



# Impact Report

2021

**EMERGE**  
*Aotearoa*



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TRUST

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# CEO's message

Kia ora koutou katoa and welcome to Emerge Aotearoa's Impact Report for 2021.

During a year dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic and widespread uncertainty, Emerge Aotearoa has continued to grow, supporting an increasing number of people in need of our housing, health, addiction and disability services. This report details the positive impacts we have had on the lives of thousands of New Zealanders in 2020/21.

One of our most significant contributions has been providing additional social housing through our Housing Trust and supporting whānau to find and maintain, not just a house but a home, via our housing services. In the last year, we have added 31 more houses to New Zealand's housing pool and supported 4540 people to find a secure home or sustain their tenancy. Among these have been 103 people who we have supported after being in prison.

We have also made an impact on integrated primary mental health services, working with General Practice teams and other NGOs to support people earlier, as they start to experience mental distress. I am proud to say rollouts have to date been in areas that have the highest levels of inequity. This has included our initially self-funded EaseUp service, which this year attracted Ministry of Health funding, allowing us to expand the area, age range and scope of mental health and addiction services being provided to rangatahi in the Auckland region. More than 155 referrals to EaseUp have been received since launching in mid-2019.

Our service options for young people across the country are now vast, ranging from intensive wraparound support services for rangatahi with complex and

challenging needs, through to mental health support initiatives in residential settings and our early intervention work in primary health care. Almost 20 per cent of the people we support are under 25 years old.

Working in partnership with Vaka Tautua on The Generator, this MSD funded initiative is producing outstanding results. Since it was launched, we have worked with more than 400 people and helped distribute over \$1.1 million to assist them to develop their own business ideas. Ninety four per cent of those funded are still actively managing their own enterprise. Two thirds are transitioning off or no longer on the benefit and one third are now employing other people. Seventy eight per cent of people funded through the Generator are Māori or Pasifika.

The work of our 1265 kaimahi, who support people in 191 residential and community-based services, has been more impressive than ever this year. Working in a COVID-19 environment has meant that they have had to adapt to new ways of delivering services that are safe for themselves and those they support. I thank them, and kaimahi who have had to adjust to delivering their work from home, for the tremendous energy and commitment they bring to work everyday.

I also want to make special mention of the increasing impact that our smaller entities Mind & Body and Ignite are making for people across the motu. Under Magdel Hammond's leadership Mind & Body is a strong national advocate for increased peer services. It is doing impressive work, providing peer support through avenues such as

the 1737 helpline, the Auckland Haven café, Awhi Ora and Piki Ora, a youth initiative under PeerZone, which we acquired in 2021. Our online platform Ignite is also growing with more than 2100 subscribers having accessed its resources and support options to improve their wellbeing in the last year.

We finalised our Te Tiriti framework and also completed our Pasifika framework. A third significant initiative has been the co-design of our lived experience and diversity framework that will underpin our continued commitment to our pou of Privileging Lived Experience and Diversity.

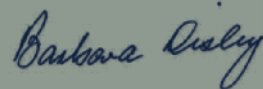
At a national and international level, Emerge Aotearoa is gaining an increasing profile and is having a substantial impact on the shape of the social housing sector, NGO mental

health and addiction services, and the development of Aotearoa's new health system. There are a number of very experienced managers in the organisation who sit on organisations at the highest levels. Among those to which I contribute are the Ministry of Health's NGO Council, the Minister's Mental Health Assurance Group, and Platform Trust's Board. I continue to be on the Board of the International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership and feel fortunate to be able to both contribute to and learn from colleagues in other countries.

Thank you to all of our kaimahi, our Group Executive Team and Board members, with particular thanks to Materoa Mar the chair of Emerge Aotearoa Trust and Graeme Bell the chair of Emerge Aotearoa Housing Trust. The services we provide are likely to be in

even greater demand in the coming year and I know that with your support we will make a positive impact on the lives of many more New Zealanders.

Ngā mihi nui,



**Dr Barbara Disley ONZM**  
**Group CEO**



# The purpose of this report



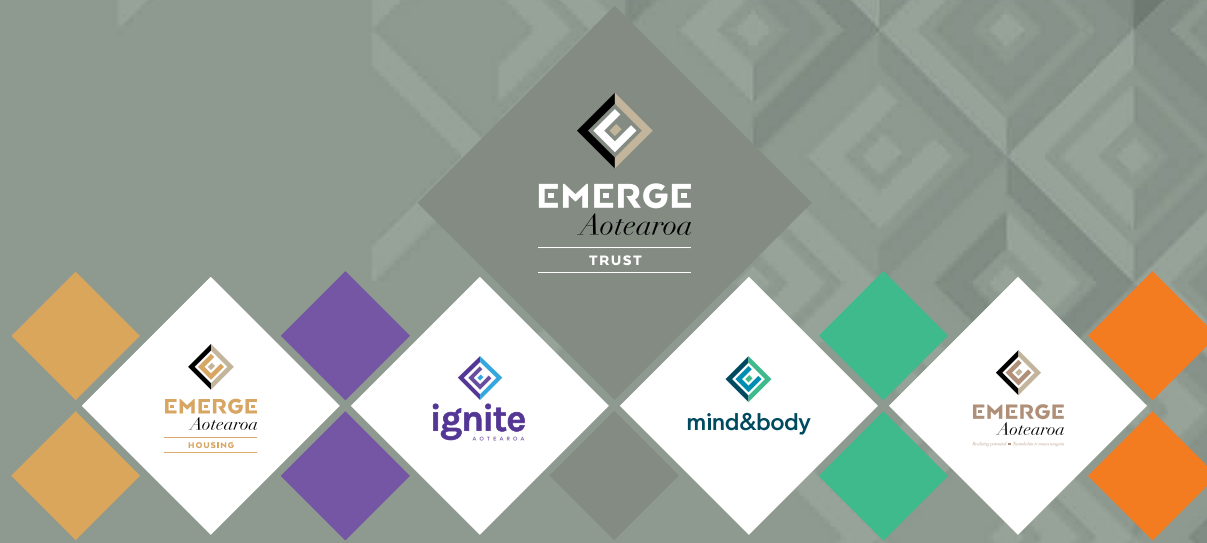
The reason for this report is to demonstrate the positive impact the Emerge Aotearoa Group has made for whānau, communities, and partner organisations over the past 12 months.

We are a large and diverse organisation united by our vision of realising potential. This report reflects how we have worked towards achieving this and the impact we have had on people, our kaimahi, our partners and funders. We are pleased to be able to share stories from our daily work and are grateful to everyone who has participated in this storytelling.

We hope that by sharing the impact we deliver for people, their whānau and communities, we are showing Emerge Aotearoa's potential to continue making a positive difference for all New Zealanders.



