

2022 Match Summary

Name of Match: **Population Mental Health Promotion: Building Capacity for Mental Health and Wellbeing within Communities**

Location of Match: **Virtual with presentations from New Zealand (video of all sessions available)**

1. Describe the purpose of the match: (Maximum 500 words)

The purpose of the virtual match was to provide a platform for international connection and sharing of knowledge and expertise on integrating mental health promotion into community led initiatives that influenced government and built resilience and wellbeing. This match was an opportunity to exchange ideas, knowledge and lessons learned on innovative and effective approaches that aim to transform health and public health systems. Its purpose was to build on the discussions that have taken place over the preceding year within the international public health leadership collaborative led by Stephanie Priest (Canada), Ian Walker and Jude Stansfield (England).

We wanted to have a leadership lens across the match that supported participants to look at the strategies and tactics that supported innovative programmes to be successful and sustainable. The match explored how you move from a “good idea” to “community led” while at the same time building in political capital and influence that ensured a longer-term commitment.

The first session was an opportunity for members to introduce themselves - whakawhanaunga (getting to know and understand each other). The intent was to introduce ourselves and provide a forum to update on country initiatives and policy settings and to provide everyone with the wider context in which both similarities, differences and divergent approaches could be identified and discussed. This provided a platform for the future sessions that supported deep sharing, learning, understanding and discussion. A primary objective of the match was to deepen understandings of the strategies that lead to innovation and sustained change that is owned and driven by communities.

The purpose of the three presentations from New Zealand was to provide examples of how communities action was galvanised while identifying the critical success factors that contributed to the success and sustainability of the programme. The three initiatives profiled were set up in response to significant events and inequity contexts in New Zealand, and each moved from intent to action that became deeply embedded in the communities being served. While the content of these presentations in themselves was of great interest, we wanted to push our thinking and sharing to look at how great ideas and programmes move through the planning to action stage and through this learn more about how we can individually and collectively learn from each other about change frameworks and approaches that enabled initiatives to go from policy and great ideas to change and outcomes within communities.

2. Describe the leaders who participated in the match (for example, were some of them peers, youth, family/caregivers, practitioners, policy makers, clinicians? Were they from community settings, government, NGOs, clinical settings?): (Maximum 500 words)

The leaders participating in this match were from a diverse range of countries and working contexts. Most were leaders within a public health, mental health prevention and promotion or educational organisation. A number were from Ministries or policy organisations while others were in public health leader roles with responsibility for developing and implementing programmes of change.

Participants were from Canada, New Zealand, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Ireland, Netherlands, United States.

3. What do you see as the game changer for this match topic? (Game changer is defined as: a newly introduced element or factor that changes an existing situation or activity in a significant way.) (Max 500 words)

The three initiatives profiled in the presentations, identified strategies and tactics that lead to strong culturally responsive, integrated community changes following challenging and traumatic events. The presentations focused on community engagement and leadership and highlighted how programmes could be set up and sustained in a way that moved from intent to action. All of the presentations had a collective impact framework underpinning them.

The first presentation profiled the Māori Whanau Ora programme, a comprehensive family wrap around response and the way in which this indigenous approach is building community wellbeing and resilience. The programme takes a strengths approach supporting people to identify their whanau (family) dreams and aspirations and supports people through an integrated holistic response, to achieve these. The

second presentation the All Right? Campaign focused on a population mental health promotion campaign initially developed in response to the earthquakes but built on this following the mosque shootings to support community recovery. The third presentation spotlighted the Mana Ake programme where community connectors were placed in schools to support them and the communities, they served to create strength based environments for young people that fostered resilience within children following the Christchurch earthquakes.

The three presentations had at their core deep community connections and engagement. All three were developed in circumstances where communities were struggling in the aftermath of significant trauma due to natural disaster (earthquake) and terrorist attack or in the case of the Whanau Ora Te Tihi presentation from the long-lasting impacts of colonization and poverty on a community. The match traversed a range of context and initiatives exploring how cultural contexts that build on strengths, leadership and change management strategies enabled good ideas to become community-impacting actions. This includes the mechanisms for getting political and commissioning buy-in. Each of the presentations addressed the themes of inequity and racism reinforcing the importance of cultural knowledge and context in galvanizing community action.

Speakers all talked about the importance of their role in providing the backbone support required to support communities to pick up and make their own, strategies and actions that would build resilience within themselves, their families, neighbours and neighbourhoods. All three programmes were deeply embedded in the communities and drew on the community leaders and the community's expertise, knowledge, preferences and cultural contexts to drive change.

The game changers related to the importance of *whakapapa* the Māori concept that relates to knowing who you are and where you come from and therefore how you connect into your current environments. In each of the programmes this concept was deeply embedded as people sort to understand the past so that they could move forward acknowledging both successes and failures. This concept within the cultural context for Māori deeply acknowledges that everything that goes forwards builds on the collective knowledge and leadership of those that have gone before and therefore starts right up front with a deep acknowledgement of collective ownership. This then feeds forward and engages communities with this same spirit of ownership and connection. The second concept that resonates from the presentations is that of *whakawhaungatanga*. This is about knowing who you are and where you came from, it is about honouring connections, relationships, networks and deeply respecting these as programmes build forward. This concept aligns well with the concept of collective impact as it ensures that mechanisms are in place within resilience building programmes that ensure they are community connected, owned and led. The network of relationships and the mindfulness of these is also critical for building out circles of influence that will ensure community and political buy in.

4. How will the match **support inclusion, resilience and growth** for this match topic and for the leaders who attended: (Maximum 500 words)

There was fabulous discussion across all four sessions and participants willingly shared their knowledge, skills, resources, and experience. This match was an opportunity to exchange ideas, knowledge and lessons learned on innovative and effective approaches that aim to transform health and public health systems. It had implications for how we build effective population mental health promotion programmes as well as implications for how we build any interventions that aim to work within a community context. The engagement of communities themselves and their input to co-design and shift responses so that they resonated has implications across all domains in which we seek to promote wellbeing. There were many examples canvassed where participants highlighted how differing strategies and approaches were taken within different communities and contexts and how this led to ownership and engagements. For example, in the All Right? Campaign, the backbone team engaged with a diverse range of groups within their community which led to messaging that spoke widely to people in an inclusive way.

Taking the theme of leadership and looking at presentations through the lens of "intent to action" has strengthened our overall focus on building mechanism for sustainable change. This builds on the discussions that have taken place over the year within the international public health leadership collaborative led by Stephanie Priest (Canada), Ian Walker and Jude Stansfield (England). There is every confidence that the learnings from this match will be taken forward and further developed and shared through the leadership collaborative.