the Tāpiri Mai project, a project co-designed with communities on Matakana and Mōtītī Islands to overcome geographic and systemic barriers to health care, supporting equity and wellbeing.

Moira discussed the impact of connecting with the communities on the Islands, highlighting key aspects such as:

- strong relationships and locally led approaches, contributing to positive health outcomes for whānau
- communities working together to produce significant improvements in engagement and overall wellbeing
- the provision of options for health care delivery for whānau, who are the leaders of their own health journeys.

Third session: interactive breakout session

The webinar also included breakout sessions, where attendees were invited to work through a set of prompt questions on a written scenario (see the appendix) or answer the questions as is. Facilitators actively supported and encouraged both options.

Discussions within these breakout sessions had several common themes, as follows.

1. Meaningful, trust-based engagement and partnership:

- Engagement must allow time, presence and genuine listening.
- Whānau need to feel safe, respected and confident to speak.
- Power sharing builds trust and shifts relationships from transactional to relational.
- Consistency and follow-through are critical to maintaining trust.
- Lived experience should guide service design and improvement.

2. Cultural safety and identity:

- Cultural considerations must be intentional.
- Engagement should recognise identity beyond ethnicity (for example, gender, disability, rurality).
- Collective, whānau-centred approaches support holistic hauora.

3. Clear, accessible and ongoing communication:

- Those who design and facilitate engagement should use simple language and formats that work for consumers and whānau, and check understanding regularly rather than assuming clarity.
- Flexible options (for example, flexible timing, telehealth, the option of whānau involvement) improve access.
- Written information and summaries should be available for later reference.
- Engagement should be continuous, with feedback and follow-up ('closing the loop').

4. System design that reduces burden for whānau and services:

- Good engagement reduces missed appointments, duplication and rework.
- Effective coordination roles (navigators) can support continuity.
- Smarter use of technology can reduce barriers while maintaining relationships.

Event analytics

To capture participant perspectives and assess the effectiveness of the webinar, we distributed an evaluation survey to attendees following the event.

The webinar was attended by 138 people; there were some drop-offs, which we expected, over the duration of the session.

We emailed the evaluation survey to attendees immediately after the webinar and sent follow-up reminders the following day and again one week later. The survey closed on Monday 4 May.

We received a total of 45 survey responses, representing a 32 percent response rate.

The survey invited feedback on the overall experience, as well as the relevance and clarity of the content. Responses provided valuable insights into what worked well, areas for improvement and suggestions for future engagement activities, supporting our commitment to ensuring consumer and whānau voices continue to shape our approach.

Due to the low response rate, the following analytics do not provide a full picture; they should be treated as indicative only.