**Tautokohia te mana tangata**  
**Realising potential**



# Overview of Emerge Aotearoa entities

The Emerge Aotearoa Group provides support services for people throughout the motu.

The Emerge Aotearoa Trust oversees the following entities:

- **Emerge Aotearoa Limited**
- **Emerge Aotearoa Housing Trust**
- **Mind & Body**
- **Ignite Aotearoa Limited**

Our organisation is committed to strengthening whānau together so that communities thrive. We do this

by providing innovative and diverse services that are culturally responsive and appropriate. We provide support for people who are homeless; live in poverty; experience addictions; are unemployed; have physical and intellectual disabilities; experience mental distress and trauma; and want to improve their wellbeing.

Under the robust governance of our Board and leadership of our Group

Executive Team, our services are guided by our strategic pou:

- **Māori succeeding as Māori**
- **Lived Experience and Diversity are Privileged**
- **Thriving Pacific Peoples**

All of our major planning includes input from people who use our services or who have lived experience. The founding document of Aotearoa, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, underpins our work. We are also mindful of the diversity of cultures and communities across

Aotearoa and we work in ways that recognise and embrace diversity.

Over the past three years, we have diversified into some new and exciting service areas and continue to look at where we can be of benefit.

We have kaimahi located throughout the country, with services in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Northland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Hawke's Bay, Nelson/Marlborough, Tairāwhiti, South Canterbury, the West Coast, Dunedin and Invercargill.

# The New Zealand landscape

The past year has seen a significant shift in health and social sector policies, as the impact of recent reviews has started to take hold.

COVID-19 has seen quick responses that have attempted to reduce the impact of poverty and income loss; provide housing to people who have been homeless; and deliver a range of services to respond to the psycho-social impact of the pandemic. In many ways the pandemic itself has shown us that there are very different responses needed in the way we provide health services, if we are to truly better meet the needs of the people for whom current services and structures do not work.

The Health Sector Review and the setting up and initial work of the Implementation Unit heralded welcome changes. The establishment of the Māori Health Authority and the Interim Health New Zealand Board flag the priority that will be given to system and service changes that will give greater priority to equity and choice. This year

has seen the continued roll out of the mental health “access and choice” responses to support people earlier when mental health and addiction challenges are experienced. While the pace of change in some areas, particularly for Māori and rangatahi, has been slow, the initiatives are providing greater choice and a range of early intervention options that have the potential to meet needs more effectively.

The significant review of Oranga Tamariki over the past year will lead to significant shifts in the way services, particularly for Māori, will be provided. This review flagged that hapu and iwi must have greater input and say into decisions that affect their tamariki. This principle in itself has the potential to substantially change current approaches and practices.

Across the Justice and Correction’s sectors, we have seen a stronger focus on alternatives to incarceration and a strengthening of mental health, addiction and housing programmes that will enhance the options for people who are interfacing with our justice systems. There has been a decrease in the prison muster as a result.

With the growing numbers of people in need of housing and housing support, there has been a range of new initiatives that are designed to provide not only more transition options but also more permanent housing for people. While not quick or easy fixes, we continue to work within the existing housing policy settings to build and provide more permanent housing. While the emphasis to date has been on the transition and social housing end of the spectrum,

there has been a small but growing shift to fund people to move into rent-to-buy and home ownership programmes. These small initiatives are enabling some innovative iwi-led responses.

While yet to really bear fruit, there is a strong prevailing focus on Te Tiriti responsiveness, equity, choice, community engagement and greater input to the design of services. We are excited to be active participants in dynamic and changing policy contexts that will change the shape of our responses to inequity, trauma and poverty.

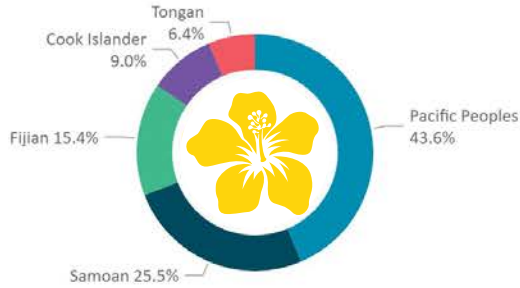
# ORGANISATIONAL SNAPSHOT

## Our Workforce

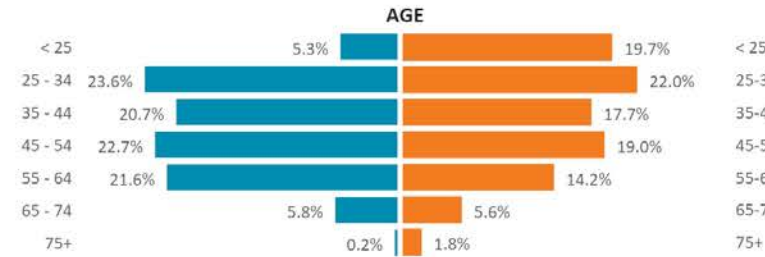
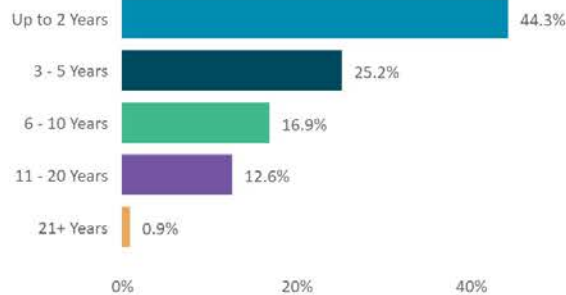
**1,265**

people were employed as at 30 June 2021

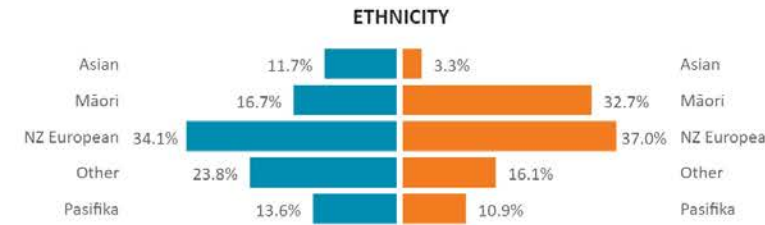
### OF THE 13% OF PASIFIKA KAIMAHI WE EMPLOY



### LENGTH OF SERVICE



### Our Workforce



### People we Support

## People we Serve

**14,747**

People have used our services during the year 1 July 2020 - 30 June 2021

**6,229**

People being supported by us on 30 June 2021

**191**  
services provided across the country



**347**

Number of Social Housing Offerings

**4,540**

Number of whānau\* supported in transitional housing and tenancy support services from 1 July 2020 - 30 June 2021

