



®

**Te Ao Māramatanga
New Zealand College of Mental Health Nurses Inc.**

Partnership, Voice, Excellence in Mental Health Nursing

www.nzcmhn.org.nz

PO Box 77-080, Mt Albert, Auckland, 1350, New Zealand

Te Ao Māramatanga Statement on the Royal Commission into Abuse in State Care

Version 10 – | Dated: 30 August

Introduction

Te Ao Māramatanga | New Zealand College of Mental Health Nurses acknowledges the findings and recommendations of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in State Care. This statement is informed by kōrero with survivors and their networks, and honours all individuals, families, and whānau who experienced tūkino (abuse and neglect) while in the care of state-run or faith-based institutions. We also acknowledge those who passed before having their experiences heard.

We accept the findings of *Whanaketia* and recognise the significant and lasting impacts of institutional tūkino on many people's lives—including loss of opportunity, compromised health and wellbeing, and disconnection from whānau, identity and community. We acknowledge that these impacts continue across generations.

We also recognise that some health professionals, including nurses, were involved in causing harm. As the professional body for mental health, addiction, and disability nurses, Te Ao Māramatanga affirms its responsibility to act.

This statement outlines our commitment to support healing, strengthen professional standards, and work with survivors to ensure the future of mental health nursing is safe, accountable, and shaped by lived and living experience.

Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the strength of those who shared their experiences with the Royal Commission. These stories highlight the profound and often intergenerational effects of trauma, neglect, and institutional failure.

We also recognise the courage of whānau and communities who continue to advocate for justice and restoration. Their leadership is vital in shaping the future of health care and nursing in Aotearoa.

In recognising the mamae and disruption caused, we also uphold the mana and resilience of those affected. Their voices and aspirations will continue to guide our next steps.

Our Commitment and Actions

Te Ao Māramatanga is committed to meaningful, sustained action within our areas of responsibility. These include:

1. Review of Standards of Practice

We will initiate a **review of the Te Ao Māramatanga Standards of Practice for Mental Health Nursing in Aotearoa (2012)**, to ensure they uphold safety, cultural responsiveness, and survivor-informed care.

This review will:

- Include guidance from lived and living experience leaders.
- Be led through a culturally grounded and trauma-informed process.
- Align with Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the principles of Kawa Whakaruruhau.

The revised Standards will support the profession to meet the highest expectations of ethical and accountable nursing practice.

2. Professional Development and Education

We will support mental health nurses to strengthen their cultural safety, trauma-informed care, and professional accountability by:

- Incorporating updated standards into professional development and training.
- Sharing lived experience-informed educational tools and reflective practice resources.
- Supporting peer learning across our membership.

3. Supporting Whānau Voice and Safety

We will:

- Promote the right of tāngata whaiora, families and whānau to raise concerns and be heard.

- Advocate for safe and transparent pathways for feedback and complaints within services.
- Work with partners to ensure nursing practice remains focused on respect, safety and whanaungatanga.

4. Ongoing Collaboration

Te Ao Māramatanga will:

- Continue to strengthen relationships with survivor networks, Māori health leaders, and other professional bodies.
- Explore additional ways to support healing and transformation through collective action.
- Advocate for systems and policies that prevent future harm.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

We reaffirm our commitment to a Te Tiriti-led approach. We recognise that the tūkino experienced by tangata whenua represents a breach of Te Tiriti obligations to protect and uphold the rights and wellbeing of Māori.

Our bicultural governance structure and commitment to mana motuhake will guide how we uphold partnership, protection, and participation in our work.

Puretumu Torowhānui – A Pathway Forward

Te Ao Māramatanga acknowledges that redress and restoration (puretumu torowhānui) take many forms. For our part, we commit to:

- Providing space for lived experience voices to shape the future of the profession.
- Embedding accountability and cultural safety in all aspects of our work.
- Ensuring that the review and renewal of our professional standards is part of a wider journey toward healing and transformation.

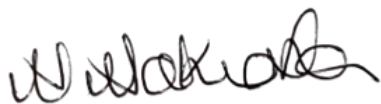
We know this statement alone is not enough. The actions we take from here will reflect our commitment to integrity, healing, and accountability.

Closing

Te Ao Māramatanga stands with those affected by abuse in care. We acknowledge the past, accept our responsibilities, and commit to a future where mental health, addiction and disability nursing upholds the mana, dignity and safety of every person.

Our profession must continue to evolve—and we are determined to be part of that change.

Noho ora mai,



Hineroa Hakiaha

President



May Pritchard

Kaiwhakahaere