Figure 1: Attendee demographics

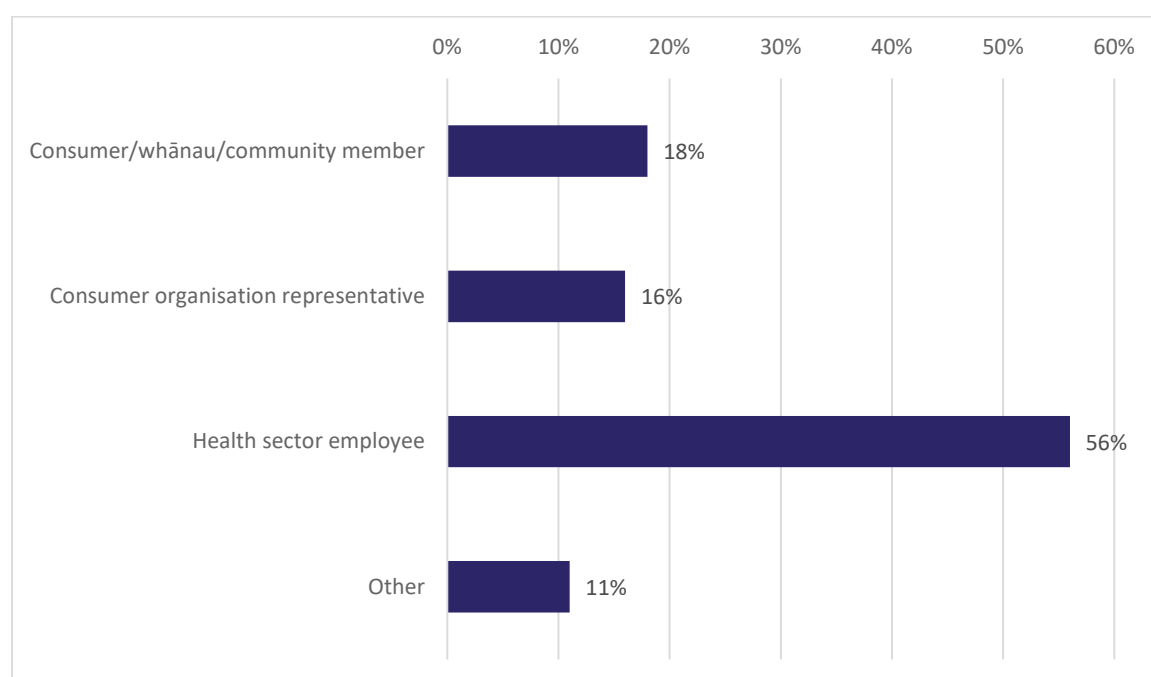


Figure 1 shows that there was strong representation by the health sector (56 percent).

We asked attendees if they had attended the webinar as an individual or in a group. If they had attended in a group, we asked how many people were in the group, to ensure we could estimate the number of 'extra' attendees we had not initially counted. We learnt that an extra 22 attendees joined, making the total number of attendees approximately 160.

Figure 2: Attendee demographics by region

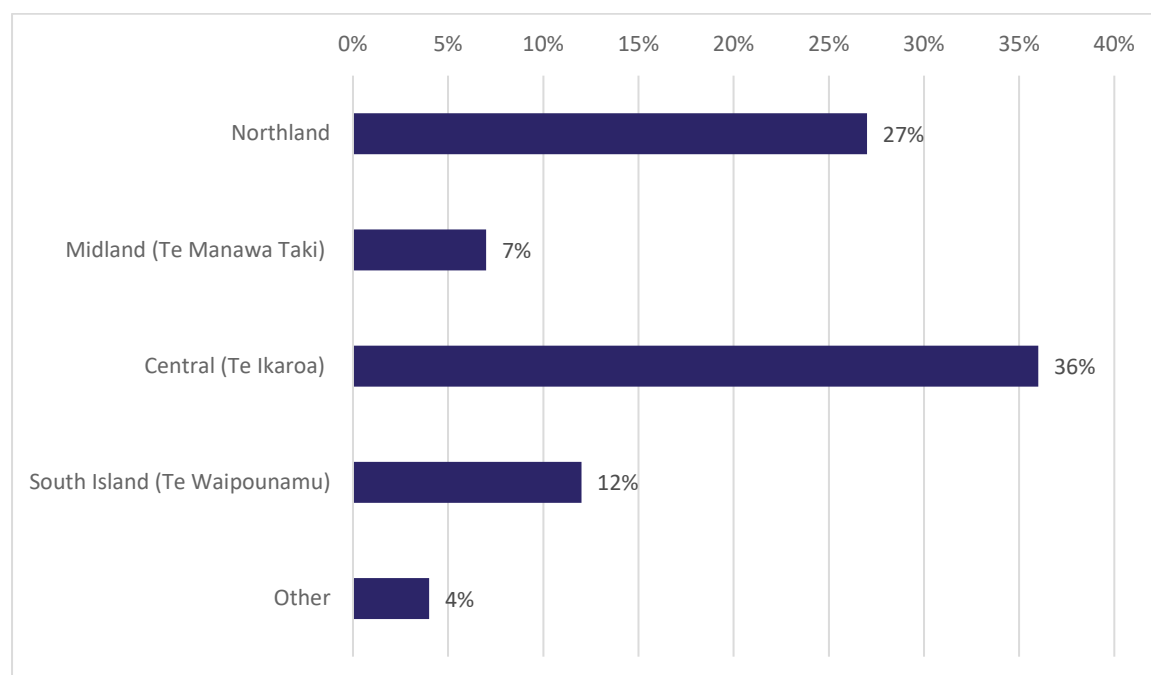


Figure 2 shows that respondents were mostly based in the Central and Northland regions. This matches our analytics for the promotional campaign, as our social media audience was mostly from the Auckland region, followed by Wellington and then Christchurch.