\*whānau range from 1-11 people





# Our desired impact



## Greater Equity

- Whānau are choosing the services they wish to access, when and where they want them
- Whānau are confident advocating for themselves
- Whānau who experience homelessness, mental distress, addiction or disability challenges participate equally in society
- Whānau experience equitable health outcomes
- Our relationship with Māori is centered on building partnerships



## Thriving Communities

- The people we support are involved in organisational decision making
- Whānau participate in leadership and development opportunities
- Whānau are engaged in activities to achieve wellbeing
- Whānau are responsible stewards of their environments
- Whānau are economically secure and are developing pathways towards independence



## Healthy Whānau

- More whānau live in decent homes
- Whānau, particularly children, are safe and experiencing mental wellbeing
- Whānau are connected to their whakapapa and communities
- Whānau are setting and achieving personal goals for their physical, emotional, spiritual and mental wellbeing
- Whānau, particularly children, have the resources to cope with life's challenges and to heal and recover from trauma

# Greater Equity





# Improving access to housing

Emerge Aotearoa's housing initiatives progressed at pace throughout the 2020/21 year and included the completion of a number of new social housing developments.

One such project was Mahia Village in Manurewa, where in September 2020, we opened the doors to 15 new one and two bedroom homes. A total of 112 homes will eventually be built in the village by the end of 2022. We were also pleased to complete 16 new one-bedroom homes in Great South Road, Manurewa, that have been made available to people waiting on the public housing register. To mark the completion of this significant project, the site was officially blessed on 19 March 2021 and gifted the name Pohutukawa, celebrating the beautiful tree standing at the front of the units.

We were delighted to hear that five projects have been approved for Ministry

of Housing and Urban Development funding for the construction of 87 new homes that will be owned or leased by Emerge Aotearoa Housing Trust. This includes the redevelopment of an old Emerge Aotearoa block of units in Papatoetoe, as well as developments in Christchurch and Masterton.



Blessing of our Pohutukawa Social Housing site in March 2021.



Pictured at the whenua blessing were (left to right) Gareth Norris (Jennian Homes), David Comiskey (Emerge Aotearoa Regional Manager), Kaumatua Mike Kawana (Rangitāne), Graeme Bell (Emerge Aotearoa Housing Trust Chair), Mayor of Masterton Lyn Patterson, Wairarapa MP Kieran McNulty, and Mena Antonio (Emerge Aotearoa Housing Trust board member).

The Housing Trust also supported Emerge Aotearoa’s Housing Services by contributing to the leasing, set up, tenancy and property management of more than 70 new homes in Christchurch, Hamilton and Napier, and two transitional housing complexes in Wellington.

We also supported the leasing of 123 homes for the Housing First and Creating Positive Pathways (CPP) programmes in Wellington and Christchurch.

“To achieve as much as we have this year has taken a mammoth effort by

a great team,” says Housing Trust General Manager Hope Simonsen.

In February, we were honoured to welcome Hon Dr Megan Woods and Hon Marama Davidson to one of our Transitional Housing properties, where they announced that the Government had reached 1000 additional transitional housing places, delivered under the Aotearoa New Zealand Homelessness Action Plan.

Also in February, we welcomed Dr Neru Leavasa, MP for Takanini and Hon Poto Williams, Minister for Building and

Construction and Associate Minister Housing (Public Housing), to Mahia Village for a visit. This coincided with the start of the Residential Tenancy Amendment Act 2020 reforms.

Looking to the future, we were delighted in July 2021 to officially bless the whenua at our upcoming social housing development in Masterton. The work will come under Emerge Aotearoa’s Housing Trust and has been funded by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

On track to be completed by June 2022, the 22 homes will be located in a wider development of 40 properties.

“Emerge Aotearoa Housing Trust’s focus for the coming year is to continue to grow the number of social homes, particularly in regions of high unmet need and where we have a transitional housing presence,” Hope says. “We are continuing to work to be part of the solution to Aotearoa’s housing crisis.”

## Supporting long-term housing and creating communities

National Housing Manager Gemma Bateman says the growth in Emerge Aotearoa's housing services means the organisation has more ability to respond to increasing need. It is, however, tough to see that more people in our communities require housing, she says.

"There's definitely been a lot of stress and pressure on people this past year. The feedback we receive is that many never thought they would be in this situation (struggling with housing), but our support has given them hope."

Gemma says highlights throughout the year have included the positive outcomes from CPP and Housing First services in Wellington and Christchurch, and seeing the positive difference made to tamariki living in motels through the flexifund we administer on behalf of the Ministry of Social Development. A new housing service has also been established in Rotorua called Te Hau ki te Kāinga (the winds that guide you home). A collaboration between three NGOs (Emerge Aotearoa, Wera Aotearoa Charitable Trust and Visions of a Helping Hand Charitable Trust) and supported by Ngāti Whakāue, it will support people into long-term housing and focus on creating communities.

Through the Sustaining Tenancies Service, we supported 298 whānau to retain their tenancies. In 2021, we also saw 1359 people we were working with, successfully move into social housing, private rentals and flatting situations. "We were pleased to see that 34.5% of people exiting our services went to private rentals," Gemma says.

Emerge Aotearoa's housing teams have been the key to many significant improvements in people's lives. This has been particularly evident in Auckland, and has included supporting people who were required to isolate and transfer into MIQ facilities due to the COVID-19 Delta outbreak.

Tenant feedback:

*"My Emerge Aotearoa support worker has earned my trust, respect and has been a person I have leant on at times for emotional support. Life would have been a lot harder without this support. I never felt judged. She is very approachable, showed compassion, concern, understanding and gave unconditional support."*



**Hon Dr Megan Woods and Hon Marama Davidson visit one of Emerge Aotearoa's transitional housing properties.**

*"Your support was amazingly helpful in giving me confidence to face the onslaught!"*

*"Thank you so much for everything you did for me and my living situation. I really appreciate it!"*



## GREATER EQUITY

# Marching with Pride

This year, we very proudly attended the Auckland Pride March on 27 February. It was a fantastic celebration of the values we hold dear at Emerge Aotearoa, and a wonderful affirmation of our commitment to diversity and inclusion in our communities.

Kaimahi and allies from across our entities came along to march behind our Te Whānau o Uenuku banner, as we made our way from Albert Park to Aotea Square.

As an organisation, we strive for all people that we connect with, to feel safe being their authentic selves each and every day.

This also applies to all of our kaimahi, as we want everybody employed by

Emerge Aotearoa to come to work each day and know they are working in a safe and inclusive environment.

We believe that participating in events, such as Auckland Pride, has an impact on kaimahi as it demonstrates how we all stand in solidarity with each other.

The Auckland Pride March was an important occasion for us to reflect on how far our nation has come and the work still to be done.



