



Te Ao Māramatanga
New Zealand College of Mental Health Nurses Inc.
Partnership, Voice, Excellence in Mental Health Nursing
PO Box 77-080, Mt Albert, Auckland, 1350, New Zealand

10 October 2023

Dear DOMHNs,

Thank you for the opportunity for Te Ao Māramatanga College of Mental Health Nurses to give feedback regarding the new Te Pukenga nursing curriculum.

In preparation to becoming RNs, undergrad nursing programmes should include mental health assessment including supporting a person and their whānau with problematic substance use to get the help they need.

This will involve undergrad programmes addressing stigma and discrimination towards tāngata whai i te ora. The best way to address this is to include people with lived experience in the teaching.

It is important nurses take a person-centred, culturally responsive approach and understand the impact of trauma on a person's wellbeing. A focus on the therapeutic relationship, developing listening skills and working in partnership cannot be underestimated. Nurses need to understand their own unconscious bias.

Embedding Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Kawawhakaruruhau and Cultural Safety across all parts of the nursing programme are essential to providing a culturally responsive approach, understanding unconscious bias and eliminating inequities in the health sector.

Te Pou Lets get Real skills (2018) (<https://www.tepou.co.nz/initiatives/lets-get-real>) outlines the essential competencies required for all health workers across the health system when working with people experiencing mental health and addiction problems. Undergraduate programmes could use this as a framework.

We are fortunate in Aotearoa New Zealand to have the fully funded NESP Programme which provides foundational practice for nurses working in MH&A settings however it remains important that all nurses can support a person and their whānau experiencing mental distress and help them access the right supports.

Hineroa Hakiaha, President, Te Ao Māramatanga New Zealand College of Mental Health Nurses Inc.

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