Reflections from the evaluation survey and attendees

Our evaluation survey was anonymous, allowing attendees to provide honest feedback. The following subsections set out attendee responses by question.

With this purpose in mind, what did you gain from the day?

Before asking this question, the survey reminded attendees of the purpose of the day, as follows.

The webinar purpose was to provide a practical introduction to strengthening consumer and whānau engagement before exploring what good practice and engagement looks like. A key focus was to support consumers, whānau and communities to engage in health service improvement activities, including in primary care.

Responses reflected the principle that communication and building relationships are important in the context of strengthening consumer and whānau engagement.

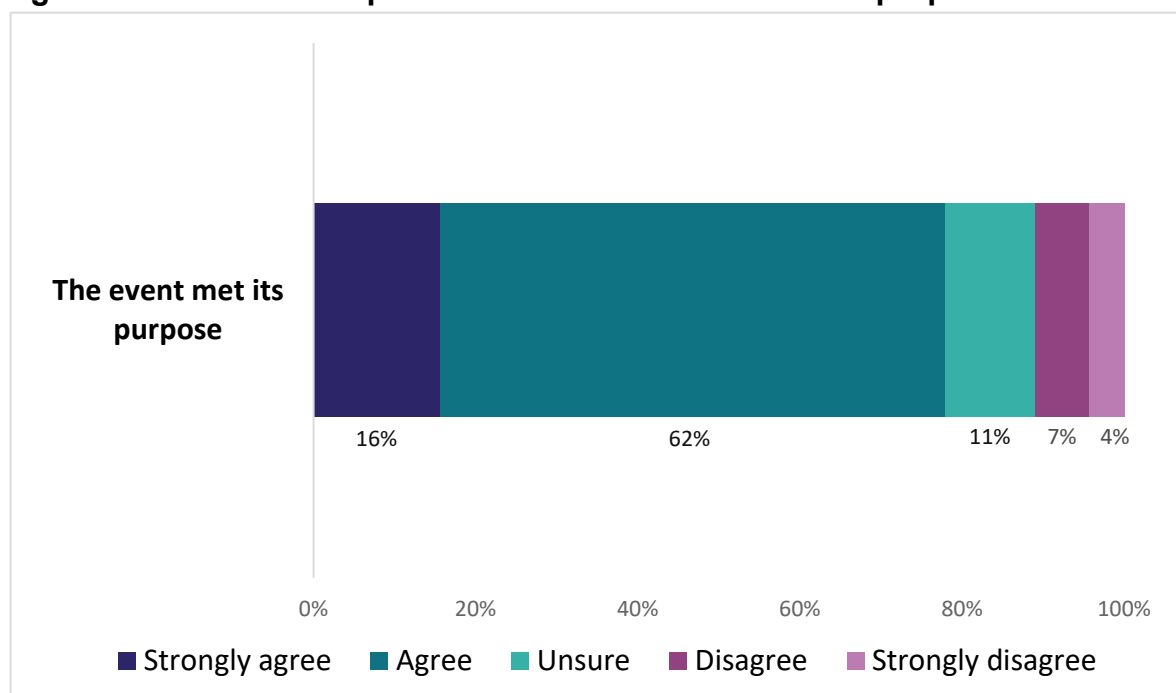
‘I gained insights into trusting the consumer perspective and coming back to the core value of relationships.’

‘A better understanding of how to engage with whānau ... it takes time and cannot be rushed.’

‘Knowledge and hearing other people’s experiences, the case study presented was amazing ... a true testament of engagement and collaboration.’

Did the event meet its purpose?

Figure 3: Attendees' responses to 'Did the event meet its purpose?'



Of respondents, 77.8 percent agreed (62.2 percent) or strongly agreed (15.6 percent) that the event met its purpose, and 11.1 percent selected 'unsure'.