**Kaimahi from across Emerge Aotearoa marching at Auckland Pride behind our Te Whānau o Uenuku banner.**



# Rainbow partner role made permanent

Emerge Aotearoa was delighted to make our Rainbow Partner role a permanent position in 2021, to further strengthen our commitment to privileging lived experience and diversity.

We welcomed Cynthia Spittal into the Rainbow Partner role in 2020, and her immense contributions around the organisation have been felt far and wide. Cynthia has been very busy providing specialist support and advice to kaimahi who are working with the diverse LGBTQIA+ whānau who access our services.

The position was created following the establishment of our rainbow kaimahi network, Te Whānau o Uenuku. It was designed to help us improve our partnerships with external stakeholders and other organisations working with diverse communities; support the work of Te Whānau o Uenuku; and ensure our internal policies and processes are inclusive and reflective of diversity.

Cynthia says EmERGE Aotearoa already had great foundations for the Rainbow Partner role. She says she has been impressed by activities that support the rainbow community such as Pride Month celebrations, and the greater visibility of diversity in the workplace.

“Through their own initiative, many of our services have shown increased responsiveness to the needs of the rainbow whānau they work with. There has been great uptake of the resources we have made available, and in fact, lots of our kaimahi get in touch with me to share some of the things they have found. It’s really encouraging,” she says.

Earlier this year, our Napier service used a grant from our Make A Difference



fund to purchase a selection of rainbow books for a special library. These books are now available for local whānau who have transgender children. They provide expert advice and information to help understand the various stages of transition, so they can better support their child.

Throughout Aotearoa’s COVID-19 response, Cynthia has worked hard to ensure information has been shared with rainbow whānau to let them know

about the support they can access during lockdowns.

She has also contributed to the development of public policy, assisting EmERGE Aotearoa to produce a submission for a Statistics NZ’s consultation about gathering gender and sex identity data. Cynthia has also begun work helping with the Government’s review of its findings from the Christchurch mosque shootings, particularly around hate speech and the categories that might be covered under anti-discrimination laws. It is work that ensures expertise from front-line kaimahi working directly with rainbow people, is considered in the development of policy and legislation.





# Celebrating Pink Shirt Day

Emerge Aotearoa is proud to take a stand against any form of bullying and regularly supports anti-bullying campaigns.

Each year, our teams take part in Pink Shirt Day, a global campaign that was started by two students in 2007, when a friend was bullied for wearing a pink shirt. People now put on their brightest pink clothing and gather around the world on 21 May to help stamp out bullying and advocate for safe communities.

We see Pink Shirt Day as a wonderful opportunity for kaimahi and the people we support to consider how we will acknowledge and celebrate the day and learn more about the movement. The occasion is always an excellent opportunity to demonstrate our organisational values of Ako (walking and learning together) and Whakawhanaunga (connecting with a purpose).

Emerge Aotearoa's teams showed their support for Pink Shirt Day by holding pink-themed events across the motu. We were thrilled to see how much mahi and creativity went into making our zero tolerance for bullying stance heard loud and clear.

The Pounamu Hub Rotorua won Best Dressed Team for their efforts organising a Pink in the Park picnic, and the Galbraith Hub won the photo and story competition. After decorating their building and garden, they celebrated with shared pink kai. It was fantastic to see so many teams dressed up in varying shades of pink, taking a stand against bullying in all its forms.



Our Galbraith Hub went all out for Pink Shirt Day



## GREATER EQUITY

# Cross Agency Rainbow Network Conference

The Government's Cross Agency Rainbow Network advocates for the diversity of rainbow communities within public service agencies, and this year, we were proud to present at the national conference in Wellington.

On 25 March, a small group from Emerge Aotearoa, including our Rainbow Partner and Chief Executive, attended the event at Parliament House. The key themes of the conference were wellbeing (physical and mental) and safety (physical and psychological).

We were excited to be one of only three NGOs to be invited to present at the conference, and it was a real privilege to share the work of Te Whānau o Uenuku, our rainbow roopu, and our

journey to becoming a more rainbow-inclusive organisation.

Many organisations at the conference commented on our efforts to create a dedicated Rainbow Partner role, something they did not have, and the capabilities it would provide for driving diversity and inclusion.

We were able to share insights from the conference about the impact of communities accepting rainbow people, including findings that show

using a transgender child or young person's chosen name reduces depression symptoms by 71 per cent, thoughts of suicide by 34 per cent, and suicide attempts by 65 per cent. These are powerful figures and are important in understanding how we as a community can make impactful changes for vulnerable rainbow people.

We are proud to be in a position to share our organisation's perspectives in the hope of improving outcomes for rainbow people throughout Aotearoa.

**(From right) Educator Michelle Dawes, Executive Director Emerge Aotearoa Ltd and Ignite Aotearoa Nicola Coom and Rainbow Partner Cynthia Spittal at the Cross Agency Rainbow Network Conference.**



## GREATER EQUITY

# Te Puna Ora grows cultural commitment

Emerge Aotearoa has embarked on a significant cultural journey with the support of Te Puna Ora team.

The team's important mahi will form strong cultural foundations within the organisation, further enhance our commitment to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi and strengthen our understanding of Te Ao Māori, which in turn benefits the people we work with. Te Puna Ora team will ensure policies are culturally sound, provide training for kaimahi, develop a Te Tiriti framework, and an action plan that incorporates Te Ao Māori and Tikanga to guide the organisation to a more inclusive model.

Emerge Aotearoa's Mana Whakahaere Manawanui Parata says the framework will be based on the pou of Māori succeeding as Māori and the organisation's important values. When he accepted the role of Mana Whakahaere - the navigator on the waka

– Manawanui had the opportunity to build a team in a truly Te Ao Māori way.

A two-day noho was held at Rāpaki Marae where prospective employees were asked to present their mihi, followed by shared kai and kōrero, and everyone was gifted a pounamu handcrafted from the same stone. "We started everyone on the kaupapa at the same time, which is a unique situation to be in and it worked really well," he says.

Manawanui describes the Mana Whakahaere role as developing an understanding of Te Ao Māori environment, bedding in more Te Tiriti-based practises within the organisation at all levels, building strong partnerships, and supporting senior management. Te Puna Ora team also

includes a Pouako (who oversees cultural competency and training), Poupono (who oversees Treaty coaching) and Pouārahi (who oversees kaiārahi, formerly known as cultural partners).

Manawanui and Te Puna Ora team have been supported throughout this journey towards greater equity by the mahi of Pouako Edwin Wikatene. "It's been great to have Edwin on the team building our cultural capacity," Manawanui says. "He has been instrumental in a number of these initiatives, is a highly regarded practitioner in Tikanga Māori, fluent in Te Reo and a natural born leader. He really knows how to capture the hearts of people."

