#### The Potential Role of Rongoa Māori in Western Medicine

**Ricky Shen** 

(My personal journey to try and understand medicine)

#### What is Healthcare?

Dictionary Definitions from Oxford Languages



noun

#### noun: health care

the organized provision of "rural people deserve good



of one or more healthcare activities, considered

as an intermediate operational step to reach a specific health objective. Healthcare planning. healthcare goal.

contsys.org https://contsys.org

healthcare goal - contsys.org

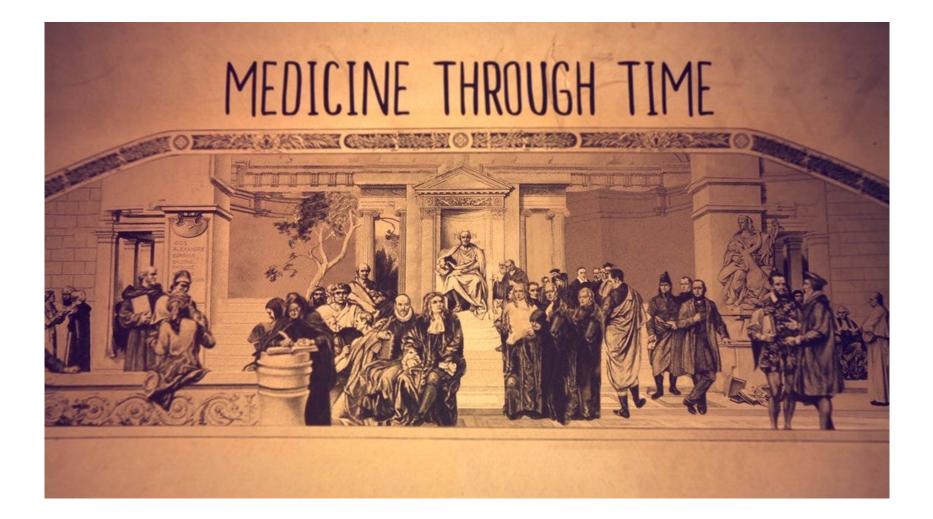
## Otorhinolaryngologist

#### What does Healthcare 'do'?



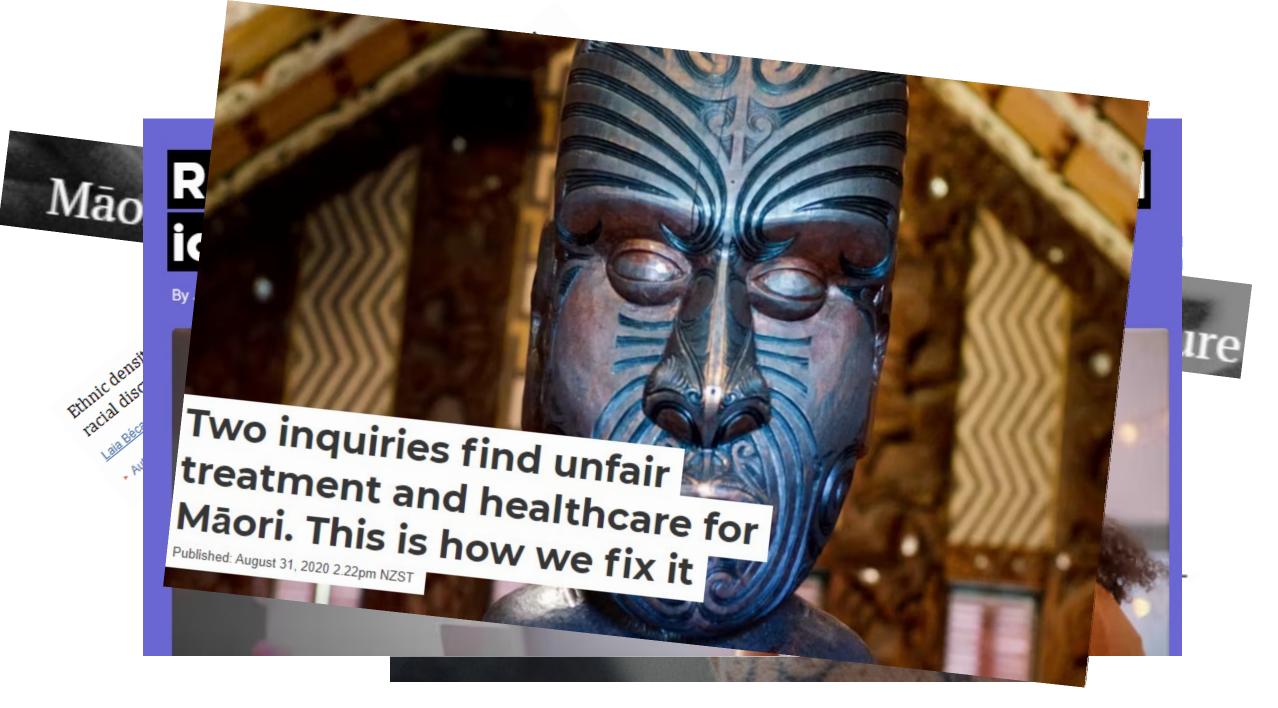
- Prevent, control, cure, manage disease.
- OR physical/ mental conditions.
- Conducts research to improve and advance healthcare
- Medical Council of New Zealand (2023)

- Improving population health
- Enhancing quality of care



#### History of NZ Healthcare

- Traditionally: Māori healthcare system Rongoa Māori
- Tailored to Māori practices.
- Emphasizes spiritual, psychological, mental health equally.
- Using traditional prayers, medicine, practices
- And then: Pakeha arrived w different healthcare system.
- Episodic care.
- Focuses on a present concern and how to treat it
- Foreign to Māori beliefs.
- Uh oh: clashes in beliefs about healthcare



The problem's BIG

# \$863.3 million from NZ Govt

### The Potential of Rongoa Māori

- Focuses on holistic care
- Introducing a system that the Māori are more accustomed to

- "Rongoā is like a journey... it involves opening up to the mauri [life force] around you and allow that to come through you.... if your surrounding taiao [environment] is polluted, the healing is not going to work."
  - (participant 5, female)
- "It is when our hinengaro [mind], tinana [body] and wairua [spirit] are separated that disharmony and illness appear in our lives. That can take many forms, from unhappiness to physical malfunction."
  - (participant 3, female)

- Generates buy-in
- Enhancing quality of care

#### Wider World Benefits

- Extend beyond just Māori Health
- Doctors have a more extensive view on a patient's background.
- View an issue more holistically factoring in every part of an individual's wellbeing.
- Whare Tapa Wha
- Mental health affects physical health
- Stress  $\rightarrow$  heart issues