Respondents provided the following comments.

'Although the example was great it was a very small-scale project and not applicable in my work.'

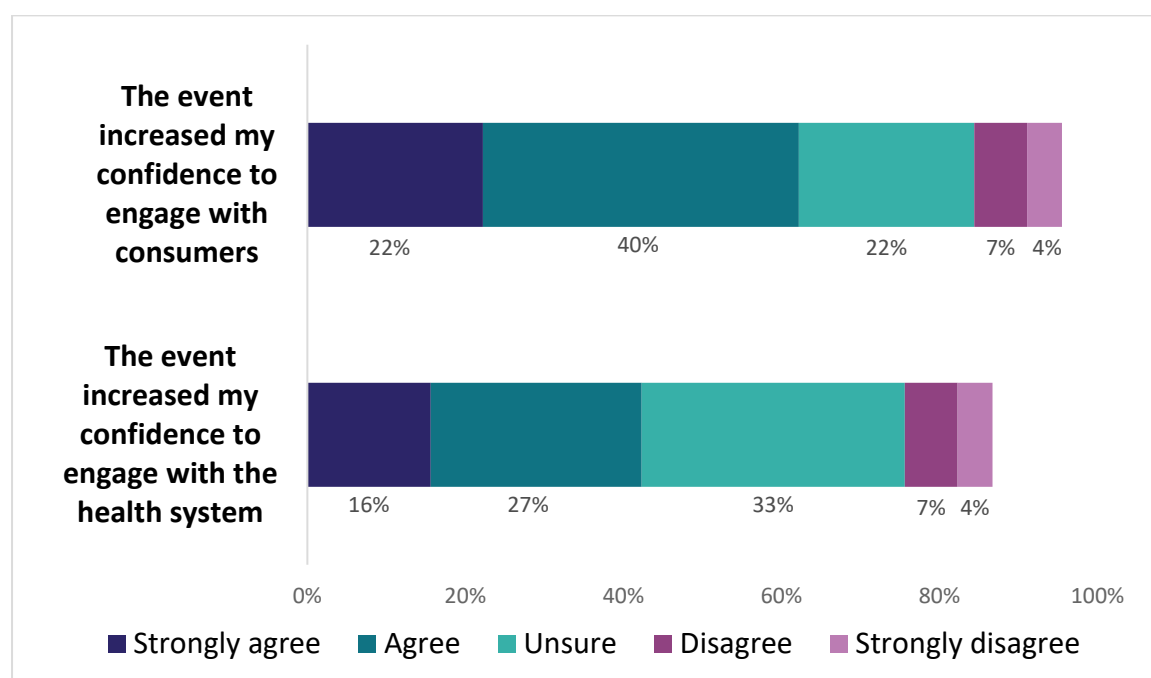
'Felt the presentations were more tailored to people working in the health system rather than to consumers, whānau and advocacy groups. It was interesting to hear about that perspective though.'

'Gained good insights from the scenario discussions and presentations on pitfalls and best practice examples, some good lessons learnt in there and it was great to have a group discussion on the scenarios.'

Did the event increase your confidence to engage with the health system or with consumers?

The survey put this question to respondents as a two-part choice. They could answer the question in terms of their engagement with the health system or in terms of their engagement with consumers, as appropriate. Note that, as the survey included a 'not applicable' response option for both statements, the percentages reported may not total 100 percent.

Figure 4: Attendees' responses to 'Did the event increase your confidence to engage with the health system or with consumers?'



Of those who answered the question in terms of engagement with consumers, 62.2 percent agreed (40 percent) or strongly agreed (22.2 percent) the event had increased their confidence, 22.2 percent were unsure and 4.4 percent selected 'not applicable'.