"A lot of mahi is being done by Te Puna Ora team and senior leaders have been coming to me and saying I'm really proud of this organisation."

Although it's early days to be able to report on Te Puna Ora's impact, we



**Ko te pae tawhiti,  
whāia kia tata;  
ko te pae tata,  
whakamaua kia tina**

Seek out distant  
horizons and cherish  
those you attain

know this work will strengthen our foundations and it's our hope that this mahi keeps us committed to being a Tangata Tiriti organisation.

## GREATER EQUITY

# Survey confirms kaimahi are highly engaged

People accessing Emerge Aotearoa services are being supported by highly engaged teams who feel that their work is making a real impact in their communities, according to our latest Kaimahi Engagement Survey.

Kaimahi engagement in the 2020 survey was 7.8 out of 10. Emerge Aotearoa's main strengths were goal setting (8.6 out of 10), meaningful work (8.4 out of 10) and peer relationships (8.1 out of 10).

The survey was carried out in January and February 2021, with 70 per cent of the organisation volunteering to participate.

National Manager People Experience Luke Franks says the findings indicate the organisation is in a good position to deliver quality services for its communities.

"We were really encouraged that kaimahi at Emerge Aotearoa see it as a good place to work and would

promote it to others. When you have a positive workplace and culture, you're more likely to be delivering good services and experiences for the people you support," he says.

Organisations with high levels of kaimahi engagement report better customer satisfaction ratings and higher productivity, as well as lower turnover and absenteeism, and fewer safety incidents.

Of those who participated in the survey, 23 per cent identified as tāngata whenua, 20 per cent were Pasifika, 13 per cent were part of the Rainbow community and 43 per cent had lived experience of issues such as mental distress, disability or homelessness.

"We serve a diverse population and work with people from all walks of life," Luke says. "Being able to reflect this diversity in our organisation puts us in a good place to better understand the needs of our communities and respond appropriately."

"We were very pleased to see that Māori, Pasifika and Rainbow kaimahi,

in particular reported high levels of engagement and inclusion, slightly higher, in fact than people who did not identify as part of these groups," he says.

Data from the 2020 Kaimahi Engagement Survey is being used to inform strategic decisions for Emerge Aotearoa.



# Thriving Communities



## THRIVING COMMUNITIES

# Strong uptake of Ignite wellbeing solutions

Since August 2020, Ignite has been transforming workplace wellbeing by offering an alternative to the traditional employee assistance programme. One that is more holistic, flexible and offers greater choice and access than ever before.

Ignite Aotearoa is steadily growing and helping boost the health and wellbeing of people.

Ignite's modern platform provides flexibility and choice for how people grow their wellbeing, making it easy for users to access resources, track their wellbeing and mood, and book support sessions from qualified practitioners.

More than 2100 people from workplaces across the country are now using Ignite and the number continues to grow as the organisation expands its offerings to become a full-service employee assistance and wellbeing provider.

### Ignite's impact at a glance

**2,100+** platform subscriptions

**10,000+** website visitors

**500 one-on-one support sessions accessed**

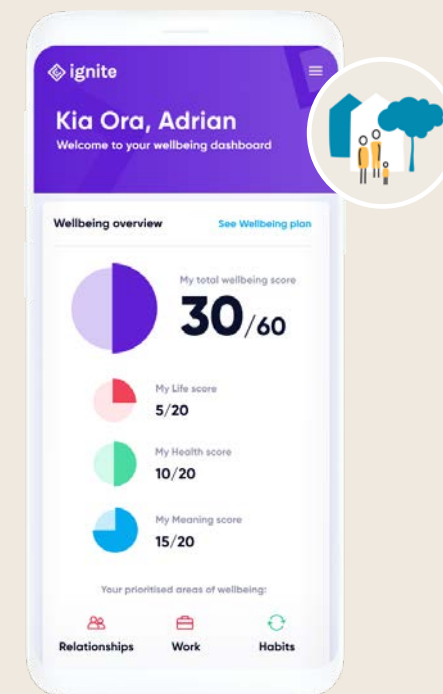
### Ready to Rent

Ignite Aotearoa has worked with Emerge Aotearoa Housing Services and the Ministry of Social Development to create an interactive programme for Wellington residents in emergency housing.

The Ready to Rent workshops are currently being delivered to people looking for

a place to call home. They have been designed to empower tenants with the tools to find and maintain a private rental property. The aim is to break down some of the barriers to accessing the private rental market often experienced by low-income households. Topics such as how to create a budget and how to keep a house clean are among those covered.

Feedback from participants has been very positive, with many saying that the workshops have helped them feel more confident about applying to rent a property. So far, more than half of the people who attended have now found housing, and several others are close.



*"The Ignite Wellbeing platform has complimented our in-house wellness programme perfectly. Being able to offer our staff a one-stop hub for their wellbeing needs, with the option to book confidential counselling and coaching sessions has been really beneficial. I would recommend this platform to any business, whether you are just starting out with employee wellness, or are looking to build on an existing programme,"*  
**Tracey, Ignite client**



# Supporting financial independence

Over the past year, an increased number of participants in The Generator have said the programme has helped improve their quality of life and sparked financial independence.

A 2021 survey found that more than 85% of The Generator’s participants reported a significant increase in their wellbeing, social connectedness and financial situation. Two thirds of participants were either transitioning off the benefit or were no longer receiving it, and 94% were working full or part-time in their enterprise.

Since the programme was launched in 2019, more than \$1.1 million in seed funding has been distributed to individuals and whānau on low incomes, so they could kickstart their dream of starting a business or enterprise.

Delivered as a joint initiative between Emerge Aotearoa Trust and Vaka Tautua, The Generator also provides mentorship to help people plan and sustain their venture.

*“Thank you to The Generator team for seeing my dream and continuing to guide me through it all.”*

*“The Generator is an absolute blessing. It isn’t just about seed funding, it’s about the community of support that we all have, it’s uniting with other people with great ideas, but also having people to talk to about what those ideas are and how to make that a reality. The Generator is incredible. I sincerely believe I wouldn’t have been able to start this without The Generator.”*

## The Generator impact at a glance:

<p><b>\$1,132,477.32</b> of seed funding has been distributed by The Generator</p>	<p><b>94%</b> of participants funded are working full or part-time in their enterprise</p>
<p><b>408</b> people have completed or are completing their journey with The Generator</p>	<p><b>78%</b> of participants funded are Māori or Pasifika</p>
<p><b>2/3</b> of participants are no longer on or are transitioning off the benefit</p>	<p><b>70%</b> of participants funded are parents of children under the age of 17</p>
<p><b>40%</b> of participants funded are caring for disabled or elderly whānau, have shared care of children, or are studying.</p>	



# Sewing her way to a brighter future

Her skills with a needle and thread have helped a single mother kick off a thriving business, thanks to support from The Generator.

