



Artist Nick Tupara, Mātauranga Expert Mark Kopua,  
Psychiatrist Dr Diana Kopua, Board Chair David Scott

# Te Kuwatawata

## a ground-breaking response to mental health and addiction distress

Gisborne health professionals have listened to a call for a more effective response to mental health and addiction distress that affects too many Tairāwhiti families.

Te Kuwatawata is a unique and groundbreaking response to that call. It is about applying indigenous mātauranga (knowledge/understanding) to reframe the way we talk about a person's experience and to find a pathway forward for people experiencing distress, says Mental Health Head of Department Dr Diana Kopua.

A groundswell of people – indigenous knowledge experts, local GPs, community groups and mental health professionals - have been learning about using stories to look at all the characteristics of Māori deities and how they interacted with each other. This helps us to understand our own interactions and behaviours.

“Mātauranga enables us to move away from only using western ideology to categorise distress while staying critical in our thinking as health professionals. We are not abandoning western psychiatric approaches; we are just putting other principals - such as relationships and community voice - forward as an immediate response. This helps us to respond quicker, closer to where people live and most importantly this makes people feel connected, rather than disempowered.”

Te Kuwatawata has been supported by the New Zealand Ministry of Health with their “Fit for Future” Innovation Funding pool.

For more info on the programme: <http://bit.ly/Tekuatawata>

For more info on Hauora Tairāwhiti: <http://tdh.org.nz>

For more info on the district: <http://tairawhiti.gisborne.co.nz>



**Hauora**  
Tairāwhiti





Mark Kopua, Te Awhimate  
Tawhai, Rose Kahaki,  
Huhana Rokx-Potae and  
Jim Green

# Te Hīringa Matua

Helping pregnant mums struggling  
with drug and alcohol problems

Te Hīringa Matua is an intensive programme of support to pregnant women and families with children under three, who have serious addiction issues. Its origins are a successful pilot programme run in Auckland.

However, in Tairāwhiti half the population are Māori. We have a high percentage of teenage mothers and generational addiction issues.

Therefore a uniquely Tairāwhiti approach to providing support and connection is being used. Mahi a Atua (using indigenous knowledge of Māori deities to make sense of a situation), is a way of working that has been developed in Tairāwhiti led by Dr Diana and Mark Kopua. It is the foundation of the Te Hīringa Matua service.

The service sees three Māori health providers; Tūranga Health, Hauiti Hauora and lead provider Ngāti Porou Hauora working collaboratively with the District Health Board Hauora Tairāwhiti.

The name Te Hīringa Matua is taken from a Te Oriori (lullaby) for Tuuteremoana. It is an ancient birthing prayer that describes the phenomenon of human procreation and the instinct to care for children.

For more info on the programme: <http://bit.ly/TeHiringaMatua>

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