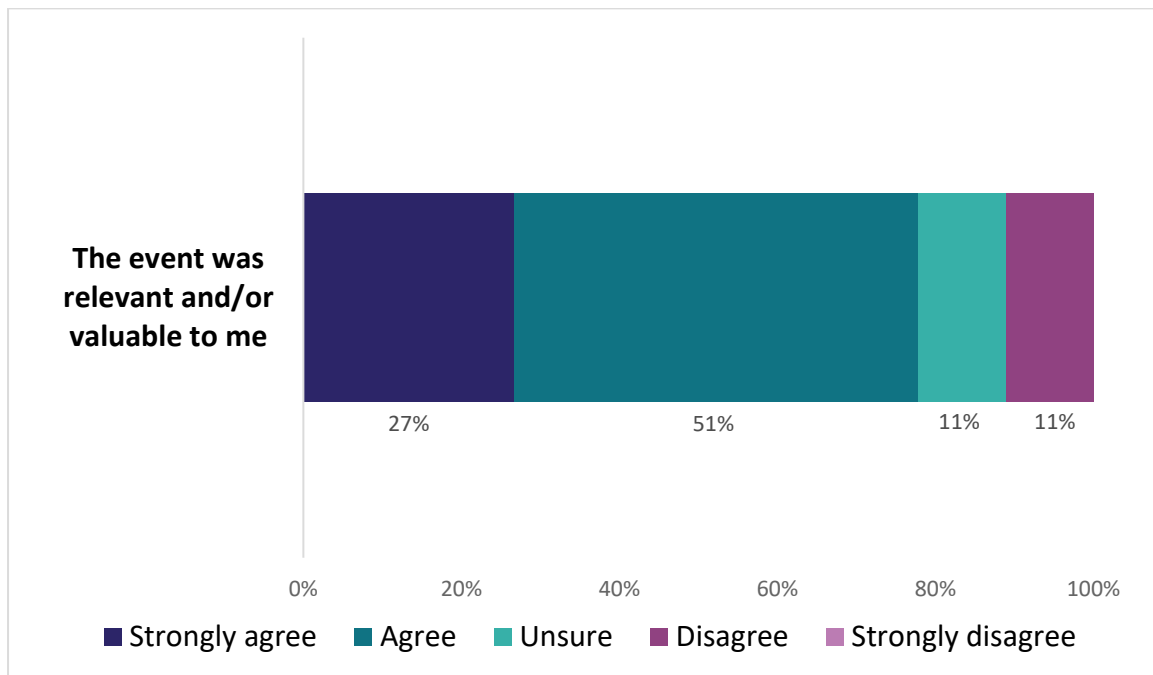
Of those who answered the question in terms of engagement with the health system, 42.3 percent agreed (26.7 percent) or strongly agreed (15.6 percent) the event had increased their confidence, 33.3 percent were unsure and 13.3 percent selected 'not applicable'.

There was an option to provide additional comment on this question. Some attendees noted an increase in their confidence and motivation to engage with communities, whereas some participants felt they needed new information about engagement with the health system and more focus on relationship building.

Was the event relevant and/or valuable to you?

Of respondents, 78 percent agreed (51 percent) or strongly agreed (27 percent) the event had been relevant and/or valuable to them and 11 percent felt unsure.

Figure 5: Attendees' responses to 'Was the event relevant and/or valuable to you?'



Some respondents provided an additional comment on this question, including the following.