Four years ago, Ann Gafo moved to New Zealand from Samoa with her five children. Initially she and her aiga lived with family members, before they started moving from place to place, including a rental property that was hazardous to their health. While searching for a more suitable home, Ann was told about The Generator.

This joint initiative between Emerge Aotearoa and Vaka Tautua provides seed funding and mentorship to help people on low incomes kickstart their own business or venture, and improve their financial future.

Using her seed funding, Ann was able to create a business plan and buy the sewing machine and material she needed to get started on her new career. Soon, she was able to launch Norah's Fashion Fale, where she makes traditional Samoan fashion using the sewing skills she learnt before coming to

New Zealand. However, not long after she started her home sewing business, the first COVID-19 lockdown happened.

Ann says that at first she was not sure what she was going to do, as the demand for her clothes slowed down significantly, and local markets closed. She then started to receive requests to make face masks, which she promptly began creating. She is looking forward to attending local markets as soon as possible to set up her clothing stall and have customers come and visit her.

Ann says being involved with The Generator has empowered her to improve her family's lifestyle with the extra money she is making from her business. "The Generator has helped a lot and I really appreciate it," she says. "The extra money I make helps us pay our bills."

[thegenerator.org.nz](http://thegenerator.org.nz)





## THRIVING COMMUNITIES

# PeerZone providing more choice for communities

Wellingtonians seeking peer-led mental health support have been given increased certainty of choice this year, after Mind & Body became the new home of PeerZone.

Along with peer-led mental health support for youth, PeerZone provides resources, toolkits, and workshops for people with lived experience and those who work with them. The social enterprise was brought into our Mind & Body services on 1 February 2021 and has been continuing to work with people in the Wellington region ever since.

PeerZone also provides one-to-one and group-based peer support for the Piki pilot programme in Wellington, which works alongside rangatahi to strengthen their wellbeing. Piki is designed for young people aged 18 to 25.

Mind & Body National Manager Magdel Hammond says many people have been struggling with mental distress through the COVID-19 pandemic, on top of other stresses and issues.

“It’s vital that people have more choice (for support), not less. We’re proud to have given PeerZone a new home to assist with these needs and ensure people have access to peer-led services, if they want them.”

“We see the impact that having choices has for people wanting support. It’s important that there are options and that you have the autonomy to decide what assistance is the right fit for your wellbeing,” she says.

PeerZone was developed by Mary O’Hagan and Sara McCook Weir, who both have lived experience of mental distress and of helping their peers look after their wellbeing.

Mind & Body had been top of mind when the founders were considering

a new home for PeerZone, due to the organisation’s stance on privileging lived experience and its commitment to mutual peer relationships.

“At the moment, Aotearoa still has limited peer-led support options, so we are really pleased to have given PeerZone the certainty to continue supporting people,” Magdel says. “It has been another option for those who want help from a peer-led service.”

One woman who accessed PeerZone this year said the experience has given her tools to make a real difference in her life.

“All of the issues that have been covered during PeerZone have been relevant to my personal experiences. I’ve really enjoyed coming to the group and being part of the things that are shared, and

learning strategies for how to deal with issues that affect me and many other women day-to-day.”

The initiative has also been well received by people attending train the trainer workshops, with one participant saying, “Our group worked really well together. I feel that PeerZone is going to be valuable for me and my peers. My knowledge has been broadened and I now have amazing resources at my fingertips.”



mind&body



## THRIVING COMMUNITIES

# EaseUp continuing to grow

EaseUp is a community-based, youth alcohol and drug service that was developed and initially fully funded by Emerge Aotearoa Trust.

It is a holistic, goal-based programme, co-designed by young people with alcohol and other drug issues, with support being provided by clinicians and peer support workers.

Over the past year, new funding from the Ministry of Health has enabled EaseUp to expand its services to cover more of Tāmaki Makarau, including Auckland and Waitemātā DHB areas, as far north as Wellsford and south to Ōtāhuhu. EaseUp has also been able to expand the age group it can support to 12-24 years old (previously 13-20 years old).

As well as continuing to provide support for overcoming substance issues, EaseUp's offerings have grown to include brief intervention services and

working with young people who are experiencing mild to moderate mental wellbeing challenges.

Being funded by the Ministry of Health has reinforced the success of this model of care, and we are delighted that more youth are now able to access EaseUp.

Youth supported by EaseUp have reported:

- **Reduced substance use**
- **Improved school attendance**
- **Improved relationships, trust and understanding with their whānau**
- **Improved physical, spiritual, emotional and mental health**
- **Improved finances**



155 referrals received

56 Māori youth supported

62 youth aged 15-18

Between June 2019 and June 2021

“...We need to start talking more. I talk way more now about how I feel...They've let me know it's not being weak, that's being a man. Any man can throw a punch but a man who can speak about his feelings or handle them well, that's a real man.”

Young person

“I just like how they come out to us, talk to us like they've known us for years, and make us feel like family. Sometimes they give us information that we need to hear. They help us a lot.”

Young person



# Whariki day programme flourishes

Whariki: Tangata Whaiora and Family/Whānau Services is a community centre that has been delivering day programmes and one-to-one support in the South Auckland community for more than 16 years.

The service provides people living with mental and/or alcohol and other drug (AOD) distress, access to recovery-based education programmes, support groups, and activities, such as classes and workshops.

A key factor to its success is that it is run by people who have lived experience of mental and/or AOD distress, Service Manager Troy Manley says. "We are the only 100 per cent lived experience service in South Auckland and we use that lived experience to build a rapport with the people we work with," he says.

Each year, four timetables are released, offering a range of activities that run over an eight-week term. Some of these free programmes include, cooking skills; arts and crafts; workshops exploring Te Ao Māori; men's and women's groups; literacy and numeracy training, and peer support.

The COVID-19 lockdowns had a big impact on the day-to-day operation and function of Whariki's programmes. In term four of 2017, an average of 77 people would attend per week, but at the same time in 2020, this had dropped to an average of 38. To adapt quickly, the team moved to online registrations using QR codes that linked to forms and information.

*"COVID-19 forced us to change what we did dramatically, but we looked at it as a way of moving us into the future," Troy says. "Being a day programme, we've been used to working face-to-face with people, but we've worked hard to jump online and offer our services in new ways."*

Comments taken from the Experience Survey compiled in 2020:

*"People can feel comfortable to be open about sharing their experiences without judgement. The facilitators are excellent, patient and skilled to bring conversations into the open. These kind of support groups don't appear to be widely known about in mainstream mental health services. Would be good to have it more widely publicised. Excellent service."*

*"I really enjoyed attending (the programme) each week. I learned a lot, got to meet new people and see a lot of familiar people."*



# Healthy Whānau





# Partnering with Oranga Tamariki

Emerge Aotearoa's partnership with Oranga Tamariki continues to flourish, with ongoing initiatives delivering strong results and new opportunities on the horizon for the coming year.

