



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 Language](#):



healthcare

/ˈhelθkɛː/

noun

noun: **health care**

the organized provision of
"rural people deserve good"



ire?



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](https://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**

MEDICINE THROUGH TIME



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**

Māori

R
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By

Ethnic density
racial disc

[Laila Béc](#)

Aut

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**Two inquiries find unfair
treatment and healthcare for
Māori. This is how we fix it**

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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 → heart issues

