



College of Emergency  
Nurses New Zealand  
Ngā Ringa Ringa Aroha NZNO



## College of Emergency Nursing New Zealand (CENNZ NZNO) Position Statement for Pae Ora in Emergency Departments

### Purpose

CENNZ (NZNO) works to improve the environment for Māori accessing care and supports the Māori nursing workforce in the Emergency Department (ED). CENNZ aims to achieve this through the implementation of the Māori Health Strategy - Te Pae Tawhiti, and the inclusion of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, hauora models, and mātauranga into clinical practice and education guidelines.

### Background

Māori have higher rates of cancer, heart and other chronic conditions, as well as a life expectancy that averages seven years less than that of non-Māori (Regional Public Health, 2017). In EDs, this inequity is illustrated in higher mortality and re-presentation rates for Māori (Curtis et al., 2022). These inequities have accumulated over decades due to a multitude of reasons, largely due to insufficient access for Māori to the determinants of health and the lasting impacts of colonisation that still have a negative impact today. Health inequities are described as “differences which are unnecessary, avoidable and are considered unfair and unjust” (Whitehead, 1992). “For many Māori, the existing public health system is experienced as hostile and alienating” (Graham & Marsters-Awatere, 2020, p.193).

In the WAI 2575 Report, a large number of Māori patients identified the healthcare system to be racist, not inclusive of whānau, and were felt to be poorly informed regarding treatment options and care. It is the clinical and ethical responsibility of emergency nurses to be aware of these negative experiences and the detrimental impact these have on Māori patients and whānau. Having an awareness of Māori health history assists the emergency nurse to understand the positioning or experience of Māori patients entering emergency care environments. Smith (2022) states that knowing the past has been part of the critical pedagogy of decolonisation.

In countries where colonisation exists, indigenous cultures have suffered. Aotearoa is no exception (Reid & Robson, 2006). Improving the health outcomes for Māori benefits the whole nation. In Aotearoa and internationally, there is an increasing recognition of indigenous health as an indicator of human rights (Reid & Robson, 2006).

The Māori nursing workforce within emergency nursing is currently at eight per cent. (CENNZ hui notes, May 2024). This low rate of Māori nurses working in EDs reflects a workforce inequity. CENNZ supports the growth and development of the Māori and Pacifica nursing workforce to reflect the communities in which we work and serve. Growing the Māori nursing workforce within EDs enables cultural care and traditions specific to Māori, 'Maoritanga,' to be facilitated, and ensures cultural safety is experienced by Māori accessing care.

## Key Recommendations

This position aligns with the Pae Ora Act, introduced July 1 2022. The purpose of this Act is to protect, promote and improve the health of all New Zealanders, and achieve equity in health outcomes, in particular for Māori.

- Emergency nurses and emergency departments are to work towards Pae Ora-Healthy Futures for all New Zealanders.
- Emergency nurses are to integrate the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi into practice.
- Nurses entering emergency nursing must be competent with 'Kawa Whakaruruhau' to facilitate cultural safety and relevance.
- Emergency Departments and their wider organisations are to enable Tuakana-Teina relationships. A Tuakana-Teina model is where senior nurses support junior nurses in practice to enable cultural specific support, facilitate the retention of Māori nurses, and to reduce cultural loading.
- Emergency Department decisions regarding funding and education opportunities for Indigenous nurses needs to be considered with an equity lens. CENNZ offers a grant to support the growth and development of Māori and Pacifica nurses to tautoko their development.

## References

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