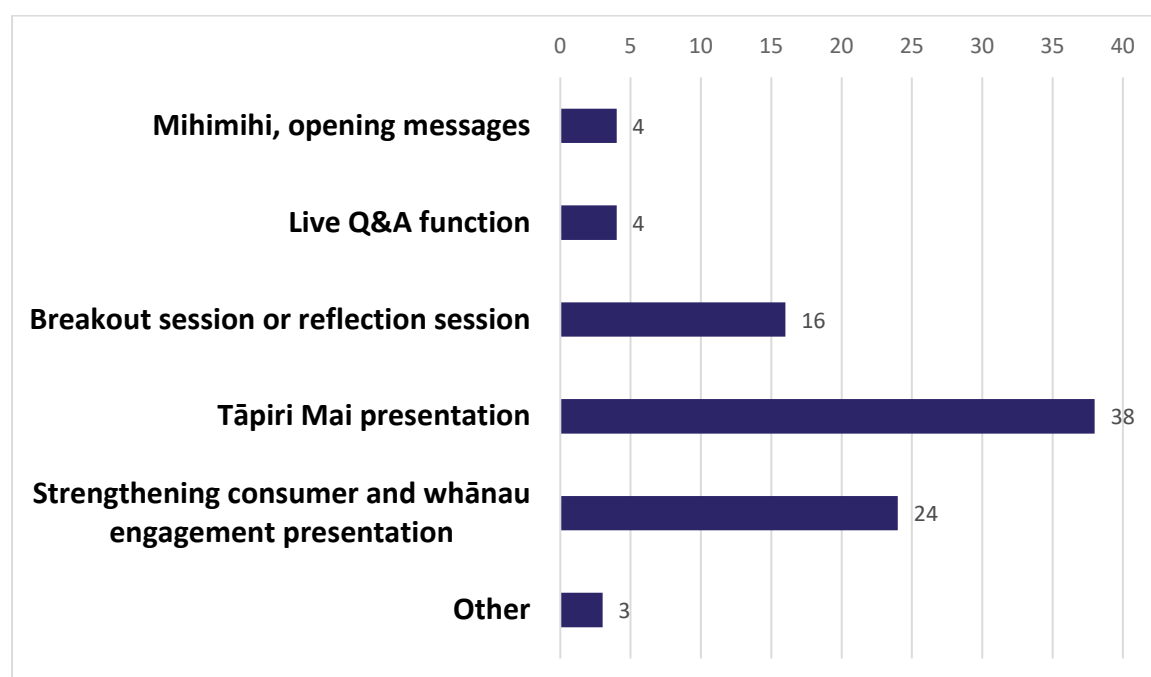
‘Awesome kaupapa and community’.

‘Tāpiri Mai presentation was great’.

‘More work needs to be done across the mental health and addiction sector’.

Which three parts of the event did you find most useful?

Figure 6: Attendees' responses to 'Which three parts of the event did you find most useful?'



The part of the event that was found most useful was the Tāpiri Mai presentation with 38 attendees selecting this. Secondly was the strengthening consumer and whānau engagement presentation with 24 attendees selecting this.

This chart allows us to understand what the key takeaways were for most attendees, and where we can improve in future, such as the live Q&A function.

Final comments

The final section of the survey we asked attendees to tell us what they would like to see at future events and workshops and to make comments on the venue and accessibility.

Comments included the following.

'Thank you for the opportunity to attend and to hear work being undertaken. It was valuable and appreciated and also shows so many opportunities to "do better" and share a collaborative journey with people most affected and utilising services to improve with, not for.'

'A very well-presented webinar – thoughtful and considered to meet obligations and better understanding of Pae Ora and how vital it is to engage with consumers of the health care system – ensuring patience and the importance of taking time to undo 180 years.'

'Keep up the excellent work, and awesome outcomes for remote communities.'

We heard valuable insights on how we can improve future workshops, including ideas for more tailored guidance for specific areas of health, and better facilitation of the interactive sessions. Respondents suggested the following improvements:

‘More real-life examples of how consumer and whānau engagement is undertaken and how it is then used to effect change.’

‘Break out teams functionality strengthened.’

‘Small-scale projects e.g., profession-specific and hospital-based to help teams working within services be better able to apply the learning.’

We had made similar observations, recognising that we need to improve on our facilitation of interactive sessions like the breakout rooms, and to better plan for large-attendance webinars, to ensure we facilitate meaningful engagement and provide a positive experience for all participants.

New Consumer health forum Aotearoa members

During the webinar, we promoted the Consumer health forum Aotearoa and encouraged attendees to join, sending the shortened URL to join the forum in the chat during the first session. Two new registrations resulted.

Conclusion and recommendations

Overall, the webinar achieved its purpose by providing practical learning and sharing examples of good practice. The feedback we gained will inform how we design and deliver future events and workshops, helping us ensure they are inclusive and practical, while strengthening how consumer and whānau voices inform future improvement.

