

# FAMILY VIOLENCE INITIATIVES AND PACIFIC MEN: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Gemma Malungahu and Associate Professor Vili Nosa review literature to identify existing family violence initiatives that specifically target men to improve their health and overall wellbeing.

### WHAT WERE THE KEY FINDINGS?

- Despite a lack of initiatives globally and nationally that specifically target Pacific men, other initiatives that target mainstream and Indigenous men were reviewed in the findings. These provided new insights into the kinds of approaches and types of initiatives that can be used and adapted for Pacific men in New Zealand
- The benefits derived from a Feminist approach (emphasising the importance of women's rights and enabling the voices of women and children), an Indigenous approach (decolonisation, restoration and reclamation of traditions and values) and a Pacific approach (that addresses the effects of migration, displacement and loss of traditional support structures that take into consideration the heterogeneity between Pacific ethnic groups) can be used together as an overarching approach to inform violence prevention initiatives for Pacific males in New Zealand
- The focus of practices should be informed by these approaches and, at the same time, ensure that there is an equal balance of practices that focus on violence prevention, cultural appropriateness, engagement of men and Pacific-specific needs
- The inclusion of all these practices in any initiative is essential. Prioritising any one of these practices at the expense of the others would hinder access by Pacific men

### APPROACHES TO FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION

- Internationally and nationally there are a number of approaches and models that focus on changing male behaviours and attitudes in the context of violence perpetrator and prevention programmes
- Approaches and models to family violence prevention programmes discussed include population health, ecological, social norms, education, behavioural, critical reflection, non-therapeutic, indigenous and cultural
- Programmes may encompass more than one approach or use a single approach. In either case the philosophy or underlying paradigm of each initiative drives the type of programme provided
- Initiatives that incorporate feminist, indigenous and Pacific approaches, bringing together the specific, effective beliefs of each approach, may produce an overarching pool of benefits for family violence initiatives that target Pacific men
- Such an over-arching approach would emphasise the importance of addressing the rights and voices of women (feminist) combined with the benefits of the reclamation of traditional values of mana and warrior hood (Indigenous) and adapted to suit Pacific-specific meanings and values of family and wellbeing (Pacific)

## BARRIERS TO ENGAGING MEN AND SERVICE DELIVERY

- Barriers to engaging men and service delivery include masculinity, peer culture, patriarchal paradigms, availability of services, religion, challenges in the Pacific region, Pacific capacity, capability, and lack of focus on the prevention of violence in New Zealand
- An effective violence prevention initiative for Pacific men is determined by the focus or priority placed on the value of (1) preventing violence, (2) cultural appropriateness (3) engaging men and (4) being meaningfully accessible to Pacific men
- The initiatives reviewed differ according to the value they place on these priorities. They fall into three broad categories: initiatives that primarily focus on violence, engage men but are not culturally appropriate (Type 1), initiatives that are culturally appropriate, focus on violence but do not engage men (Type 2), and initiatives that are culturally appropriate, engage men but do not directly address violence prevention (Type 3)
- An ideal initiative is one that focuses on all three factors equally, and for an ideal initiative for Pacific men is one that is specifically adapted for them and focuses on all four priorities equally (Type 4)

## THE REPORT MAKES SOME RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Provide an overarching multifaceted approach to violence prevention that includes the Feminist approach (that aligns with women's rights and enables women and children's voices to be heard), the Indigenous approach that reclaims traditional values and empowers positive leadership roles (such as, the Hale Mua) and the Pacific approach that takes into account the heterogeneity between the Pacific ethnic groups (as reflected in the Nga Vaka o Kāiāga Tapu theoretical framework)
2. Ensure practices for Pacific men prioritise the four factors: prevents violence, is culturally appropriate, engages men and is Pacific-specific
3. Reduce barriers and improve male engagement by: improving funding and resource allocation, increasing the capacity of staff (i.e. including men who have successfully completed the programme) and ensuring staff are culturally competent
4. Provide robust practices that reconstruct the dominant discourse of masculinities and patriarchal paradigms by encouraging critical reflections of current peer culture and service delivery, and replacing such constructs with positive notions of masculinity, such as warrior hood
5. Select and implement best practice models that will be effective for Pacific peoples, particularly Pacific men, that address migration effects, displacement and social issues, such as poverty, substance abuse and a negative peer culture
6. Encourage service providers to negotiate evaluation outcomes and include a rigorous evaluation process, such as the Management for Outcomes Cycle

Pasefika Proud embodies a vision of strong, vibrant and prosperous Pacific children, young people and their families. Wellbeing for Pacific families occurs when all aspects of the individual and collective are in balance, co-existing with environments, kinship and support systems while recognising *mana* and *tapu*.

Pacific cultures are strengths that can be used positively to promote and enhance resilience within Pacific families.

Pasefika Proud mobilises Pacific individuals, families and communities to take responsibility for the issues they are facing, find the solutions and take leadership in implementing them.

**'OUR FAMILIES, OUR PEOPLE, OUR RESPONSIBILITY'**

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