We are contracted to provide care and support to young people with complex needs in the Southern region. These services include:

- **Multi-Systemic Therapy**, an intensive parenting intervention that helps whānau manage their children who have challenging behaviour. Therapists are available 24/7 to work with parents or caregivers to develop confident parenting methods and improve outcomes for children. These outcomes include less criminal offending and substance use, and increased participation in school and other positive opportunities.
- **Te Whare Whai Oranga**, a five-bed residential programme in Christchurch for rangatahi with harmful sexual behaviours. Young people in this programme are referred by Oranga Tamariki via the Police and usually stay at Te Whare Whai Oranga for up to 12 months. This service has been running for more than 10 years.
- **Ahuru Mowai**, which provides bespoke residential placements for rangatahi requiring specialist support at a 24/7 staffed residence. Young people, who have been directly referred from care and protection facilities, generally stay with us for an extended period of time, as we work with them to transition back home to whānau or independent living. This service recognises that rangatahi may come from traumatic backgrounds and will support them to build positive relationships by helping them access



clinical support and maintain contact with whānau. It creates a stable environment where rangatahi are encouraged to participate in school and develop consistent routines.

As part of our relationship with Oranga Tamariki, a new service is also being developed in Hastings. This will provide a three-bed home in the community for rangatahi with high needs. The service will feature wrap-around support

that includes whānau involvement, daily activities and support to attend education, whether this is at school or with another provider.

Ngāti Kahungunu have provided guidance around Tikanga and Te Ao Māori to help with building a model of care to meet the needs of the rangatahi. Oranga Tamariki will partner with Emerge Aotearoa to provide the clinical care required by the young people.



# COVID-19 response continues

Emerge Aotearoa has had a robust organisational response to COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic. This has been important in keeping our kaimahi safe and ensuring we have been able to continue supporting people in the community.



Our COVID-19 Response Team was assembled in early 2020, before Aotearoa's first nationwide lockdown, and a COVID-19 Response Plan was developed. During the lockdown, the team met daily to review official updates and Ministry of Health recommendations to determine the organisation's next steps. The response has included making sure kaimahi have had the information and equipment they have needed to either work at home, in our hubs, or in the community. The response team's work has also included monitoring the situation and providing guidance to the Board and Group Executive Team.

Other ways that we have supported kaimahi throughout the pandemic have included making additional payments and offering wellbeing support, to remove some of the stress and let our

team know we are there for them and their whānau. Likewise, we activated a "keeping in touch squad" to ensure kaimahi remained connected during changing alert levels. We also worked hard to ensure the people we serve were well supported, and that external funders, government agencies and organisational partners had confidence that our pandemic response was being well managed.

One of the ways our work was recognised was receiving a 2021 Public Relations Institute of New Zealand (PRINZ) Award for our internal communications throughout COVID-19.

The award was presented to Emerge Aotearoa Communications and Marketing Manager Theodora Despotaki, and Michele Hider and her team at Priority Communications.

During the 2020 COVID-19 response, the communications team developed a microsite and other tools to deliver targeted, daily communications to our kaimahi. This ensured everybody was kept up-to-date and had the information or resources they needed to support whānau as safely as possible.

Emerge Aotearoa's COVID-19 response was also independently evaluated and the strong communications work was identified as being one of the key successes overall.

We would like to say a big thank you to all of our kaimahi for their commitment and dedication to providing our services to people in need during these difficult times. It has been a team effort and we are proud of how Emerge Aotearoa has responded to COVID-19 and the ever-changing landscape it presents.

*"All my staff said they could not have asked for better support. We were kept up-to-date daily, with reassuring and easy to access information that helped alleviate the feeling of being overwhelmed, and we felt connected through engaging in the poll on the microsite. The theme was they have never received such fantastic support from an organisation and they felt they were truly appreciated and valued for working in a front line role during this time. You and your team did a phenomenal job and I just wanted you to know that it was felt on the front lines."*

**Kaimahi feedback**

## HEALTHY WHĀNAU

# Former prisoners benefiting from Supported Living Service

Over the past year, Emerge Aotearoa has worked with more than 100 people who have been in prison to help them find suitable accommodation and reintegrate into the community.

When Ed\* was nearing his release date, he started working with an Emerge Aotearoa support navigator to set personal goals and develop a holistic reintegration plan for when he was released. He also worked with an Emerge Aotearoa Improving Mental Health Clinician while in prison to help manage his anxiety and learn new coping skills.

Following his release, Ed moved into a Corrections Supported Living Service for people with mental health challenges or cognitive impairment. A whakatau was held with kaimahi and other residents at the service to welcome Ed, and this became his home for the next several months. His support navigator says Ed engaged well with

other whānau and was thankful for the support he was receiving.

He set a goal to obtain a qualification in health and fitness, and began to focus on this quickly after entering the supported living service. He was supported to prepare a CV and successfully got a volunteer job at the local gym after going there for several weeks as a client. The kaimahi of the gym were incredibly supportive, and Ed took every opportunity he could to learn and develop his skills in dealing with people. He also enrolled in a full-time course studying nutrition and exercise at a local polytechnic.

To help with his journey, Ed became the main cook in the supported living

service and always ensured the meals were healthy and nutritionally balanced. He was house proud, attended the weekly house meetings and always participated in the allocated household duties on a daily/weekly basis.

Another achievement for Ed was re-engaging with his whānau. While he was in prison, his father had passed away, and the relationship with his whānau was strained. He was able to visit them over a weekend to start rebuilding the relationship with his mother and siblings.

He was supported to look for accommodation in the community and found a flat with other students, which he loved. Although, shifting in was delayed

due to a change in COVID-19 alert levels. Ed was disappointed and frustrated at not being able to move but to help himself manage the situation, he continued to study online and even started to run a daily exercise group with other kaimahi and clients living at the facility.

Ed is now working with Emerge Aotearoa's Corrections step-down service, which supports people transitioning from supported living into long-term accommodation. He continues to do well with his studies and recently completed a 30km run. Life at the flat is going well, and Ed continues to make positive progress.

\*Names and photos have been changed to protect the identity of the individual.



# Meeting the needs of young people

At Afua Le Taeao, young people are provided with a safe, warm and welcoming environment where they can learn about themselves and understand their future potential.

The Fale, based in Auckland, is a community placement remand home for young people who are detained in custody pending a court hearing, or are placed in the care of Oranga Tamariki before their first court appearance. The Fale provides care for up to five people at a time, usually for between four to six weeks, as they progress through their Youth Court proceedings.

Since opening in September 2019, 139 young people have been offered placements at Afua Le Taeao. Of these, 95 of the placements resulted in the young person returning home to their whānau and local community following their stay at the Fale.

Emerge Aotearoa is contracted by Oranga Tamariki to provide this service. Once a young person arrives at the Fale, kaimahi conduct a comprehensive assessment for them which takes into account their cultural and spiritual needs so these can be incorporated into their personal support plan. Throughout their stay, a structured, strengths-based programme is undertaken which promotes building positive relationships, engaging in daily recreational activities such as sport, and starting or continuing education or training.

Kaimahi encourage whānau involvement throughout the stay, and the inclusive and nurturing environment

at the Fale aims to help young people strengthen their connection with their family and local community.

The service also aims to prevent further offending and reduce their exposure to youth justice residences, by promoting public safety and ensuring positive role models interact with them regularly.

One of the great successes from Afua Le Taeao is the strong and positive relationship the service has with its neighbours and the surrounding community. Not only are they aware of the service, they are welcoming and understanding of it and the need to provide this support for youth.

*“Thanks for everything you’ve done for me while I spent my time here. I am grateful for you guys putting up with me. I would like to say thank you for welcoming me to the house and having good hospitality. I hope to one day become successful like you guys and I hope you guys have a good future. I enjoyed my time here.”* **Young person**





# Our digital transformation

We are now halfway through our three-year digital transformation journey, Te Manu Korokī, which is helping us to work more efficiently and better support the people we serve.

Through this journey, we have been introducing new tools and ways of working that allow us to spend even more time in our communities. Prior to this, a number of our systems were no longer meeting our needs, and we wanted to ensure our business applications would be fit-for-purpose for a more efficient and sustainable future.

So far, we have rolled out several improvements that better equip kaimahi to carry out their work. These have included improved record keeping and financial systems, streamlined processes that are friendlier for our mobile workers, upgraded privacy and cyber security measures, and better business systems to manage teams and scheduling.

In 2021, Te Manu Korokī saw more than 800 digital devices updated and replaced, giving kaimahi improved access to collaborate and work with their peers. A highlight from this upgrade was being able to provide kaimahi with greater flexibility to take notes with the people they support out in the field.

This work was further supported by our new cloud-based productivity and collaboration tools, including a new and improved intranet, Te Kete. The new tools have made it easier to access important work documents from any device, when and where kaimahi need them. The system also facilitates greater kōrero across teams, which was particularly important through the COVID-19 pandemic as our people



## Te Manu Korokī

sought guidance and connection to continue delivering critical support for the people who access our services.

Te Manu Korokī also streamlined key business processes that kaimahi perform, putting information they need at their fingertips and reducing the time they need to spend on administrative tasks. These improvements included a new rostering and timesheet system that kaimahi can access on their mobile phones. It allows them to accept shifts, submit leave or check rosters from wherever they are. This improvement was backed up by a new payroll system that integrates with the rostering application, and a new human resources tool that makes finding important employment information an easier process.



Te Manu Korokī is all about empowering our kaimahi to do the very best they can for people, and providing our leaders with the tools and information they need to drive our organisation with confidence.

We are continuing to introduce these improvements and are supporting all kaimahi through training and upskilling to expand their skills.





# New ideas strengthen our mahi

Kaimahi at Emerge Aotearoa have been enthusiastic about taking part in a new initiative that ensures everyone is involved in the organisation's continuous improvement.

The Emerge Aotearoa Business Plan includes an objective to "move to a culture where quality is everyone's business" and The Ideas Box is helping to bring this to life.

Launched in May 2020, The Ideas Box is an ongoing project that encourages staff to share exciting or new initiatives, and say what they think could be improved at an organisational level. Initially, it was used to harness some of the new and innovative ways kaimahi were working during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Over the last year, more than 100 ideas have been submitted by people across the motu.

When an idea is submitted, a working group investigates it or determines how it could be implemented. Subject

matter experts within Emerge Aotearoa are consulted during the process.

Ideas submitted by kaimahi have ranged from simplifying processes or making adjustments to policies, through to developing initiatives that may improve people's experiences of our services or enabling work related tasks to be done more efficiently. Many of these ideas have been developed further by subject matter experts; are having their potential implementation or financing scoped; or have had a solution identified.

One of the ideas that has been implemented in the last year has been adding a shielded website icon to the Emerge Aotearoa website. A shielded website icon is a resource for people experiencing domestic violence.

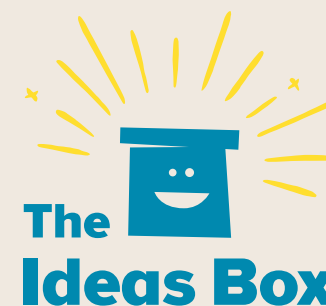
It provides a shielded portal when clicked and allows someone to contact Women's Refuge, find out how to make a safety plan to get out of a dangerous situation, and learn more about how to stay safe, without the fear of accessing it showing up in their browser history for anyone else to see.

This is one of the ways we are providing a safe passage for people experiencing family violence to get support.

Other ideas that have been implemented have included starting a workplace yoga group to boost mental and physical wellbeing. The group uses an online instructor and kaimahi who sign up choose session times that suit their schedule and level of confidence.

*"The Ideas Box is a great initiative that provides anyone with the opportunity to send in an idea. It has robust processes in place to make sure ideas that otherwise might get lost, get heard and listened to. It's great to see it was put in place as an avenue for kaimahi to contribute to how we grow and learn as an organisation."*

**Feedback from kaimahi**



# Our Board



**Materoa Mar**  
BOARD CHAIR



**Graeme Bell**  
DEPUTY CHAIR



**Sharon Hawke**  
KAITIAKI



**Dr Hinemoa Elder**  
TRUSTEE



**Tanya McCall**  
TRUSTEE



**Tim Walker**  
TRUSTEE



**Sally Webb**  
TRUSTEE

# Our Group Executive Team



**Barbara Disley**  
Group Chief Executive Officer



**Nicola Coom**  
Executive Director of EmERGE  
Aotearoa Limited and Executive  
Director of Ignite Aotearoa



**John Cook**  
Group Chief Financial Officer



**Luke Franks**  
National Manager People  
Experience



**Hope Simonsen**  
General Manager Housing Trust



**Magdel Hammond**  
National Manager Mind & Body



**Manawanui (Mana) Parata**  
Mana Whakahaere

**Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari kē he toa takitini**

My success should not be bestowed on to me alone,  
it was not individual success but the success of a collective

[www.emergeaotearoa.org.nz](http://www.emergeaotearoa.org.nz)