The insights shared on the day encouraged us to have more tailored discussions with the health sector; for example, through webinars that are specific to individual programmes and areas of interest. We could work more closely with the sector to identify priority topics and co-design content that reflects specific needs and realities, ensuring relevance and value. There is also a clear opportunity to strengthen our promotion and outreach strategies to better involve consumers and whānau, supporting more inclusive participation and bringing lived experience into these spaces.

We recognise there are areas where we can do better as this report has identified.

Recommendations

In the context of future webinars, we will strive to:

- co-design webinar topics and formats with the health sector
- develop more tailored, programme-specific webinars

strengthening consumer and whānau participation to inform improvement activities.

We wish to convey our appreciation and gratitude to all speakers, presenters and organisers involved in the webinar, for contributing their time and knowledge towards this kaupapa.

Appendix

Scenarios and questions provided for breakout session

Scenarios for our activity

Groups can work on the scenarios together to answer the prompt questions. Or your group may choose to answer the prompt questions without the scenarios; they are designed to reflect all these options. You have about 20 minutes.

Please designate one chat scribe in your group to take notes in your chat so we can capture the content and then share back in main room chat.

Prompt questions

- What learnings from Tāpiri Mai will you take into this scenario to improve on consumer engagement?
- What is the impact of good consumer engagement?
- How does good consumer engagement reduce burden on the system?

Scenario one: Redesigning outpatient services

A health service has identified ongoing challenges with outpatient follow-up appointments for people living with long-term conditions. Missed appointments are high, clinicians are stretched and whānau report feeling frustrated and unheard.

The service decides to redesign its outpatient model. Early on, they invite a small group of consumers and whānau who previously used the service to be part of the design process. These participants are supported to contribute meaningfully through clear information, flexible meeting options (including online), koha and dedicated facilitation. They met four times within eight months.

During the kōrero, consumers explain that clinical letters are confusing, appointments clash with whānau responsibilities and travel costs are a real burden. One consumer member shares that they often act as the coordinator of care but aren't recognised in communications. Others mention that while they appreciate being asked for input, they are unsure how decisions will ultimately be made or what influence their feedback will have.

Within the organisation, there is broad agreement that engagement is important, but different views about how much change is realistic given workforce pressure, digital capability and existing systems. Some clinicians are enthusiastic about trying new approaches, while others worry about consistency, workload and clinical risk.

In response, the health entity co-designs several changes:

- Appointment options include virtual consultations where appropriate.
- Communications are simplified and offered in multiple formats.
- Whānau are formally included (with consent) in care planning and follow-ups.
- A consumer advisory group remains involved during implementation and review.

Sometime later, attendance has improved, staff report more focused consultations and trust with the community has strengthened. At the same time, the service is still learning how to

embed these approaches consistently across teams, and how to sustain meaningful engagement alongside ongoing system pressures.

Scenario two: Navigating care together

Sam and her whānau live in a rural community. Sam has a long-term health condition that requires regular monitoring and specialist input. Attending appointments usually means time off work for her daughter, long travel and stress for the whole whānau.

In the past, decisions were made quickly during appointments, often without checking who else needed to be involved. Sam felt shy asking questions, and her daughter felt invisible despite carrying much of the care responsibility. They sometimes left appointments unsure about next steps but didn't feel confident to follow up.

Recently, the service introduced an approach that centred more on whānau. At the start of care planning, clinicians ask Sam:

- Who do you want involved in your care?
- What matters most to you and your whānau right now?
- How would you prefer to connect with us?

Some appointments now happen via video, with whānau joining from different locations. When this works well, clinicians take time to explain options clearly, check understanding and encourage whānau to share what's working and what's not. Feedback from Sam and her whānau is invited after appointments, and on occasion, they hear back about how their feedback has influenced change.

However, this experience is not always consistent. Technology doesn't always work smoothly, and some appointments still feel rushed. Sam is still working out when it's okay to raise concerns or challenge decisions, and her daughter sometimes wonders whether being honest might affect future care.

Overall, Sam feels more confident than before, her whānau feel more visible and the care plan fits better with their everyday lives. However, they know their experience could be different depending on who they see, how busy the service is and how supported staff feel to work in ways that centre on whānau.

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New Zealand Government
Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa