

Clinical and cultural governance – working hand in hand in a Kaupapa Māori healthcare organisation

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Background

Te Korowai Hauora o Hauraki is a Kaupapa Māori governed health and social care organisation based in Thames, New Zealand. They deliver a range of primary care and health and disability support services to a 50% Māori population (or 66% Māori *and* poor), employing 77 EFTs (excluding casuals). At the time this work commenced, staff were in a period of significant change with the sudden departure of their Chief Executive, very low morale, significant concerns regarding the viability of their primary care services and a recent sentinel event that highlighted serious gaps in their clinical governance framework.

Methods

This project ran over a six month period from December 2014 with a series of staff workshops, a stocktake of current clinical governance activity completed, and a set of recommendations developed that enabled the organisation to implement a clinical governance model.

Results

A set of recommendations were presented and accepted by the Board of the organisation. They covered ten key areas, premised on the implementation of an integrated clinical and cultural governance framework.

Discussion

Staff were challenged to explore what clinical governance meant for their organisation, identified what was currently in place, and what needed to change to improve kaimahi (clinician) understanding, engagement and accountability of their clinical governance responsibilities. Importantly, it also considered the concept and application of cultural governance within a Māori framework at an organisational level, providing a pathway to build a robust and sustainable clinical governance system based on integrating Hauraki Ora, Haurakitanga and traditional clinical governance concepts for the organisation.

This paper considers clinical governance in a novel way, respecting the healthcare models of view of indigenous Māori while ensuring patient safety. It worked with kaimahi to develop a framework that met cultural and clinical requirements, integrating the essentials of clinical governance within organisational values of whanaungatanga, maanakitanga and kotahitanga.