

**Wai 2750 – Kaupapa inquiry into claims concerning Housing Policy and Services****Filing – Copy of Housing First Evaluation and Rapid Rehousing Review  
Phase One Report****INDEX**

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# Housing First Evaluation and Rapid Rehousing Review: Phase One Report

Prepared for:  
Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga  
Ministry of Housing and Urban Development

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With black and with red the work is completed.**

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# Report terminology

- ‘Housing First programme’ refers to the national programme.
- ‘Housing First providers’ refers to the organisations contracted to deliver the Housing First service:
  - ‘Māori and iwi Housing First providers are iwi or Māori organisations who hold a Housing First contract.
  - ‘Non-Māori Housing First providers’ refers to all other organisations holding a Housing First contract.
- ‘Housing First services’ refers to delivery in specific locations.
- Housing First services are named using the following method – service name (location), (e.g., He Kāinga Ora ki Ōtautahi (Christchurch). The exception is where the service name includes the location (e.g., Housing First Nelson).

Different terms are used for ‘clients’ and ‘staff’ across Housing First programmes, reflecting local tikanga. For readability and consistency, we have adopted the following words:

- ‘Clients’ describes people who are in Housing First. Other words used for clients include:
  - In He Kāinga Ora ki Ōtautahi (Christchurch) and Housing First Blenheim, the kupu for client is ‘kaewa’, which means wanderer, traveller, rover. The kupu was gifted by Anania Tawhi (cultural lead).
  - In Mangatakitahi (Rotorua), the kupu for client is ‘mānaha’ from a Ngāti Whakaue mōteatea about a rangatira who drowned – means to wander and be lost.
  - Aro Mai Housing First (Wellington) refers to clients as ‘taumai’, meaning to settle<sup>1</sup>.
  - Other regions use a range of words – whānau, clients, people.
- ‘Kaimahi’ describes the general Housing First workforce:
  - ‘Key worker’ describes staff who work with clients. Other terms for key workers used across the Housing First programme are kaiārahi, case worker.
  - ‘Property locators’ describes staff who source houses for clients through working with property owners, property agents and developers.
  - ‘Tenancy managers’ undertake housing inspections on behalf of the property owners/agents. They work with key workers to address any issues identified. In addition, some tenancy managers support and coach clients to maintain their tenancies. In some areas, tenancy and property locators are under one role.

<sup>1</sup> Kahungunu Whānau Services (Wellington) does not use this word.

# **1 Executive summary**

This document contains the key insights from the phase one evaluation of the Housing First evaluation and review of the Rapid Rehousing trial.

## **Evaluation context**

### **Severe housing deprivation is increasing**

In Census 2018, more than 102,000 people were identified as severely housing deprived, about 2% of Aotearoa's population. Since 2013, the rate of severe housing deprivation has increased. Māori, Pacific peoples and young people have the highest rates of severe housing deprivation (Amore et al., 2021).

Homelessness includes rough sleeping, people without shelter, emergency and temporary accommodation, and living in overcrowded and uninhabitable housing. Homelessness is driven by structural issues and system failures, and individual vulnerabilities or circumstances. For Māori, colonisation has and continues to impact on their experience of homelessness (Pihamo et al., 2018a). Homelessness is associated with a range of poor socio-economic outcomes (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2019a).

### **The Homelessness Action Plan's vision is that homelessness be prevented where possible, or is rare, brief and non-reoccurring**

The Government funds a range of responses to homelessness and housing issues, including financial support, Housing First, Rapid Rehousing, transitional housing, Sustaining Tenancies, and public housing. Other responses are increasing housing supply, and building partnerships with iwi, Māori and marae. These responses are funded and delivered by Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga - Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and other cross-government agencies and NGOs.

### **HUD is committed to advancing housing and urban development outcomes for Māori**

In 2020, HUD released Te Maihi o te Whare Māori - Māori and Iwi Housing Innovation Framework for Action (MAIHI). MAIHI requires HUD to work collaboratively across government agencies through a single door approach to increase housing supply that meets whānau needs, prevents homelessness and works to improve Māori housing security.

In 2021, HUD launched MAIHI Ka Ora, the National Māori Housing Strategy. MAIHI Ka Ora was developed in partnership with Māori. The national housing strategy elevates MAIHI and uses the framework's 'respond, reset and review' structure to guide the strategic goals for Māori housing over the immediate and long term. MAIHI Ka Ora provides the strategic direction for the whole Māori housing system.

Te Matapihi He Tirohanga Mō Te Iwi Trust (Te Matapihi) is the national peak body advocating for Māori housing outcomes. In July 2019, led by Kāhui Tū Kaha and Kahungunu Whānau Services (Wellington), Arohanui ki te Tangata was established as the national Māori collective of iwi, hapū and Māori organisations that deliver Housing First services.

HUD commissioned an evaluation of Housing First and a review of the Rapid Rehousing trial.

# Overview of Housing First and Rapid Rehousing

## Housing First is an international rights-based approach to homelessness

In Aotearoa, Housing First is the primary response to chronic homelessness. In 2014, The People's Project introduced Housing First to Aotearoa. In 2017, the Government funded a Housing First pilot with Housing First Auckland.

Housing First eligibility criteria are people experiencing chronic homelessness for more than 12 months and who have high, multiple and complex needs, and need intensive ongoing support to stay housed and achieve their goals (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2021b).

The programme aims to house and provide wraparound support to clients. Providers can support clients indefinitely. HUD currently funds 12 Housing First programmes with 17 providers across 11 locations in Aotearoa.

In Aotearoa, Housing First services need to truly understand and adopt to the values of rangatiratanga (self-determination), whanaungatanga (positive connections) and manaakitanga (self-worth and empowerment). The cultural values derive from the initial work of Housing First Auckland. Kāhui Tū Kaha strongly advocated for the inclusion of the cultural values in Housing First's contract.

Drawing from the international model, the Housing First programme has five core principles:

1. Immediate access to housing with no readiness conditions
2. Consumer choice and self-determination
3. Individualised and person-driven support
4. A harm reduction and recovery-orientation approach
5. Social and community integration.

## In 2020, the two-year Rapid Rehousing trial started

The Rapid Rehousing trial targets individuals and whānau who do not meet the Housing First eligibility criteria. The trial targets people experiencing homelessness for less than 12 months with low to medium social service needs. Rapid Rehousing providers support people into houses and deliver wraparound support to maintain their tenancy. Providers can support Rapid Rehousing clients for up to 12 months of support. Fourteen Housing First providers are contracted to deliver Rapid Rehousing.

## **Evaluation overview**

### **HUD commissioned a two-phased developmental evaluation of Housing First**

Phase one focuses on understanding the implementation of Housing First and the early implementation of Rapid Rehousing in Aotearoa. Phase two focuses on the emerging client outcomes in the Housing First programme.

The phase one evaluation does not assess implementation fidelity of Housing First with the international model. The focus is on understanding the adaption of the model in Aotearoa.

The Phase one evaluation is based on interviews with 160 people delivering Housing First and Rapid Rehousing across Aotearoa. People from governance, management, and the frontline delivery were interviewed. Existing documentation and data on Housing First and Rapid Rehousing were also reviewed. HUD and Housing First providers reviewed the draft report.

## **Evaluation findings**

### **The profile of people in Housing First is single Māori men and changing due to the broadening definition of homelessness**

As of March 2021, 3,396 individuals and households had been accepted into Housing First in Aotearoa. Of those accepted, 1,891 clients (56%) have been housed. Four in ten clients have withdrawn for a range of reasons (38%).

Nearly two-thirds of clients accepted are male (63%) and aged over 36 (63%). Of those currently in the programme, 58% primarily identify as Māori, 9% as Pacific peoples, and 24% as New Zealand European.

Providers noted they are receiving more referrals from whānau with children, reflecting the lack of houses in Aotearoa. Some providers commented women, Pacific people, younger people, and older adults who could benefit from Housing First may be missing out.

### **Housing First services are at different development stages.**

Housing First services in operation for more than three years have refined their service delivery based on practice learnings. Providers contracted from 2019 are at an earlier development stage and are learning how best to deliver the services.

### **Four Housing First governance and operational structures exist**

In Aotearoa, the governance and organisational structures of Housing First services have evolved. In early 2021, four broad governance and organisational models were identified:

1. **A dispersed collective model** is where several Housing First providers in a region are contracted to deliver Housing First services to a specific region or population group. The providers form a governance structure to respond to and advocate about issues impacting Housing First clients. A backbone function shares information and data about Housing First.
2. **An integrated collective model** has a lead Housing First provider contracted to deliver Housing First. The lead provider creates a Housing First hub and seconds staff from other providers with a range of expertise. A cross-agency governance group guides the work of the central hub in delivering Housing First.
3. **A lead provider model** holds the contract and delivers the Housing First services. A cross-agency group made up of external government agencies and NGOs provides strategic direction on Housing First and a network of services for Housing First clients.
4. **Iwi and Māori-led models** are based on delivering a holistic kaupapa Māori and whānau-centred service to whānau Māori experiencing homelessness. While structurally, the iwi and Māori-led models are similar to the three models above, their underlying philosophy embedded in a Te Ao Māori worldview differs.

Collective action underpins the four Housing First models with multiple agencies working together to address regional homelessness. The different collective action models used in Housing First have different benefits and challenges. Working collectively is not easy as providers need to balance organisational accountabilities with collective responsibilities.

### **Housing First service delivery, with some variations, follows the contracted pathway**

#### **Referrals to the Housing First programme come from three sources**

The three referral sources are self-referrals, other agencies, and outreach. Providers check eligibility on referral using a range of tools. Opinion varies on the validated assessment tools available, ranging from useful to determining client need to potentially re-traumatising. Ineligible clients tend to be referred or supported to other services. Due to workforce capacity and housing stock, some providers have wait lists.

#### **A multi-disciplinary workforce is evident across the 12 services**

Several workforce models exist with a mix of key workers with a range of mental health, addictions and other support skills, property locators/tenancy managers, and peer support workers. A Whānau Ora workforce is also evident across Māori providers. The Housing First workforce does not consistently reflect the diversity of clients.

### **Kaimahi capacity is stretched**

Key workers have an average caseload of around 15 clients and up to 25 – not the internationally recommended seven to 12 clients (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2020; Wright and Peasgood, 2018; Polock, 2021). Housing First kaimahi offer an intensive wraparound service to clients and try to meet clients weekly or more often. Most key workers develop a plan with clients to work on their priority needs and aspirations. Key workers connect clients to other services.

### **A lack of houses and discrimination against clients impedes Housing First**

By March 2021, 56% of clients were housed across Aotearoa. Others are in emergency housing, such as motels. Given the housing stock shortage, property locators can play a critical role in the programme.

### **Providers want more clarification on the graduation process**

Several long-term Housing First providers use a graduated transition process. As a result, the support clients receive reflects their level of need. The Housing First contract does not have a fixed duration period for supporting clients, ongoing conditions to remain on the programme, or a process to graduate clients when they are settled in permanent housing and thriving. All Housing First providers strongly support the long-term nature of the approach.

### **Housing First implementation is hindered by several structural barriers**

Housing First requires access to housing stock to deliver on its human rights principle of first a house and then support. Other structural inhibitors of the Housing First programme are:

- The delays and challenges for clients to get on the Housing Register can slow down the process to get a house
- A lack of mental health addiction services to support the level of client need
- Ongoing prejudice, stigma and racism by the public and other government agencies towards Housing First clients
- A lack of information sharing across agencies, creating a siloed system for clients.

### **Housing First's responsiveness to Māori experiencing homelessness**

The Housing First programme is evolving in Aotearoa to be more responsive to Māori. Arohanui ki te Tangata are enabling the adaption of the programme to Aotearoa. Māori staff in non-Māori organisations are working to strengthen the cultural responsiveness in non-Māori Housing First providers. This role can be challenging.

All Housing First providers are applying the Housing First principles and cultural values in implementing the service. However, how the principles are actioned reflects how the values

## **Appendix A**

are being interpreted. The differing interpretations of the cultural values reflect differing worldviews – Māori and non-Māori. The adaption of Housing First occurs along two pathways reflecting worldviews, organisational values, and levels of cultural responsiveness.

Some Māori providers feel the views of non-Māori providers in applying cultural values are given more credibility than that of Māori.

### **Māori and iwi Housing First providers are delivering a kaupapa Māori service**

Māori and iwi Housing First providers' delivery is based on local iwi tikanga and a Whānau Ora approach. Māori and iwi providers focus on mana motuhake to enable Māori to be Māori, to exercise their authority over their lives, and to live on their terms as Māori. In this context, a tangata whenua-led solution is being developed for whānau Māori who are homeless. Arohanui ki te Tāngata supported by Te Matapihi are leading this transformational work.

Using a kaupapa Māori delivery approach, Māori and iwi providers are adapting the Housing First principles. Adoptions include using a whānau-centred approach, connecting to Te Ao Māori, using mate Māori and traditional healers, and recognising self-determination includes the reconnection to whānau and contribution to collective responsibilities.

### **Non-Māori providers are working to encompass the three cultural values**

The extent to which non-Māori providers have embedded the cultural values in their organisations and practices varies based on their level of cultural responsiveness to Māori.

Some non-Māori providers are working to identify how to apply the cultural values in their organisation and the delivery of Housing First. In these providers, both managers and most kaimahi are aware of the cultural values. Managers have or are exploring processes to apply the cultural values in delivering Housing First relevant to their region. Internal Māori cultural leaders or external Māori organisations support this work and staff. These non-Māori providers are aware more work is needed to embed the cultural values across all layers of their organisation.

Other non-Māori providers, tending to be new to the delivery of Housing First, have given limited consideration to applying the cultural values. Managers are aware of them. They tend to see kaimahi Māori as responsible for ensuring the values are applied in their work with Māori clients. Non-Māori staff have limited knowledge of how to apply the values in their work with Māori or non-Māori clients. As indicated, more work is needed to build the cultural responsiveness of non-Māori Housing First providers.

Non-Māori providers are delivering Housing First in line with the five core principles. In delivering to the principles, the core focus tends to be delivering to individual person-centred needs. However, Māori and Pacific staff in non-Māori organisations tend to adopt a more whānau-centred approach.

### Housing First's alignment with MAIHI needs to be strengthened

MAIHI represents a fundamental shift in the Crown's response to housing. MAIHI requires HUD to partner with Māori, take a system approach, and support kaupapa Māori approaches. Iwi and Māori were not involved in the co-design or governance of the Housing First programme. To date, the level of kaupapa Māori delivery does not align with the representation of Māori experiencing homelessness.

Feedback from some Māori and iwi providers in Arohanui ki te Tangata do not believe Housing First can be adapted to meet the needs of whānau Māori experiencing homelessness. They note Housing First is not philosophically based on mātauranga Māori, and does not take account of the impact of colonisation or systemic issues contributing to Māori homelessness. Māori and iwi providers are drawing on the insights of delivering Housing First to develop a kaupapa Māori response for whānau Māori experiencing homelessness.

As indicated through interviews with Housing First providers and our analysis, alignment with MAIHI can be strengthened by:

- Māori partnership in the governance and oversight of Housing First at a national level (e.g., a role for Iwi Chairs or Te Matapihi in the investment decision process)
- shifting the balance of investment funding towards a greater level of kaupapa Māori delivery by Māori and iwi providers
- continuing to invest in building the capacity and capability of Māori providers (existing and others) to respond to the scale of Māori homelessness<sup>2</sup>
- working with Arohanui ki te Tangata to determine the appropriateness of the Housing First design in Aotearoa and enabling the design of a kaupapa Māori response
- ensuring non-Māori providers continue to build their cultural responsiveness to Māori
- increasing contractual accountability mechanisms to demonstrate their cultural responsiveness for Māori.

### Pacific people's access to Housing First seems low

Access to Housing First by Pacific people varies by location (i.e., higher in Auckland). The level of access by Pacific people seems low compared to their severe housing deprivation prevalence rates. Housing First providers are working to be responsive to Pacific clients through the guidance of their Pacific staff and the acknowledgement of the diversity of Pacific

<sup>2</sup> HUD's He Taupua and He Taupae investment funds were set up to build the capability of Māori and iwi to accelerate housing projects and provide support services (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2021d).

peoples. Consideration is needed on whether a Pacific strategy is required to guide the programme's implementation for Pacific peoples.

### **Housing First may be strengthened if known challenges were addressed**

The evaluation identified several challenges that, if addressed, may strengthen the Housing First delivery.

**National challenges** include:

- The HUD contract is creating challenges in the delivery of the programme due to:
  - resource inequities in not recognising different starting points of providers and costs of rural delivery
  - not covering the costs of outreach and insurance for houses contaminated by methamphetamine
  - inconsistent funding models for housing maintenance
  - onerous and unused reporting, and the need to supply individual data on clients
  - uncertain processes for contract renewal due to a lack of timely information
  - not enabling clients to graduate or re-enrol if needed.
- A lack of opportunity to share Housing First learnings across providers in Aotearoa in a way that respects and gives voice to the range of providers.

**Operational challenges** include:

- Agencies within collectives negotiating differing roles, responsibilities, values and approaches in the delivery of Housing First
- Retention and recruitment of a diversity of kaimahi that reflects their clients
- Referrals challenges -
  - reaching people who may be eligible for Housing First and less visible to some providers
  - Housing First providers stepping in to support people referred by other agencies in extremely challenging situations who do not meet the Housing First criteria
  - the lack of capacity for kaimahi to meet demand is creating waitlists.
- Service delivery challenges -
  - the impact of COVID response on setting up the services and being able to provide wraparound support to clients
  - stretched kaimahi capacity due to dealing with urgent client issues resulting in delays supporting other clients
  - the potential risk to kaimahi safety due to the complexity of client need
  - in rural areas, the lack of agencies to support clients' needs and aspirations.
- No agreed graduation and maintenance process to enable clients to receive ongoing tenancy support and to return to the programme, if needed.

## **Rapid Rehousing is at an early implementation stage**

Twelve Housing First providers deliver Rapid Rehousing. Holding the Rapid Rehousing contract enables providers to support clients who do not meet the Housing First criteria. Feedback indicates clients' service experience is similar to those on the Housing First programme except for the 12 months' duration. The implementation of Rapid Rehousing will be explored further in the second phase of the evaluation.

## **Housing First and Rapid Rehousing contribute to the delivery of the Homelessness Action Plan**

The Housing First programme has some alignment with the Homelessness Action Plan's guiding principles. More work is needed to align with Te Tiriti and kaupapa Māori principles. Housing First and the Rapid Rehousing trial have important roles in meeting the needs of people who experience long-term homelessness with moderate to complex needs. However, sector fragmentation, increasing housing demand and a lack of houses is creating housing sector competition and adversely impacting the programmes.

At a policy level, consideration is needed on how to create a whānau-centred housing system that addresses immediate and long-term needs for the diversity of people and whānau. Insights from Housing First delivery can inform this policy work and the kaupapa Māori response being developed by Māori and iwi providers. The insights from Housing First evaluation can also strengthen the MAIHI framework within the policy settings.

## **2 Background and context**

### **The Homelessness Action Plan's vision is that homelessness be prevented where possible or is rare, brief and non-reoccurring**

A home is essential to wellbeing. A stable and affordable home provides a crucial platform for recovery, employment, education, and wider community engagement and participation.

#### **In Census 2018, more than 102,000 people were identified as severely housing deprived, about 2% of Aotearoa's population (Amore et al., 2021)**

Severe housing deprivation is synonymous with homelessness (Amore et al., 2021, p. 6).<sup>3</sup> Compared with 2013, the rate of severe housing deprivation in 2018 had increased by about 4,400 people. In 2018, the severely housing deprived population was disproportionately young, with nearly 50 per cent aged under 25 years of age.

#### **Māori have high rates of severe housing deprivation**

For Māori, colonisation and the resulting loss of land and culture has had a devastating effect on whānau health and wellbeing (Moewaka & McCreanor, 2019; King, Cormack & Kōpua, 2018; Cram, 2019; Durie, 2017; King et al., 2018; Pihama et al., 2019). The key losses include the separation of whānau from their whenua, destabilising whānau, hapū and iwi identities; losses of language, economic and political independence, and whānau as a protective collective; and the undermining of agency and autonomy.

Severe housing deprivation prevalence rates for Māori are four times the European rate (Amore et al., 2021). Rates of severe housing deprivation are highest among Māori young people. The highest rates of severe housing deprivation were in Northland, Gisborne, and Auckland (Amore et al., 2021). Māori are also significantly overrepresented in unmet housing needs, making up nearly 60% of households in emergency housing (New Zealand Government, 2019).

#### **Pacific peoples also have high rates of severe housing deprivation**

Pacific peoples' severe housing deprivation prevalence rates were six times the European rate, with rates being highest among Pacific young people (Amore et al., 2021). Thirty-eight per cent of Pacific households live in overcrowded living conditions and are vulnerable to increasing rental costs and insecure tenures (Statistics New Zealand, 2020).

<sup>3</sup> A person is severely housing deprived if they are living in severely inadequate housing (i.e. housing below a minimum adequacy standard), due to a lack of access to housing that meets the minimum adequacy standard (rather than living in such circumstances as a matter of choice). (Amore et al., 2021, p.8)

## Appendix A

Other groups at risk of homelessness and overrepresented in homelessness statistics include refugees, rainbow community/takatāpui, disabled people, people with mental health and addiction needs, and young people (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2019a).

### **Homelessness includes rough sleeping, people without shelter, emergency and temporary accommodation, and living in overcrowded and uninhabitable housing**

Homelessness is driven by structural issues and system failures, and individual vulnerabilities or circumstances. Homelessness is associated with a range of poor socio-economic outcomes (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2019a).

### **Aotearoa New Zealand’s Homelessness Action Plan (2020-2023) sets out the Government’s cross-agency roadmap to prevent and reduce homelessness**

The Government funds a range of responses to homelessness and housing issues, including financial support, Housing First, Rapid Rehousing, transitional housing, Sustaining Tenancies, and public housing. Other responses are increasing housing supply, and building partnerships with iwi, Māori and marae. These responses are funded and delivered by Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga - Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and other cross-government agencies, and delivered by NGOs, Community Housing Providers, or Kāinga Ora.

Housing First and the Rapid Rehousing trial are important programmes contributing to the Homelessness Action Plan’s vision that homelessness is prevented where possible, or is rare, brief and non-recurring (New Zealand Government, 2019).

### **HUD is committed to advancing housing and urban development outcomes of Māori**

In 2020, HUD released Te Maihi o te Whare Māori (Māori and Iwi Housing Innovation framework, MAIHI) – HUD’s strategic framework for action. MAIHI states that supporting iwi and Māori to find and keep safe, secure, healthy and affordable housing is essential to reducing the number of Māori becoming homeless (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2020a, 2020b). The application of MAIHI is in its early stages and evolving.

In September 2021, MAIHI Ka Ora – the national Māori housing strategy – was released. MAIHI Ka Ora provides strategic direction to current and future policy and processes impacting on Māori housing. The strategy sets out a 30-year shared vision that “*all whānau have safe, healthy, affordable homes with secure tenure, across the Māori housing continuum.*”

Te Matapihi He Tirohanga Mō Te Iwi Trust (Te Matapihi) is the national peak body advocating for Māori housing outcomes. In July 2019, led by Kāhui Tū Kaha and Kahungunu Whānau Services (Wellington), Arohanui ki te Tangata was established as the national Māori collective of iwi, hapū and Māori organisations that deliver Housing First services. Te

Matapihi acts as an umbrella organisation for Arohanui ki te Tangata, bringing aspects of interest related to homelessness for discussion. The purpose of Arohanui ki te Tangata is to increase collective capacity and capability and uphold tikanga Māori and the values of whanaungatanga, manaakitanga and rangatiratanga in their mahi and within the sector (Arohanui ki te Tangata, n.d., p. 1).

### **HUD commissioned an evaluation of Housing First and a review of Rapid Rehousing.**

The evaluation purpose is to understand the implementation and emerging outcomes of Housing First in Aotearoa and provide preliminary insights on the implementation of Rapid Rehousing.

### **Housing First is an international rights-based approach to homelessness**

In the early 1990s, Housing First was developed by Dr. Sam Tsemberis, at Pathways to Housing in New York, USA. Housing First was initially developed to help people with mental health problems who were living on the streets. Over time the focus expanded to include other people experiencing long-term homelessness (Pleace, 2021).

Housing First was an important innovation in shifting away from people who are homeless having to demonstrate they are ‘housing ready’ before they are housed (e.g., in sustained recovery) (Pleace, 2021). The design of Housing First is based on the principle that housing is a human right.

### **Internationally, Housing First has a core set of guiding principles**

The core principles of Housing First draw directly from the Pathways model. However, differences exist in how the principles are applied across European countries and North America. As summarised in Pihama et al. (2018a, p. 22), the core principles of Housing First are:

- Rapid access to housing with no housing readiness conditions and no housing consequences should people disengage from services
- Consumer choice and self-determination which allows each person to determine the support and housing received
- Harm reduction and recovery-oriented approach where individuals are holistically supported to reduce harmful practices and recover physical and mental health
- Individualized, client-driven supports; and social and community integration, which supports better health, relationships and reconnection. (Canadian Housing First Toolkit, 2018; Kennedy et al., 2017).

### Housing First has an international evidence-base

Pihama et al. (2018a) noted several studies comparing Housing First with treatment-focused approaches showed improved outcomes for Housing First participants. Housing First tended to be particularly effective for single men with no dependents, experiencing mental health or substance abuse illness in urban areas with rental houses (Bodor et al., 2011; Busch-Geertsem, 2013; Kennedy et al., 2017; Stock, 2016). Improved outcomes included improved housing stability and health, psychological, and quality of life outcomes.

Eide (2020) acknowledged reasonable evidence exists that Housing First improves residential stability. However, Eide (2020) notes the evidence about enabling behavioural change and reducing social isolation is weak. Lawson-Te Aho et al. (2019) note little research has been done on the experience of Housing First for indigenous people and the application of indigenous worldviews, principles, and frameworks. The existing evidence on the approach's effectiveness for indigenous populations is not strong (Lawson-Te Aho et al., 2019; Pihama et al., 2018a).

### In Aotearoa, Housing First is the primary response to chronic homelessness

In Aotearoa, before Housing First was established, people experiencing chronic homelessness were supported by the non-governmental community, religious and Māori organisations, charities, and philanthropic efforts. In 2014, The People's Project used the Housing First approach in Hamilton to address the increased visibility of homelessness and growing concerns about people sleeping rough.

The Government understood increasing public and general housing supply could support a large proportion of the homeless population. The Government also recognised the need for wider social services to support people experiencing chronic homelessness (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2021a).

In 2017, representatives from The People's Project, social service providers in Auckland, the Auckland City Council, and senior officials from the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) attended the End Homelessness conference in Canada. Following this conference, the Auckland Housing First Collective was contracted to pilot Housing First in Aotearoa.<sup>4</sup>

In 2018, budget was allocated to expand Housing First across Aotearoa in areas of severe housing deprivation (personal communication, December 10, 2020).

<sup>4</sup> No evaluation was discovered that assessed the effectiveness of this pilot.

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### **HUD currently funds 12 Housing First programmes across 11 locations in Aotearoa**

The 12 programmes in Aotearoa are delivered both individually and collectively. Across the programme, HUD holds contracts with 17 community-based providers, of which seven are iwi and kaupapa Māori providers.

Below is a summary of the staged expansion of Housing First across Aotearoa:

- In 2014, The People's Project implemented Housing First in Hamilton.
- In 2017, the Government funded the two-year Housing First pilot in Auckland.
- In 2018, Housing First commenced in Christchurch and Tauranga.
- In 2019, Housing First commenced in Wellington (including Lower Hutt), Whangarei, Rotorua, Nelson, Blenheim, and Hawke's Bay (Napier and Hastings).
- In 2020, Housing First services commenced in the Mid and Far North (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2019b).

Funding from the Wellbeing Budget 2019 ensures Housing First in Aotearoa can continue to deliver services to over 2,700 people and whānau over the next few years. The Government is investing \$197 million to strengthen the Housing First programme (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2019a).

### **The Housing First programme aims to house and support people experiencing chronic homelessness with high, multiple and complex needs**

Generally, individuals and family and whānau who are eligible for Housing First:

- have high, multiple and complex needs
- are sleeping rough or in other places not designed for habitation (for example, cars, tents) for a total of 12 months or more in the previous three years
- need intensive ongoing support services to stay housed and achieve their goals (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2021b).

As detailed in the HUD contract, the Housing First eligibility criteria have some flexibility on the length of homelessness. The HUD contract notes 20% of clients can have experienced less than the minimum duration of 12 months.

At the outset, Housing First enables access to stable and permanent housing. With consent, Housing First providers then offer tailored wraparound support (e.g., mental health and substance use) for as long as needed (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2021b).

### **In Aotearoa, Housing First is guided by three Māori values and five core principles**

As in the HUD contract, Housing First services need to align to the values of rangatiratanga (self-determination), whanaungatanga (positive connections) and manaakitanga (self-worth and empowerment) (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2021b).

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Drawing on the international model, the Housing First programme in Aotearoa has five core principles (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2021b):

1. **Immediate access to housing with no readiness conditions:** people have immediate, unconditional access to housing, with no housing readiness conditions, only a willingness to engage and be in housing.
2. **Consumer choice and self-determination:** people have choice and self-determination about the support and housing they receive to be right for them. People do not lose their housing if they no longer need support.
3. **Individualised and person-driven support:** person-driven support is adapted to fit each individual's needs and is proactively offered for as long as it is needed.
4. **A harm reduction and recovery-orientation approach:** holistic support reduces harmful behaviour and encourages steps towards mental and physical well-being.
5. **Social and community integration:** people are encouraged and supported to be part of their communities and connect with whānau, support networks, social activities, education and work.

### **In Aotearoa, the Housing First programme has not been evaluated**

Many research projects have been conducted on Housing First internationally (e.g., Bodor et al., 2011; Busch-Geertsem, 2013; Kennedy et al., 2017; Stock, 2016). While no national-level Housing First evaluation has been completed in Aotearoa, location-specific research and evaluations exist. Examples include:

- Two pūrākau: He oranga ngākau, He pikinga wairua and He Whare Kōrero o Mangatakitahi, which tell the journey of two Housing First programmes and the whānau they support (Tīaho Limited, 2020a and b).
- Research into the response of He Kāinga Ora ki Ōtautahi (Christchurch) during the COVID-19 lockdown in 2020 (Tikao et al., 2020).
- A five-year research programme (funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment) is currently being undertaken by The People's Project in Hamilton in partnership with the University of Otago, Statistics New Zealand, and the University of Waikato (The People's Project, 2021).

### **Rapid Rehousing was introduced as a trial in 2020**

#### **Rapid Rehousing is a new trial developed as part of the Homelessness Action Plan**

Providers identified the need for the Rapid Rehousing trial to support people experiencing homelessness but do not meet the Housing First eligibility criteria. The trial aims to reduce pressure on Housing First and transitional housing (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2021c).

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### Rapid Rehousing supports people experiencing homelessness with low to medium need

The Rapid Rehousing trial targets individuals and whānau experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness with low to medium complexity of social service needs. Rapid Rehousing providers support eligible individuals and whānau into public or private housing and wraparound support to maintain their tenancy. Providers can support Rapid Rehousing clients for up to 12 months. Rapid Rehousing is flexible and may be adapted by providers to meet local needs and contexts.

### Fourteen Housing First providers are contracted to deliver Rapid Rehousing

Most Housing First providers are trialling this new initiative over the next two years. Initially, the trial was for 340 permanent places and an investment of \$13.5 million. In response to COVID-19, the Rapid Rehousing trial was scaled up to deliver a national total of 549 places in 2020/21. No evaluations have been completed on the Rapid Rehousing trial.

Table 1 presents the Housing First programmes, their providers, length of service at June 2021 and whether they are contracted to deliver Rapid Rehousing.

**Table 1: Overview of Housing First and Rapid Rehousing providers at June 2021**

Location	Name	Providers	HF service years (as of 2021)	Rapid Rehousing contract
Far North <sup>5</sup>	Hau Kainga - Kāinga Whenua	He Korowai Trust	<1 year	No
		Ngāti Hine Health Trust	<1 year	Yes
		Te Hau Ora O Ngāpuhi	<1 year	No
		Te Rūnanga o Whaingaroa	<1 year	Yes
Whangarei	Kāinga Pūmanawa	Kāhui Tū Kaha	<1 year	Yes
		Ngāti Hine Health Trust	<1 year	Yes
		One Double Five Whare Āwhina Community House Trust	<1 year	Yes
Auckland	Housing First Auckland	Auckland City Mission	>3 years	Yes
		Kāhui Tū Kaha	>3 years	Yes
		Lifewise Trust	>3 years	Yes
		Linkpeople	>3 years	Yes
		VisionWest	>3 years	Yes
Hamilton	The People's Project Hamilton	Mental Health Solutions Ltd	>3 years	Yes

<sup>5</sup> No data for Far North and Whangarei as the contract has just started.

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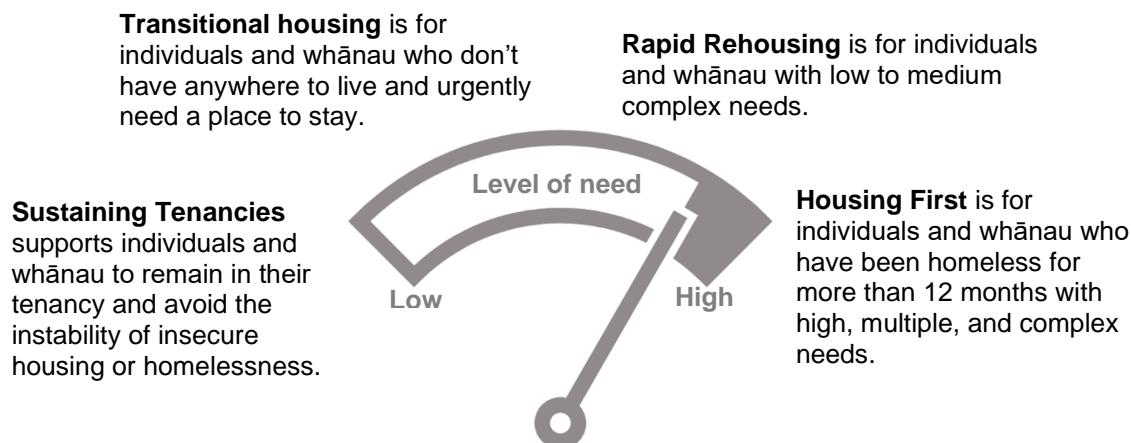
Location	Name	Providers	HF service years (as of 2021)	Rapid Rehousing contract
Tauranga	The People's Project Tauranga	Mental Health Solutions Ltd	2 years	Yes
Rotorua	Mangatakitahi	Te Taumata o Ngāti Whakaue Iho Ake (subcontracting Lifewise Trust)	1 year	Yes
Hawke's Bay	Te Tahī Whare Ora / Housing First Hawke's Bay	Whatever It Takes Charitable Trust (subcontracting Te Taiwhenua o Heretaunga)	1 year	No
Wellington	Aro Mai Housing First Collaboration	Downtown Community Ministry Wellington Inc (partner agencies include Emerge Aotearoa, Wellington Homeless Women's Trust, and Linkpeople)	2 years	Yes
Wellington	Kahungunu Whānau Services	Kahungunu Whānau Services (Wellington)	2 years	No
Nelson	Housing First Nelson	The Salvation Army NZ (subcontracting The Male Room, Te Piki Oranga)	1 year	Yes
Blenheim	Housing First Blenheim	Christchurch Methodist Mission (subcontracting Gateway Housing Trust, St Marks Society, and Maataa Waka)	1 year	No
Christchurch	He Kāinga Ora ki Ōtautahi/ Housing First Christchurch	Christchurch Methodist Mission (subcontracting Comcare Trust, Emerge Aotearoa, Christchurch City Mission, Otautahi Community Housing Trust, and Te Whare Roimata)	2 years	Yes (Comcare Trust contract)

**Housing First and the Rapid Rehousing trial are part of a larger suite of housing support services**

### Many Housing First providers offer wider housing services

Many Housing First providers also deliver Sustaining Tenancies, transitional housing, and the Rapid Rehousing trial. These providers can therefore meet the diverse range of housing and other related needs and ensure people receive the right level of support.

**Diagram 1: Overview of general housing services to meet the diversity of need**



**Transitional housing is temporary accommodation and support for individuals or families who are in urgent need of housing**

Established in mid-2016, transitional housing enables access to short-term accommodation for people and whānau who have nowhere to live and are struggling to find a place to rent (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2021e). People in transitional housing also receive tailored support, including budgeting advice, social services, or help with finding longer-term housing. Individuals and whānau will stay at a place for 12 weeks, and once they have found permanent housing, they may receive a further 12 weeks of support. As part of the Homelessness Action Plan, \$175 million is invested in increasing the supply of transitional housing places to reduce the demand for emergency accommodation.

**Sustaining Tenancies works to address issues putting tenancies at risk**

In early 2017, Sustaining Tenancies was trialled as a homelessness prevention service (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2021f). Providers help individuals and whānau sustain their tenancy and address issues putting their tenancy at risk. Services can include life skills coaching, advocacy and support to navigate services, budgeting advice, advocacy with property owners, and specialist social and health services. As part of the Homelessness Action Plan, Sustaining Tenancies was redesigned and expanded into high-demand areas between 2020 and 2023.

**Other government agencies provide housing support**

Since July 2016, the Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (EH-SNG) has been available for people who cannot remain in their usual residence and do not have access to other accommodations. The MSD-managed grant helps with the cost of staying in short-term accommodation (motels, hotels, campgrounds) for up to seven days if people cannot access transitional housing. Recipients can be assessed for further payment.

In September 2019, MSD developed the Intensive Case Management services and Navigator initiatives to support people receiving the EH-SNG. The goal is to improve the

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stability of clients in their current situation, enabling them to engage with the housing system and sustain housing in the long term.

In 2018 MSD, working with the Department of Corrections, launched the four-year Creating Positive Pathways trial. The trial initiative enables pathways to stable accommodation for people who leave prison and are at a high risk of reoffending and homelessness.

# **3 Evaluation purpose and method**

## **Evaluation purpose**

HUD commissioned a two-phased evaluation of Housing First and the Rapid Rehousing trial:

- Phase one focuses on understanding the implementation of Housing First and the early implementation of Rapid Rehousing in Aotearoa.
- Phase two focuses on the emerging client outcomes in the Housing First programme.

The evaluation does not assess the fidelity of the implementation of Housing First in Aotearoa with the international model. The focus is on understanding how the model has been adapted in the Aotearoa context.

This report presents the insights from the phase one evaluation. Below is an overview of the evaluation questions and method.

## **Key evaluation questions**

The following are the key evaluation questions for phases one and two. Phase one addresses all questions except question 5, which will be explored in phase two.

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### **Key evaluation questions**

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1. How are the Housing First programme and the Rapid Rehousing trial being implemented?
  2. How are the Housing First programme and its principles being tailored to meet the diverse and complex needs of people experiencing homelessness across regions?
  3. How does implementation of the Rapid Rehousing trial fit with the Housing First programme and other existing housing services to meet the diversity of people's needs?
  4. How are the design and delivery of the Housing First and Rapid Rehousing trial programmes working for Māori experiencing homelessness?
  5. What are the experiences and emerging outcomes of those individuals and whānau supported through the Housing First programme and the Rapid Rehousing trial?
  6. What are the enablers and barriers for the successful delivery of the Housing First programme and Rapid Rehousing trial at the local, regional, and national levels?
  7. What is and is not working well with the Housing First programme and Rapid Rehousing trial?
  8. What improvements, if any, are needed in the Housing First programme and the Rapid Rehousing trial to sustain a consistent service and support the attainment of functional zero homelessness?
-

## **Evaluation method for phase one (October 2020 to July 2021)**

Appendix 2 contains the developmental evaluation approach, including the sub-evaluation questions, data collection tools, and analysis. In summary, the phase one evaluation of Housing First and the Rapid Rehousing review included:

- Meeting and building connections with the Housing First providers across Aotearoa between December 2020 and February 2021
- Reviewing existing documentation on Housing First at national and local levels
- Analysing HUD data on the Housing First programme
- Interviewing 160 people across the 12 Housing First services at governance, management, and frontline levels, and interviewing 10 HUD staff
- Developing a case study for each Housing First service following analysis of the interviews, documents and data
- Developing this cross-case report based on the thematic analysis of the 12 case studies, documents and literature reviewed<sup>6</sup>, data and HUD interviews
- Refining the cases studies and cross-case report following feedback from HUD and Housing First providers.

## **The report answers the key evaluation questions**

Each section starts with the key evaluation question being answered. Questions 6, 7 and 8 have been merged to avoid repetition, given their similarity. A standalone section was developed for Rapid Rehousing, given the early stage of implementation. Due to the adaptive nature of Housing First and Rapid Rehousing, the findings reflect insights at a specific point in time – early 2021.

The report is structured as follows to answer the question/s in the sub-bullets:

- The implementation of Housing First across Aotearoa
- The tailoring of the Housing First values and principles in Aotearoa
- Housing First's responsiveness to Māori experiencing homelessness
- Enablers, challenges and sustainability of Housing First
- Review of the early implementation of the Rapid Rehousing trial
- Housing First and Rapid Rehousing roles in the housing sector
- Phase one conclusions and improvements.

<sup>6</sup> The evaluation drew on existing literature provided by HUD and Housing First providers. A systematic literature review was not completed.

## 4 The implementation of Housing First across Aotearoa

This section answers the following key evaluation question:

- How is the Housing First programme being implemented in Aotearoa?

The section provides evaluation insights into the implementation of Housing First across Aotearoa in early 2021. It draws on the 12 case studies and interviews with HUD staff to discuss the following insights:

- Housing First responds to people and place across Aotearoa
- Housing First services are at different development stages
- Four Housing First governance and operational structures exist across Aotearoa
- Variations exist in intake and assessment processes
- Variations exist in service delivery, including workforce capacity and capability, housing allocation and wraparound services
- Clarification is needed on service maintenance and exits
- Housing First support during the COVID-19 lockdown.

### Housing First responds to people and place

#### Housing First in Aotearoa has housed 1,891 people

As of March 2021, a total of 3,396 people have been accepted into Housing First across Aotearoa since it started. Of those accepted, 1,891 clients (56%) have been housed. In contrast, four in ten clients had withdrawn<sup>7</sup> from Housing First (38%). Three per cent of clients have graduated.

#### In Aotearoa, people in Housing First tend to be largely male, Māori with no dependents

In March 2021, of the clients accepted into Housing First, 58% identified as Māori, 9% as Pacific peoples, and 24% as European. Nearly two-thirds of clients accepted are male (63%) and aged over 36 (63%). Around three-quarters of clients housed across Aotearoa have no dependents (75%).

The profile of Housing First clients tends to reflect the international model of mainly single men (Bodor et al., 2011; Busch-Geertsem, 2013; Kennedy et al., 2017; Stock, 2016).

<sup>7</sup> 'Withdrawn' includes no longer wants to take part; evicted or tenancy lost; housed; left area; not suitable; declined by client; Corrections (Prison); withdrawn; transferred to another service.

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**Table 2: Profile of clients accepted into Housing First across Aotearoa as of March 2021**

Domain	Variables	Numbers	% <sup>8</sup>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	2,143	63%
	Female	1,235	36%
	Gender diverse	18	<1%
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Māori	1,972	58%
	European	828	24%
	Pacific peoples	314	9%
	Other	282	8%
<b>Age (years)</b>	0 – 24	323	10%
	25 – 34	944	28%
	35 – 44	872	26%
	45 – 54	797	23%
	56 plus	460	14%
<b>Dependents<sup>9</sup></b>	None	808	75%
	One or more dependents	269	25%

### The profile of Housing First clients varies across the 12 service locations

The Housing First data shows providers are supporting a diversity of people experiencing homelessness. This diversity reflects regional population differences and the strengths of different Housing First providers in connecting and supporting particular population groups.

Appendix 3 has a series of tables profiling Housing First clients across the 12 service locations. Key differences of note are:

- **Gender and whānau profile differences** – Kahungunu Whānau Services (Wellington) has the highest proportion of female clients (71%) and a higher proportion of people housed with dependent children (52%).
- **Ethnicity profile differences** –
  - Māori clients are overrepresented among Housing First clients in all regions (compared to the Māori population per region).

<sup>8</sup> All percentages are rounded to the nearest whole per cent.

<sup>9</sup> Data on dependents are only available among those who are housed.

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- Māori and iwi providers have the highest level of enrolment of Māori clients ranging from 77% in Te Tahi Whare Ora (Hawke's Bay) to 84% in Mangatakitahi (Rotorua).
- Housing First Auckland has a high proportion of Pacific clients (17%). For other providers, Pacific clients accepted into their service are less than 10%, with many under 5%.
- **Age profile differences –**
  - Housing First providers with more clients aged over 46 years are Housing First Blenheim (53%), Kāinga Pūmanawa (Whangarei) (43%), The People's Project (Hamilton) (42%), and Mangatakitahi (Rotorua) (40%).
  - Kahungunu (Wellington) has more younger clients, with 22% being aged under 24 years and 58% under 35 years.

### The profile of people needing support from Housing First is changing

Providers noted they are receiving more referrals from whānau with children. Some providers commented some groups who could benefit from Housing First may be missing out. Some Housing First providers noted these groups tend to be less visible to them.

- Women experiencing homelessness can be hidden in the suburbs couch-surfing, living in tents and cars, and may not be accessing services dominated by men.
- Pacific peoples may be less likely to come forward and seek support because of the stigma associated with homelessness. Some felt Pacific peoples experiencing homelessness may be less visible to Housing First providers as they are living in overcrowded houses. Other providers like Kāhui Tū Kaha are enabling Pacific peoples to benefit from Housing First through the work of their Pacific staff.
- Younger people with mental health and addiction issues and a lack of daily life skills are an emerging group in need of Housing First. However, only a few providers have young people accessing their Housing First service.
- Older people can face homelessness when long-term tenancies are terminated after properties are sold or they cannot afford increased rent. Providers noted older people can be too whakamā to seek help when they become homeless.

*We predominantly focus first and foremost on children, tamariki, rangatahi, and whatever they bring with them, whether that's their nanny, their koro, their aunty, their whatever. We do have that population group, men. But our priority is our future, it's our mokopuna. And we don't say no to them of course, we do have them. But we're also really aware that those agencies, that's their focus. We focus on the unseen. Because a lot of the men are seen, so everybody thinks, "There's an issue with the men." But there's a huge issue of the unseen homeless that's not profiled enough. And that's where we go. (Manager)*

### In Aotearoa, the lack of housing obstructs Housing First delivery

The underlying philosophy of Housing First is to house people and then offer wraparound support from a place of security. All Housing First providers note the significant challenges of finding permanent housing for their clients due to the housing crisis. The challenges

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mentioned are a shortage of housing supply, high housing demand, a lack of housing affordability, and poor-quality housing stock. Some providers noted government agencies and NGOs are competing against each other for the limited stock.

*So lack of houses is our main challenge. We've got less houses, and sometimes with Housing First the really vulnerable go to the bottom of the list. (Key worker)*

### **Local adverse events can impact housing supply and Housing First delivery**

Unexpected events can further impact the lack of housing supply. Examples include flood damage in Napier taking out 100 houses, the Christchurch rebuild impact, and the decrease in tourists due to COVID-19 increasing the availability of city-centre apartments in Auckland.

### **Housing pressure increases when people experiencing homelessness move areas**

Housing First providers in provincial areas with warm weather and seasonal work (i.e., Rotorua, Hawke's Bay, Blenheim, Nelson, Te Tai Tokerau) noted the inflow of people experiencing homelessness from other areas. People are being advised by friends and government agencies to move on the basis more housing is available in these areas. The influx of people puts further pressure on limited housing supply and social services.

### **Whānau Māori living on their whenua can live in sub-standard and overcrowded housing**

For whānau Māori living on their whenua, the housing challenge is how to improve existing sub-standard housing and infrastructure (e.g., no power and water). Whānau Māori living on their whenua do not want to move to houses not on their whenua. In this context, iwi and Māori Housing First providers also focus on bringing existing homes up to acceptable standards and improving infrastructure.<sup>10</sup>

In Te Tai Tokerau, whānau Māori experiencing long-term homelessness may live in cars, caravans or tents in whānau backyards. These living situations are increasing as tamariki and mokopuna return from the cities and overseas. In summer, people experiencing homelessness live at the beach. As the seasons change, they seek other shelter.

*I remember one case where whānau wanted to come home as too dear and too expensive in Auckland. They had a caravan and then had a lean-to. Then the wife became pregnant. All the babies slept in that caravan, and they slept in the lean-to. Cold water, no power in the middle of a paddock. My visit to them was in the winter. One of many. (Manager)*

<sup>10</sup> In Budget 2021, \$380 million was allocated for increasing Māori housing supply and \$350 million was allocated for infrastructure from the Housing Acceleration Fund (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2021g).

## **Across Aotearoa, Housing First services are at different development stages**

Given their different starting dates, Housing First services are at different development stages.

### **Early adopters refined their service based on practice learnings**

Housing First Auckland, The People's Project (Hamilton), and He Kāinga Ora ki Ōtautahi (Christchurch) have delivered Housing First for more than three years. Over time, these providers have consolidated and refined their structure and delivery based on their practice learnings. They have:

- gained deeper insight on how to work collectively with other Housing First providers in their region
- strengthened their local and regional networks to create pathways for Housing First clients to access wider services
- refined their workforce to better meet the needs of Housing First clients (e.g., having nursing and mental health and alcohol and other drug (AOD) specialists)
- developed policies and practices to support Housing First service delivery (e.g., He Kāinga Ora ki Ōtautahi, Christchurch has guidelines for staff on inspections, crisis plans, and transfers)
- developed frameworks to express how their staff uphold kaupapa Māori principles in their work (e.g., Housing First Auckland's Kaupapa Māori group developed the Tāiki Framework (discussed further [here](#))).

### **Providers contracted from 2019 are developing their practice**

Budget 2018 allocated funding to expand Housing First in areas with severe housing deprivation. In 2019, HUD contracted the following Housing First services: Mangatakitahi (Rotorua), Te Tahi Whare Ora (Hawke's Bay), Aro Mai Housing First Collaboration (Wellington), Kahungunu Whānau Services (Wellington), Housing First Nelson, Housing First Blenheim.

Hau Kāinga (Far North) and Kāinga Pūmanawa (Whangarei) commenced service delivery in late 2020 and are, therefore, at an early establishment stage.

### **The impact of COVID-19 disrupted the set-up of the new Housing First services**

In March 2020, the COVID-19 lockdown response required all people experiencing homelessness to be housed. Given their experience in the sector, all Housing First providers worked closely with HUD to house people experiencing homelessness in motels.

For new Housing First providers, the COVID-19 response disrupted their establishment. New Housing First providers had to manage the challenges of providing emergency housing while setting up their Housing First services. For example, Nelson Housing First and Kāinga Pūmanawa (Whangarei) had to start housing people before key workers were on board.

### **Establishing Housing First services takes time, given the complexity of need**

Given the limited time since commencement, the Housing First providers contracted in 2019 are building their workforce capability, wider networks and knowledge of Housing First and the housing sector.

*I know the managers of two [Housing First] programmes. I had a yarn, how do you do it, give us some heads up. They said to me we have been going for two years, and we've only just started to understand it. (Manager)*

## **Four Housing First governance and operational structures exist across Aotearoa**

In Aotearoa, the governance and organisational structures of Housing First services have evolved. In early 2021, four broad governance and organisational models were identified:

1. **A dispersed collective model** is where several providers in a region are contracted to deliver Housing First services. Each Housing First provider delivers the service to a specific region or population group, reflecting their strengths and physical location. The Housing First providers form a governance structure to respond to and advocate about issues impacting on Housing First clients and the service. The governance structure tends to include iwi or Māori representation. A backbone function may be set up to develop and share information and data about Housing First.
2. **An integrated collective model** has a lead Housing First provider contracted to deliver Housing First. The lead provider creates a Housing First hub and seconds staff from other providers with a range of expertise. The providers delivering the service establish a governance group which guides the work of the central hub in delivering Housing First.
3. **A lead provider model** holds the contract and delivers the Housing First services. A cross-agency group made up of external government agencies and NGOs provides strategic direction on Housing First and a network of services for Housing First clients.
4. **Iwi and Māori-led models** are based on delivering a holistic kaupapa Māori and whānau-centred service to whānau Māori experiencing homelessness. While structurally, the iwi and Māori-led models are similar to the three models above, their underlying philosophy embedded in a Te Ao Māori worldview differs.

### **The four models reflect differing collective action approaches and the rangatiratanga of iwi**

The Canadian Housing First toolkit notes local governance models need to embrace local cultural diversity (Canadian Housing First Toolkit, 2021). Governance and organisational structures should be inclusive, reflect the community, and foster collective action and power-sharing (Distasio et al., 2019).

#### **In different ways, collective action underpins the four Housing First models**

HUD defines collective action as multiple agencies in local housing systems working together to address regional homelessness (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2021b). The different collective action models used in Housing First have different benefits and challenges (discussed below). Working collectively is not easy as individual providers need to balance organisational accountabilities with collective responsibilities (discussed [here](#)).

#### **New Housing First services need time to build local collective responses**

In 2019, HUD ran a series of regional workshops to encourage potential providers to work together to deliver Housing First. Feedback from providers indicates the timeline to set up collective arrangements was short. Potential Housing First providers wanted more time to explore different ways of working collectively. Distasio et al. (2019) note localising Housing First in First Nations communities in Canada can take up to two years.

Across the new locations, providers did develop collective models to deliver Housing First. However, many providers had to renegotiate roles and responsibilities for the Housing First service when established. As a result, some collective arrangements were sustained through ongoing negotiations. Others were restructured and providers in the collective changed, particularly providers from outside of the region.

Feedback from HUD indicates the challenges of learning to work collectively were also noted in Housing First services set up earlier. Tensions within collectives arise, especially where organisational responsibilities differ or are not aligned to shared collective objectives agency (Wilks et al., 2015). However, the Canadian Housing First Toolkit (2021) notes that negotiating early tensions is important for building trust and strong collectives.

#### **Māori and iwi providers and their sector bodies are developing tangata whenua-led solutions to chronic homelessness**

In 2019, HUD contracted seven Māori and iwi providers to deliver Housing First. Māori and iwi providers value the Housing First contract as it enables them to meet the needs of whānau Māori experiencing chronic homelessness in their rohe. Māori and iwi providers are

implementing Housing First in line with the HUD contract and based on local tikanga and Whānau Ora approaches (Whānau Ora Review Panel, 2018).<sup>11</sup>

*They work within a holistic approach and incorporate Whānau Ora principles into their mahi. For kaimahi, it is their natural way of being. They are whānau-led and place whānau at the centre. (Manager)*

Arohanui ki te Tangata through Te Matapihi are developing tangata whenua-led housing solutions for those experiencing homelessness in their rohe. Arohanui ki te Tangata is made up of Māori and iwi providers to ensure their kaupapa Māori approach is not compromised. Māori working in non-Māori organisations are not included in Arohanui ki te Tangata.

### **The four Housing First models have different strengths and challenges**

Below is an overview of the four models using some case study examples, followed by the benefits and challenges noted by providers and HUD staff.

#### **Dispersed collective model of Housing First programmes**

Auckland Housing First collective depicts a dispersed collective model. In this model, the HUD contract for the Housing First programme is held by five individual agencies (i.e., Kāhui Tū Kaha, Lifewise, Auckland City Mission, VisionWest and LinkPeople). The Wise Group is the backbone function.

The benefits of the dispersed collective model are:

- learnings and insights are shared to inform the strategic direction across a broad geographical region
- strong networks across the region
- the ability to scale and respond promptly across urban settings
- clients can access a range of services and expertise due to the services offered by the agencies beyond Housing First (e.g., their wider health, mental health, addiction and wellbeing services).

The challenges of this model are:

- navigating the tensions across agencies relating to roles and responsibilities
- ensuring responsiveness to Māori is clearly delineated in the model.

<sup>11</sup> Whānau Ora is a culturally anchored approach, shaped by Māori worldviews, cultural norms, traditions and heritage. Whānau Ora puts whānau in charge of decision-making, empowering them to identify their aspirations to improve their lives and build their capability to achieve their goals (Whānau Ora Review Panel, 2018, p. 5).

### The integrated collective model

The integrated collective model is demonstrated by Housing First programmes in He Kāinga Ora ki Āotautahi (Christchurch), Housing First Blenheim, Housing First Nelson, and Te Tahi Whare Ora (Hawke's Bay).

The benefits of the integrated collective model are:

- the location of staff within a central hub enables staff to draw across diverse skills and expertise and offers clients choice
- the development of strong networks
- a seamless pathway for clients to access wider services and support, as needed
- the sharing of insights across the region
- job security for seconded staff as they can return to the home agency if Housing First succeeds in ending homelessness or is discontinued.

Inherent tensions lie within the secondment of staff across agencies, particularly around areas of accountability between staff's employer and the lead agency, namely:

- seconded staff members recruited to work in the hub may have restricted relationships with their employing organisation
- managing health and safety obligations across agencies (e.g., if an incident occurs at the Housing First site, the employer is legally responsible, not the lead agency)
- employers are responsible for performance development and management, but they do not see their employees' daily work
- staff members in the same role may receive different salaries and contracts across organisations. Some Housing First services have standardised the pay structure.

### Lead provider with an advisory group

Examples of this model include Aro Mai Housing First Collaboration (Wellington) and The People's Project (Hamilton and Tauranga).

The benefits of the lead provider approach are:

- the lead provider can deliver the services based on their values and skills
- service delivery is localised and not geographically spread
- the advisory group offers access to wider networks to meet clients' needs
- the advisory group inputs into the strategic direction and offers a forum to discuss and address emerging issues relating to homelessness in their region.

The potential challenges of the approach are:

- a lack of diverse skills within the lead agency and the need to develop strategies to upskill
- the opportunity to connect clients with other services can be missed

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- the provider may not have the capacity to cover the entire region.

### Iwi and Māori-led Housing First models

Across Māori and iwi providers, three Housing First models exist. For Māori and iwi providers, the focus is on delivering a kaupapa Māori service to meet the housing and wider social and health needs of whānau Māori experiencing homelessness. The benefits and challenges have similarities to the models noted above. Distinctive benefits and challenges for iwi and Māori-led models are noted below.

**A Mana Whenua model**, as demonstrated by Kahungunu Whānau Services (Wellington). The benefit of this approach is meeting the needs of whānau Māori within a Te Ao Māori approach based on mātauranga Māori. A potential challenge of this model is the provider may not have specialist housing expertise to secure housing stock. Kahungunu Whānau Services (Wellington) overcame this challenge by working with Kāhui Tū Kaha (Auckland) who is a Community Housing Provider. Once Kahungunu Whānau Services (Wellington) became a Community Housing Provider, Kāhui Tū Kaha (Auckland) handed over the properties to them.

**Lead iwi provider with subcontracts to other providers**, as demonstrated by Mangatakitahi (Rotorua). Te Taumata o Ngāti Whakaue Iho-Ako Trust subcontracts Lifewise and Airdale Property Trust to deliver core services.

The benefits of this approach are:

- delivering services that align with iwi values and creating opportunities to strengthen whānau Māori connections to iwi and Te Ao Māori
- drawing on organisations with a depth of experience in the housing sector and mental health and wellbeing services, when iwi are new to the housing sector
- building local capacity and capability to support a long-term goal of directly delivering services to whānau experiencing homelessness.

The challenge can be a lack of understanding of the implications of iwi's vision for the subcontracted organisations. Initially, iwi may work with non-Māori providers to deliver Housing First services. However, as the capability of iwi is built over time, iwi can decide to assert their tino rangatiratanga and solely work to deliver the service for their people and those living in their rohe. As a result, non-Māori providers in the region may need to withdraw from the Housing First service in the region.

**A dispersed collective of Māori and iwi providers** as demonstrated in Hau Kāinga (Far-North), and Kāinga Pūmanawa (Whangarei).

- Hau Kāinga (Far-North) is a collective of He Korowai Trust (Kaitaia), Ngāti Hine Health Trust (Kawakawa), Te Hau Ora O Ngāpuhi (Kaikohe), and Te Rūnanga o Whaingaroa (Whaingaroa).

- Kāinga Pūmanawa (Whangarei) is a collective of One Double Five Whare Āwhina Community House Trust, Ngāti Hine Health Trust, and Kāhui Tū Kaha.

The benefits of this model are the ability to base the service on iwi tikanga and Māori cultural values, cover a large rural area, and use a Whānau Ora approach.

Working collectively can be more challenging in rural areas due to the geographical distance between providers, differing local needs and the limited number of government and other agencies. For example, in Hau Kāinga (Far-North), having the property locator function in Kaikohe makes providing support in Kaitaia and Kerikeri difficult due to the lack of local housing knowledge and property-based relationships.

## Variations exist in intake and assessment processes

The HUD contract outlines the Housing First principles, cultural values and ways of working. The contract offers a level of flexibility to providers to implement the Housing First contract.

### Referrals to Housing First come from self-referral, other agencies and outreach services

- **Self-referrals to Housing First** – Self-referrals tend to occur when the service has been running for several years. People self-referring have an awareness of and trust the Housing First provider. Providers are mindful to avoid raising unrealistic expectations as not all people self-referring will meet the Housing First eligibility criteria.

*We are very proud that someone can walk through our front door when they need help. They don't have to be referred by another organisation. If you are homeless, it takes an incredible amount of bravery to come through that door and ask for help, particularly when you've been constantly turned away from help from all the organisations. So the front door I think, is important. (Manager)*

- **Referrals from other government agencies and NGOs to Housing First** – Referring agencies tend to be engaging with people experiencing homelessness, including DHBs, the Department of Corrections, NZ Police, MSD, marae, NGOs offering mental health and addiction services, and NGOs providing food or temporary shelter. Feedback indicates some referrals are not appropriate for Housing First (discussed [here](#)).
- **Outreach services** – Kaimahi identify people experiencing homelessness and work to build trust over time. Housing First providers with outreach services are Housing First Auckland, The People's Project, One Double Five Whare Āwhina Community House Trust, iwi providers through their networks, Whānau Ora providers who are part of Housing First). As the quote below shows, kaimahi can take years to build trust before some clients decide to engage with Housing First.

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*Estranged from her family for 10 to 15 years, picked on at school, in the mental health system, transient living in lots of different locations but never really feeling at home. Most agencies had given up on her. She was building up this massive issue of just destroying the community. We realised there were some mental health issues and then she started to engage. We created a great relationship – drinking coffee together telling me about her family. We managed to finally house her. (Key worker)*

### The COVID-19 lockdown response increased referrals to Housing First providers

Providers and HUD indicated enrolment in Housing First services builds slowly as awareness, trust, and networks build. Housing First providers contracted from 2019 had initially low referral numbers. Supporting the COVID-19 lockdown response enabled providers to enrol eligible people into the Housing First service.

### All Housing First providers assess eligibility on referral

#### Across Aotearoa, Housing First services use a range of tools to determine eligibility

All Housing First providers are aware of and apply the Housing First eligibility criteria. Providers vary in their opinion on the eligibility criteria. Some consider Housing First eligibility criteria appropriate for targeting people with the greatest need. However, others consider it too restrictive (discussed [here](#)).

At referral, all Housing First providers check people's eligibility<sup>12</sup> for the service using the following tools and checklists:

- The Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritisation Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) is used to triage and assess referrals to Te Tahi Whare Ora (Hawke's Bay) and The People's Project (Hamilton and Tauranga). VI-SPDAT assesses people's history of homelessness, current situation, and their health and social needs (OrgCode Consulting and Community Solutions, 2015).
- The Vulnerability Assessment Tool (VAT) is used by Aro Mai Housing First (Wellington), Housing First Blenheim and He Kāinga Ora ki Āotutahi (Christchurch). VAT is designed for people experiencing homelessness and assesses vulnerability to continued instability (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, 2016).
- Whānau Ora principles are used by Hau Kāinga (Far North) and Kāinga Pūmanawa (Whangarei). Providers develop individual whānau plans to identify people's needs and aspirations and assist them in achieving their goals.
- A conversational approach working off a housing, health and social needs checklist is used by Mangatakitahi (Rotorua), Housing First Nelson, and Kahungunu Whānau Services (Wellington).

<sup>12</sup> The Housing First eligibility criteria are: high, multiple and complex needs, sleeping rough or in other places not designed for habitation for a total of 12 months or more in the previous three years, and needing intensive ongoing support services to stay housed and achieve their goal (refer [here](#)).

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- Some Māori and non-Māori providers, use a range of Māori frameworks, including Te Whare Tapa Whā<sup>13</sup> and Hua Oranga<sup>14</sup> using whanaungatanga to build trust.

### Opinion differs across providers on the value of standardised tools

Most providers using VI-SPDAT and VAT find the tools useful in determining eligibility, and identifying clients' preferred areas of focus and supports needed.

*When you get a bit stuck, [the VI-SPDAT] is a neat springboard to get back on track or just ask the next logical question. When you finish that, it can break down all of your questions, and it does it in a way where it takes away human error and gives a neat calculation to show you where they're vulnerable. It could be socialising, it could be health, it may be some background information as well. So it creates a really nice conversation for you to springboard off. (Kaimahi)*

In contrast, some providers have moved away from using triage tools like VAT and VI-SPDAT. These Housing First providers note the tools took too long to administer (over two hours), and the process was stressful and re-traumatising for some clients.

Some Māori providers view the standardised tools as conflicting with iwi values of manaakitanga where all whānau are supported and not just those reaching a priority threshold. These providers are using a conversational approach or are simplifying the tool.

*The tool they wanted to use wasn't conducive to what we felt we needed to happen around the conversations because it contravened our values around manaakitanga. You know, so, and people have been able to exercise their rangatiratanga in making those choices. We just simply say, "Are you homeless? Where do you come from, and where do you want to go?" You know, what help do you need. It doesn't need much more than that. (Manager)*

Some Housing First providers are seeking more guidance on tools and online systems to assess eligibility for Housing First and Rapid Rehousing.

## Variations in service delivery exist across Aotearoa

### Workforce capacity and capability vary across Aotearoa

Across Aotearoa, the number of staff and FTE in each Housing First service varies, reflecting the region's size and HUD contract based on the assumed number of people experiencing homelessness in the regions.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Te Whare Tapa Whā (Durie, 1985) is a Māori model of health. The model identifies four equal and inter-related components of health and wellbeing. Broadly, these are taha tinana (physical health), taha hinengaro (mental health), taha whānau (family health) and taha wairua (spiritual health).

<sup>14</sup> Hua Oranga is a Māori measure of mental health and outcomes (Kingi & Durie, 2000).

<sup>15</sup> HUD contracts were developed before the COVID-19 lockdown in 2020 which identified the true number of people experiencing homelessness.

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The 12 Housing First services have three kaimahi structures:

- Five Housing First services have key workers, tenancy managers and property locators, and peer support workers with lived experience of homelessness.<sup>16</sup>
- Four Housing First services have key workers and property locators or tenancy managers.<sup>17</sup>
- Three Housing First services have only key workers.<sup>18</sup>

### A multi-disciplinary workforce is evident across the 12 services

Housing First provider feedback suggests a multi-disciplinary workforce is best placed to meet clients' complex needs. For example:

- key workers with diverse skills in mental health, AOD addictions, Whānau Ora, and social work to deliver the wraparound support
- peer support workers to do outreach and build trusted relationships with clients<sup>19</sup>
- property locators and tenancy managers to source houses and enable clients to maintain their tenancies.

Many Housing First clients have significant and urgent health and mental health needs. The quote below demonstrates the severity of health issues identified amongst clients in Housing First Nelson and the need to connect clients to health services.

*All Housing First clients were offered a health assessment through the Hauora Direct programme of Nelson Marlborough District Health Board. The team estimate around half of the clients completed the health assessment, which identified urgent follow-up care and life-threatening diseases. As a result of the programme, most clients have a GP. Te Piki Oranga is critical in supporting clients to work towards other life goals. (Manager)*

Given the complexity of health needs, some Housing First providers who have been delivering the service for more than three years are widening the kaimahi skill base to meet clients' clinical needs (e.g., addictions and mental health issues). For example, Housing First Auckland and He Kāinga Ora ki Ōtautahi (Christchurch) have introduced a community mental health nurse to work with clients with high mental health needs. Kāhui Tū Kaha has appointed an AOD addictions specialist and is recruiting mental health specialists to support key workers and clients in a therapeutic and counselling role.

Feedback from some HUD staff questions whether Housing First providers need more clinically-based roles or whether better referral pathways are needed to these services.

<sup>16</sup> Housing First Auckland, Mangatakitahi (Rotorua), Aro Mai Housing First Collaboration (Wellington), Kahungunu Whānau Services (Wellington), and He Kāinga Ora ki Ōtautahi (Christchurch).

<sup>17</sup> Te Tahi Whare Ora (Hawke's Bay), Housing First Blenheim, Hau Kāinga (Far North), and Kāinga Pūmanawa (Whangarei).

<sup>18</sup> The People's Project (Hamilton and Tauranga), and Housing First Nelson.

<sup>19</sup> Some Māori providers are focused on developing a Whānau Ora workforce as the positioning of kaimahi as peer support workers does not align with a mana-enhancing workforce (manaakitanga).

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However, the lack of AOD and mental health services across Aotearoa impedes access to these services (discussed [here](#)).

### **Building trusting relationships between kaimahi and clients is at the heart of effective services**

How services are delivered is as important as what is provided (Distasio et al., 2019).

Housing First providers emphasised the need for strength-based approaches to build trusting relationships with clients.

*Trust for me is really important. I guess in any relationship, but particularly with our group. In most instances, they have actually been in and out of work with a lot of different organisations, whether it be Corrections, other mental health services. There's a lot of promises that often aren't kept or there's a big power imbalance. (Kaimahi)*

Most Housing First providers assign clients based on the best fit for their needs and kaimahi availability. A few providers offer clients a choice of key workers.

Providers noted the interpersonal skills of kaimahi are key to effectively delivering the Housing First service. Providers identified key characteristics of kaimahi as:

- being relatable and non-judgmental
- being culturally safe given the high proportion of Māori clients (discussed further [here](#))
- being adaptive, flexible and responsive
- enabling choice and self-determination (discussed further [here](#)).

*Going forward, the focus is for key workers to become reflective practitioners as part of their personal development and overall workforce development. Being reflective means tikanga Māori is applied in a more deliberate way. Key workers are also able to articulate the value and outcomes of their practice. (Manager)*

### **The Housing First workforce does not consistently reflect their clients**

Across Aotearoa, Māori clients are overrepresented in Housing First, reflecting the high rates of severe housing deprivation they experience. Distasio et al. (2019) note the importance of having indigenous staff when localising Housing First in Canada. Indigenous staff bring a cultural and environmental understanding of the local knowledge and values in delivering the service. Indigenous leadership and governance are also central to creating buy-in and ensuing culturally safe services.

In some Housing First providers, the management and kaimahi reflect the culture and local values of their clients. However, others do not. Some have a high proportion of kaimahi Māori but few Māori in leadership roles.

- Seven Housing First programmes predominantly have Māori key workers reflecting the profile of their clients (e.g., Hau Kāinga (Far North), Kāinga Pūmanawa (Whangarei), some Housing First Auckland providers, Mangatakitahi (Rotorua), Te Tahi Whare Ora (Hawke's Bay), Kahungunu Whānau Services (Wellington), He Kāinga Ora ki Āotutahi (Christchurch)).

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- Other Housing First providers tend to have one or two Māori key workers who provide cultural support and guidance on top of their current role.
- Kāhui Tū Kaha also have several Pacific kaimahi reflecting the higher number of Pacific clients in Housing First Auckland.

*Being a mostly Māori team is a strength and the backbone of the service. Staff are culturally competent and naturally apply tikanga Māori practices and values, including whanaungatanga, kaitiakitanga, manaakitanga, and aroha. Staff can also relate, empathise, and understand the marginalisation and institutional racism that their Māori clients go through. It enables them to engage with clients without judgment or buy into negative stereotypes. (Manager)*

### **In 2021, workforce capacity in some areas did not meet the demand for Housing First**

Analysis of the 11 Housing First services with client data indicates the services are supporting an additional 652 clients than contracted.<sup>20</sup> The bulk of the additional clients sits with Housing First providers who have delivered the service for more than three years.

Four Housing First providers are waitlisting clients until a key worker can take on another client. These providers have differing strategies for managing people on their waitlists. After placing people into emergency or transitional housing, some providers:

- offer brief advice to prepare potential clients for coming into the service (e.g., WINZ obligations, ID, references, bank account, health check and getting on the Housing Register)
- link clients to other services (e.g., GP, MSD) as they do not have the capacity to offer direct support or advice.

The waitlists are reviewed regularly (e.g., weekly or monthly). During the review, priority tends to be given to clients with higher needs and length of time on the waitlist. One Housing First provider gives waitlisted clients a phone and calls monthly to confirm they want to be in Housing First. The impact of clients being on a waitlist for Housing First needs further exploration.

In early 2021, four Housing First programmes were actively recruiting kaimahi due to turnover and service growth. Most Housing First providers highlighted kaimahi retention and recruitment as a key challenge (discussed further [here](#)).

### **The capacity of kaimahi to meet the needs of clients on their caseload is stretched**

Given the complexity of clients' needs, key workers in Housing First programmes are expected to carry a caseload of around 10 clients (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban

<sup>20</sup> The 11 Housing First services are contracted to support 1,437 clients, 3,396 clients have been accepted into the service and 1,307 clients have graduated, withdrawn or died (refer Appendix 1).

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Development, 2020). However, across Aotearoa, caseloads range from 10 to 30 clients, with an average of around 15.

*Everyone here actually believes in what we're doing. I think that's a strength, yes. You have to be strong because you're doing really intense work. (Kaimahi)*

Provider feedback indicates workforce capacity is stretched. Key workers highlighted much time can be spent responding quickly to emerging client issues. These unplanned events can undermine the kaimahi's ability to complete weekly contacts with their clients.

To manage kaimahi capacity, some Housing First providers:

- run a strict 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday roster. In contrast, some iwi and Māori organisations operate 24/7 services to meet their community needs
- stop referrals to the service to avoid raising client expectations and adding caseload pressure
- run waitlists to ensure caseloads remain around 10 clients.

### **The complexity of client needs can create potential risks for key workers' safety**

No key workers interviewed indicated they felt unsafe in their work. Providers are using a range of strategies to maintain safety. Kaimahi support each other to assess and mitigate risks arising. Issues identified are discussed with team leaders and managers. In some urban settings, key workers and housing tenancy staff go in pairs to visit clients. Key workers feel safety risks are reduced when clients are in motels with onsite security.

### **Clients' housing choice is limited due to the housing shortage**

As noted, the ability of Housing First to house clients is undermined by Aotearoa's housing shortage and the stigma and discrimination faced by clients. By March 2021, 56% of clients accepted into Housing First were housed across Aotearoa. Others are in emergency housing, such as motels. As shown in Appendix 1, housing rates vary across providers, reflecting the current shortage of houses.

On enrolment, Housing First providers seek to find an appropriate house for clients based on their location preference and needs. If houses are available, clients are given an option and can turn houses down. However, if housing supply is limited, providers reinforce the lack of choice. If no houses are available, clients are placed into emergency accommodation or told to remain where they are currently staying (i.e., tent, car, couch surfing).

*If you look at the principles of the model, the first one is no housing readiness. So basically, no preconditions, come as you are, we'll take you as you are. As time's gone on, there's less houses and there's a bigger pool of people and they're waiting a lot longer. I think that's the challenge. The principles are what guide us, but how do you keep to those in this environment? (Manager)*

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### **Half of the housed Housing First clients (50%) are in accommodation provided through a Community Housing Provider (CHP)<sup>21</sup>**

The housing rental market in Aotearoa is highly competitive. Specialist housing expertise is needed to identify and secure housing stock for Housing First clients who face stigma and discrimination in the housing market.

The majority of Housing First programmes have a provider who is a CHP. Having the CHP status means clients pay 25% of their income for rent under Income-Related Rent. The CHPs then receive the Income-Related Rent Subsidy from the Government to cover the difference between the income-related rent paid by a tenant and what rental the market would pay.

In Housing First locations with no CHP provider, providers from other regions are supporting the service. For example, Kāhui Tū Kaha (Auckland) is supporting Kahungunu Whānau Services (Wellington) and Kāinga Pūmanawa (Whangarei) as the CHP until they reach CHP status. In these regions, CHP providers are key to finding sustainable accommodation.

The People's Project is not a CHP and does not have property managers. The People's Project (Hamilton) has housed 49% of clients accepted into Housing First.<sup>22</sup> The People's Project (Hamilton) has strong relationships with a group of property owners familiar with Housing First and their clients. Case managers are also responsive to any house maintenance issues arising, which reassures property owners.

*We're a little bit privileged in Hamilton because we're a longstanding provider. We've got probably more landlord relationships than in most other cities. And because we're not so geographically spread, it's not going to take us three hours in a car to assist with a property issue. We can be quite responsive to our community. (Manager)*

### **Property locators and tenancy managers enable access to and help sustain tenancies**

Eight out of 11 Housing First locations have property locators who develop relationships with property owners, rental agencies and property developers to secure housing stock. Property locators demonstrate to housing owners and suppliers the benefits financially and socially in renting properties to Housing First clients. As a HUD stakeholder noted, property locators are critical when finding houses in a housing crisis.

Tenancy managers also help maintain the tenancy by acting as a go-between for the property owner and the client. Tenancy managers support clients to transition to their new home and work with clients to sustain the tenancy. The tenancy managers ensure clients are aware of any property owner expectations and that adhering to them is achievable.

<sup>21</sup> 5% are in Kāinga Ora houses and 8% in other or private accommodation. For a third of housed clients the types of housing is unknown (37%).

<sup>22</sup> In The People's Project (Hamilton), the housing type for three quarters of housed clients is unknown (74%, n=344). Other clients are housed in Kāinga Ora houses (18%), private rentals (6%), and CHP or other (2%).

### Housing First providers deliver wraparound services

The underlying philosophy of Housing First is once people are in permanent and secure housing then wraparound support can address the determinants of clients' homelessness (e.g., mental health or addiction issues, abuse, intergenerational trauma). As noted, due to the housing shortage, the delivery of wraparound services may commence before clients are in permanent housing.

*For some of our clients, their primary goal is getting into a house and then they'll think about everything else afterwards. Once they get into a house, it might be, "Okay, things have changed now. Now I've actually got to clean the house myself. I've got to do the rubbish." You might get some that are starting to think about employment and all these other things that weren't possibilities when they were homeless or rough sleeping. (Kaimahi)*

### Key workers deliver an intensive service tailored to clients' needs

Most key workers see their clients at least once a week, and for those recently referred or facing challenges, up to three times a week. The frequency of client engagement is dependent on where clients are at in their journey. For example, key workers spend considerable time transitioning clients into houses (e.g., learning about housing upkeep and bill payment). Clients managing well in their houses and lives are seen less frequently. However, the intensity may increase again if clients face new challenges.

For example, He Kāinga Ora ki Ōtautahi (Christchurch) has developed a process to match the intensity of client interaction to their need. He Kāinga Ora ki Ōtautahi (Christchurch) has a time-based process to decrease the intensity of service received by clients. After about a year, key workers work with clients to determine if they are ready to be less frequently supported by a peer support worker. Eventually, clients only receive tenancy management and maintenance support.

### Most key workers develop a plan with clients to work on their priority needs and aspirations

Kaimahi use the insights from the initial enrolment assessment to work with clients to develop an individual or whānau plan. The plans can focus at two levels:

- addressing immediate health and wellbeing or financial needs (e.g., gaining entitlements from MSD, services to support physical and mental health, or addiction services support)
- working towards clients' longer-term aspirations (e.g., sustaining tenancies, reconnecting with whānau, returning to work).

A few Housing First services do not develop a written plan with clients. In these services, a more conversational approach is used to identify and support client needs<sup>23</sup>. New Housing

<sup>23</sup> The reasons for some providers not having formal plans is not clear.

First providers want more guidance from HUD on the appropriate assessment and planning tools to use.

### **Key workers are connecting clients to a range of other services, where available**

Across providers, key workers are connecting clients to AOD counselling, education, work, health services, budgeting, and anger management. Providers are connecting clients to primary health care, and some are ensuring clients receive health checks. All providers spoke of the challenges of accessing mental health and AOD services.

Many clients are anxious and dislike engaging with services due to previous negative experiences. Key workers across Housing First use different approaches to connect clients to services.

## **Clarification is needed on maintenance and exits**

### **Housing First services support clients for the long term**

Internationally, as in Aotearoa, Housing First offers flexible support for as long as required by clients with no preconditions to remain on the programme (Please, 2021). This long-term and unconditional approach reflects Housing First clients' high, multiple and complex needs (e.g., AOD addictions, anxiety, depression). Gaining and maintaining wellbeing and addiction recovery is an ongoing process of development. Clients will face circumstances that may adversely affect their mental health wellbeing or trigger a relapse through this journey. As a result, Housing First clients may become at risk of becoming homeless.

In Aotearoa, the Housing First contract does not have a fixed duration period for supporting clients, ongoing conditions to remain on the programme, or a process to graduate clients when they are settled in permanent housing and thriving. All Housing First providers strongly support the long-term nature of the approach.

### **No agreed graduation process exists for clients who are thriving**

One estimation is around 4% of clients accepted into Housing First across Aotearoa have graduated from the programme when settled into their permanent house and are thriving.

### **The Housing First contract is not enabling clients to graduate or re-enrol if needed**

The Housing First contract covers both the wraparound services and tenancy support for clients. As clients progress in their journey, the need for wraparound services can decrease. However, the tenancy support and the Income-Related Rent Subsidy continues to be valuable in sustaining tenancies in a competitive and expensive rental market.

Within the current contract, graduating clients from Housing First can result in the removal of tenancy support. As a result, Housing First providers need to find alternative resources to

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cover the tenancy support costs. HUD acknowledges the complex funding model and is currently reviewing the tenancy support aspect of the contract.

The eligibility criteria for Housing First are also a barrier for graduating clients. One provider noted a graduated client who requires help cannot be re-enrolled as they will not meet the criteria for chronic homelessness. This lack of ability to easily re-enrol contributes to clients not being graduated off the programme.

*I might be working with [client]. She's doing really well, and actually, she doesn't need my assistance at the moment. I'm just ringing her once a month saying, "Are you alright." Before we were funded, we would have discharged her and said, "You know where we are, come back if you have any problems." We can't do that because we cannot enter people into our system who are already housed so unless [client] is homeless again I can't bring her back. That's why people keep them on. If we take them off and they have problems, we won't get paid to work with them. (Manager)*

### **Some Housing First providers want a graduation process from Housing First**

Some Housing First providers want a process to recognise clients' achievements. They are seeking a graduation process that celebrates clients' success, sustains tenancy arrangements, and offers a pathway back if needed. Providers are seeking an approach that builds clients' mana and avoids creating dependency on the programme.

*We've been asking for two or three years how to graduate. Because we've got some whānau who are actually doing incredibly well, and they don't need the support navigator anymore. They still need the whare, their home...We should celebrate they're doing well. (Key worker)*

### **Around a third of clients have exited Housing First**

Over the last three years, about a third of clients (38%, 1,307) have withdrawn<sup>24</sup> from Housing First (refer to Appendix 1). Across Housing First providers, exit rates vary from 14% in Housing First Blenheim to 43% in Te Tahi Whare Ora (Hawke's Bay).<sup>25</sup>

### **Differing opinions exist on the value of having no client conditions for remaining on the programme**

As noted, the Housing First programme is based on two assumptions: 1. Housing is a human right; 2. Housing is not contingent on behavioural changes except for abiding by standard tenancy obligations (Stefancic & Tsemberis, 2007).

Across Aotearoa, Housing First providers support clients being rehoused if they lose tenancies (e.g., due to property damage). Across Housing First services, providers continue

<sup>24</sup> 'Withdrawn' includes no longer wants to take part; evicted or tenancy lost; housed; left area; not suitable; declined by client; Corrections (Prison); withdrawn; transferred to another service.

<sup>25</sup> The People's Project (Hamilton) has an exit rate of 71%. The reason for this difference is not known and may reflect the length of time The People's Project has worked on Housing First.

to deliver wraparound support to these clients and work to find them another house. Some, including Māori providers, question the ongoing rehousing of clients with many evictions.

### The sustainability of Housing First implementation

Housing First providers interviewed recognised the need and value of the programme. All noted no other similar service exists to support the diverse and complex needs of people experiencing long-term homelessness. The demand for Housing First services continues to be high, reflecting the need in the community.

Some providers and some HUD staff questioned the ongoing sustainability of Housing First. This reflects that not having a graduated exit process means the number of clients in the programme will continue to increase.

*It's massive. That whole journey of going from homeless to a house and then building it into a home is an incredible journey for people who've been deemed as lost, had doors shut on them and such. That's the cohort we deal with. To be able to have a home that you can afford to be safe and secure, you can't really put a measure on it. (Kaimahi)*

### Housing First supported the COVID-19 response

In March 2020, the COVID-19 lockdown response required all people experiencing homelessness to be housed. Housing First providers worked with HUD to house people experiencing homelessness in motels. During the lockdown, Housing First providers provided food and daily welfare checks and linked people to health professionals. As essential workers, kaimahi could access and strengthen their relationships with clients. In some motels, clients created support networks that lasted beyond the lockdown.

Housing people in motels also created challenges. Some Housing First providers noted drug sellers were targeting motels, and AOD consumption created problems. Many providers introduced security firms to increase the safety at motels. Some providers worked closely with their clients, moteliers, NZ Police and the community to develop local solutions.

Some kaimahi noted motels are not conducive to building clients' life skills. They commented clients were more goal-focused when placed in a permanent home. Initially, after lockdown, the lack of rental accommodation and other costs associated with motels created a disincentive for a few clients to transition into permanent housing.

## **Key insights on Housing First implementation**

- As of March 2021, 3,396 people have been accepted into Housing First across Aotearoa. Of those accepted, 1,891 clients (56%) have been housed. Four in ten clients have withdrawn for a range of reasons (38%).
- In Aotearoa, the lack of housing obstructs the delivery of Housing First.
- Housing First services are at different development stages. Those in operation more than three years have refined their service delivery based on practice learnings. Providers contracted from 2019 are at an earlier development stage.
- Four Housing First governance and operational structures based on collective action exist across Aotearoa: a dispersed collective model, an integrated model, a lead provider model, and iwi and Māori-led models. Each has its benefits and challenges and reflects both its people and place.
- The Housing First contract enables flexible delivery of the service based on the programme's principles and values. Variation of service delivery exists, reflecting differing interpretations of principles and values (discussed in [section 5](#)).
- Key areas for further discussion and clarification are:
  - The eligibility criteria in determining whether they are too restrictive
  - The relevance and use of standardised assessment tools
  - The maintenance and graduation processes to enable clients to receive ongoing tenancy support and to return to the programme, if needed
  - Building workforce capacity, capability, and diversity.

## **5 Housing First's responsiveness to Māori experiencing homelessness**

This section addresses two key evaluation questions:

- How are the Housing First programme and its principles being tailored to meet the diverse and complex needs of people experiencing homelessness across regions?
- How are the design and delivery of the Housing First programme working for Māori experiencing homelessness?

The two key evaluation questions are answered together, as the introduction of the cultural values seeks to localise Housing First in Aotearoa. In this context, the changes reflect the Crown's Te Tiriti o Waitangi levers as expressed through MAIHI Ka Ora. The section also has a high-level overview of Housing First's responsiveness to Pacific peoples experiencing chronic homelessness.

Understanding the variations in the adaptions and application of Housing First principles and cultural values helps explain service delivery variations discussed in section 5.

The section draws across the 12 case studies, interviews with HUD staff and literature to present:

- The reasons for evolving Housing First principles and cultural values in Aotearoa
- The adaption of the Housing First principles and cultural values in practice in Aotearoa
- The responsiveness of Housing First to Māori experiencing chronic homelessness
- Housing First's alignment with MAIHI
- The responsiveness of Housing First to Pacific peoples.

### **The reasons for evolving Housing First in Aotearoa**

#### **Five principles guide the delivery of Housing First in Aotearoa**

HUD's contract sets out the five principles to guide the delivery of Housing First in Aotearoa:

1. Immediate access to housing with no readiness conditions
2. Consumer choice and self-determination
3. Individualised and person-driven support
4. A harm reduction and recovery-orientation approach
5. Social and community integration.

The Housing First principles are based on international research evidence on the actions needed to implement the programme effectively. The assumption is that if the Housing First principles are followed, then positive client outcomes will result.

How the Housing First principles are actioned is dependent on Housing First providers' values (i.e., the qualities that define how they behave). In short, the principles tell providers what to do, and values determine how providers will work to action them.

### Three cultural values define the behaviour expected to action the principles

Since 2018, work has been undertaken to define values to strengthen service delivery to Māori. In 2018, HUD held a series of workshops across Aotearoa to set up new Housing First locations. During the workshops, HUD actively encouraged providers to work with Māori and iwi providers to develop a collective Housing First solution in their region. Some Housing First providers had existing relations, and others did not. In a few cases, Māori and iwi providers initiated their involvement as they were overlooked in discussions about their people.

*We've included MAIHI principles within our contracts. That's been our first foray into trying to get more explicit around our expectations of providers and how they're involved in the conversations and the connections they have within their communities. It's pretty immature at this point. Different providers are at different levels of maturity. (HUD)*

In 2019, three Māori cultural values were introduced with the new Housing First contracts (except for Mangatakitahi (Rotorua)). The HUD contract requires Housing First providers to apply the cultural values in delivering the service so individuals/whānau can exercise:

- Rangatiratanga (self-determination)
- Whakawhananungatanga (positive connections)
- Manaakitanga (self-worth and empowerment).

The values are consistent with the Māori and Iwi Housing Innovation (MAIHI) framework for action<sup>26</sup>. The MAIHI has five kaupapa Māori principles including rangatiratanga, whakawhananungatanga, and manaakitanga (Figure 1).

<sup>26</sup> MAIHI is a framework for action to support iwi and Māori to find and keep safe, secure, healthy and affordable housing to reduce the numbers of Māori becoming homeless.

## Appendix A

**Figure 1: The kaupapa Māori principles of the MAIHI Framework for Action (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2020b)**



### Housing First Auckland developed a kaupapa Māori framework – Tāiki

In 2018, Housing First Auckland's Kaupapa Māori Group developed the Tāiki framework. The Kaupapa Māori Group is made up of Māori staff from each of the Housing First Auckland providers. Tāiki, based on mātauranga Māori, is an indigenous approach and assumes a Māori-centric position (Figure 2).

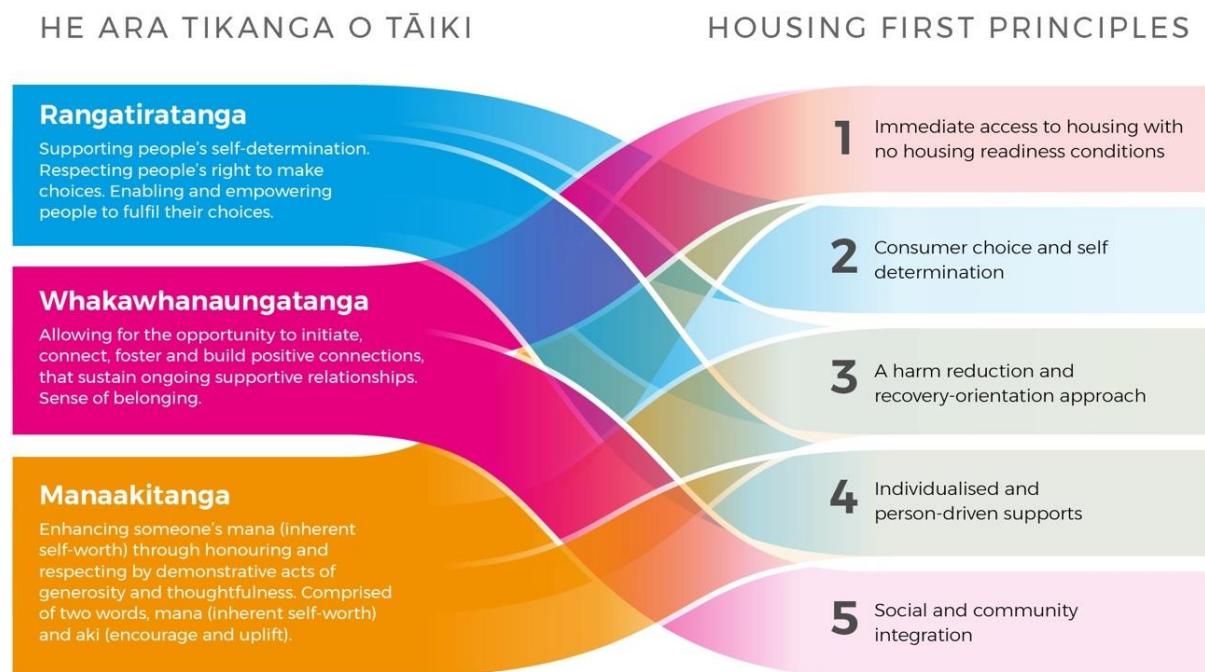
**Figure 2: The Tāiki framework for Housing First (Housing First Auckland, 2021)**



## Appendix A

Tāiki shows how the cultural values – rangatiratanga, whakawhanaungatanga and manaakitanga – guide Housing First practice and influence client interaction (Housing First Auckland, 2021). Figure 3 illustrates the interrelationship between the cultural values and Housing First principles.

**Figure 3: The interrelationship between Tāiki and Housing First principles**



### Tāiki requires application at all organisation levels and for all staff

Tāiki sets a way of working for Housing First Auckland providers at all organisational levels (i.e., leadership, management, and frontline). The cultural values are intended to be embedded into systems, processes, policies, tools and practices. The values are expected to inform the organisation's and individuals' behaviour to influence how Housing First clients are supported. This responsibility for applying the values lies with leaders and all staff and does not fall solely on kaimahi Māori.

The Kaupapa Māori Group oversees the implementation of Tāiki in Housing First Auckland providers. Tāiki upholds the mana of each provider and offers discretion in how they operationalise the values in practice. Tāiki enables providers to incorporate their organisational values. The Kaupapa Māori Group and Kāhui Tū Kaha have provided training on the application of Tāiki.

The development of Tāiki is a significant achievement for Housing First Auckland. Feedback indicates implementation of Tāiki in Auckland is in the early stages.

*By now, they should have sorted how the cultural principles look like in their practice. It's been five years and they still haven't and that really infuriates me because it's not hard. (Kaimahi)*

### The cultural values were introduced to adapt Housing First to the Aotearoa context

#### Iwi and Māori had limited input into adapting the Housing First programme when first introduced to Aotearoa

Before its introduction to Aotearoa, limited work was done to ensure the cultural relevance of the Housing First programme for Māori. Other international programmes have been adapted to work effectively with Māori and other indigenous communities (Keown et al., 2018; Superu, 2015). Critical to this process are the community's desire for the programme, and community leaders, the community and service providers working to incorporate indigenous knowledge, values and approaches. This process is similar to the seven steps to localise Housing First in Winnipeg, Canada (Distasio et al., 2019).

#### A kaupapa Māori review identified Housing First needs to encompass decolonisation processes, mātauranga Māori definitions and root causes of Māori homelessness

In 2018, Housing First Auckland worked with Te Kotahi Research Institute to develop a kaupapa Māori evaluation of Housing First Auckland (Pihamo et al., 2018a, 2018b). The scoping report offers critical insight into the context for Housing First to optimise outcomes for Māori.<sup>27</sup> The authors caution the scoping report does not have the answers but offers areas of critical discussion for Housing First in Aotearoa.<sup>28</sup>

Pihamo et al. (2018a) highlighted critical areas Housing First providers need to be aware of when working with Māori experiencing homelessness.

- **The impact of colonisation:** Housing First providers need to appreciate the contradiction of Māori being homeless on their whenua when responding to Māori experiencing homelessness. Colonisation has and continues to impact on Māori and their experience of homelessness – as settlers were placed, Māori were displaced. Service providers need to understand the impact of colonisation and use intergenerational trauma approaches to support Māori experiencing physical, cultural and spiritual homelessness. Housing First needs therefore to be aligned with a decolonisation process to empower the diversity of Māori clients.
- **Māori definitions of home and homelessness:** Definitions of home influence service responses to homelessness. Pihamo et al. (2018a, p. 18) draw on wider literature to

<sup>27</sup> At the time of this report, a kaupapa Māori evaluation of Housing First had not been completed in Auckland.

<sup>28</sup> Pihamo et al's (2018a) literature review is substantive; only key points have been drawn to inform the reader of this evaluation.

## Appendix A

define home for Māori as a collective, with interconnected cultural relationships of individuals, families, and communities in relation with land, water, ancestors, animals, culture, languages, and identities. Homelessness is not simply a lack of physical shelter, but a disconnection from the land, whānau and iwi. In this context, Māori can be housed and be homeless, or without shelter and yet at home. Pihama et al. (2018a) argue interventions to transform the lives of Māori experiencing homelessness need to come from a Māori-specific understanding of the dimensions of homelessness. At the heart of addressing homelessness for Māori is connection to whānau, hapū and iwi, culture, whenua, language and tikanga.

- **Systemic structural issues:** Work is needed on changing the systemic structural issues that are the root cause of Māori experiencing homelessness (e.g., sustained racism, lack of affordable or appropriate housing, housing discrimination, culturally inappropriate health and education services, inadequate employment opportunities, and a discourse that equates poverty with criminality). Pihama et al. (2018a) highlight that without addressing these systematic structural issues, the severe housing deprivation experienced by Māori will not be addressed. The Housing First programme needs therefore to be part of a wider transformative process (discussed in section 8).

### **Housing First's focus on individuals is at tension with the Māori worldview that focuses on collectives**

Pihama et al. (2018a) note Housing First is based on a Western worldview which prioritises the integration of individuals back to Western economic, political, social and cultural contexts. The tension noted is that Housing First's individual person-centred approach can undermine collective intergenerational living, reciprocity and kinship obligations, and manaakitanga and whananungatanga for Māori. Pihama et al. (2018a) highlight responses to homelessness need to contribute to the aspiration of Māori living as Māori in all its diversity.

### **Housing First is not the only solution for Māori experiencing homelessness**

Pihama et al. (2018a) comment Housing First is not the only solution to homelessness for Māori and recognition is needed of kaupapa Māori responses to homelessness. Pihama et al. (2018a) note the foundations for addressing Māori experiencing homelessness may exist in Whānau Ora. Housing First can therefore learn from Whānau Ora about culturally responsive approaches. However, Housing First should not undermine or detract from kaupapa Māori service provision.

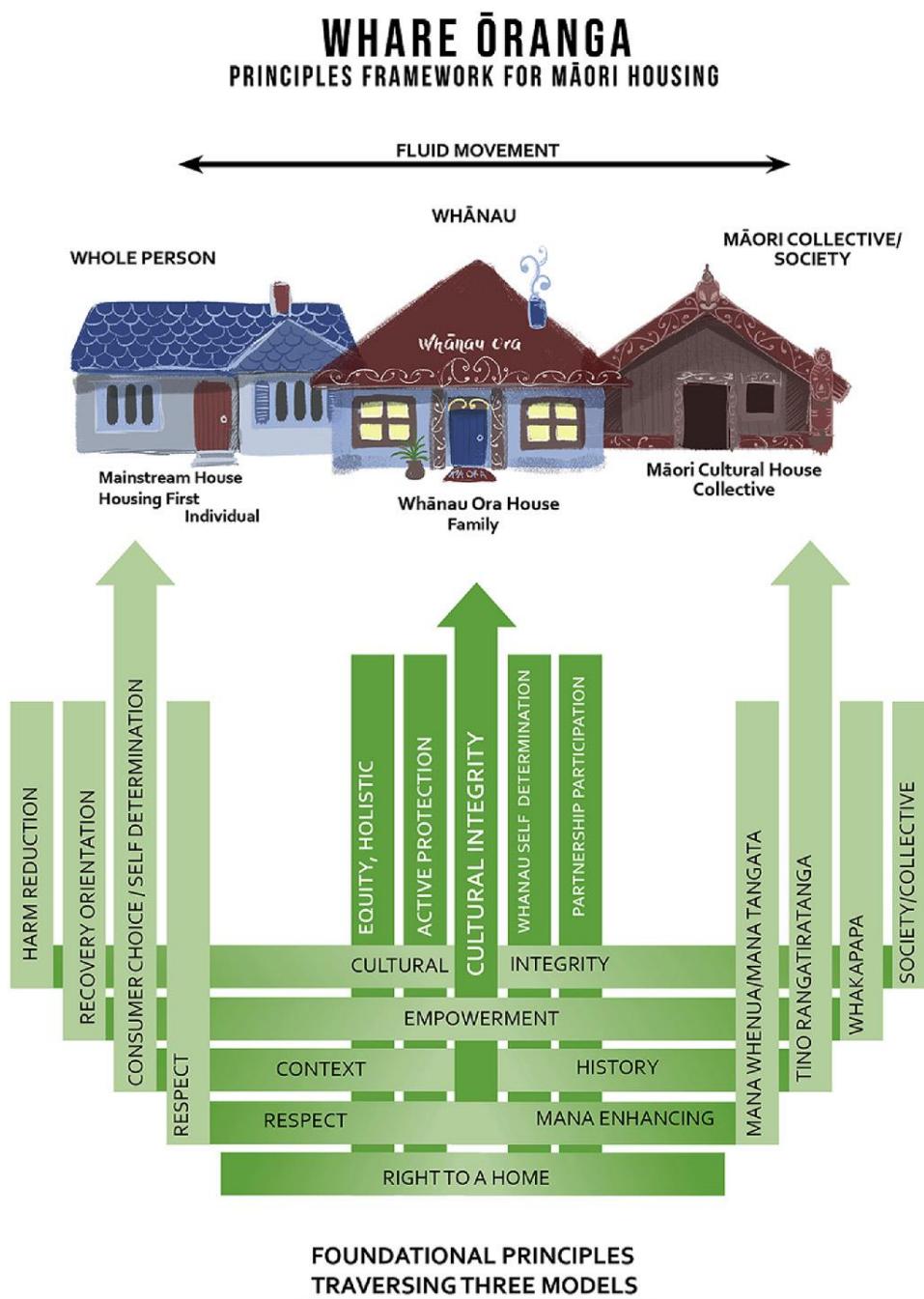
Lawson-Te Aho et al. (2019) note the three models for Māori housing – each underpinned by self-determination: the Māori Cultural House (collective), Whānau Ora house (family) and Housing First (individual). Figure 4 illustrates the foundational principles of Cultural Integrity, Empowerment, Context, History, Respect, Mana Enhancement and Right to a Home. As Pihama et al. (2018a) cite from Ombler et al. (2017, p. 6):

## Appendix A

*It is essential that any homelessness intervention is well-integrated with the Treaty, and with the principles of Whānau Ora, to ensure effective and ethical delivery to, and by, Māori.* (Ombler et al., 2017, p. 6)

Being grounded in the Aotearoa context helps in understanding the adaptions of Housing First principles and cultural values by providers.

**Figure 4: Whare Ōranga Framework: A Principles Framework for Māori Housing**  
(Lawson-Te Aho et al., 2019, p. 4)



# **The adaption of Housing First principles and cultural values in Aotearoa reflects differing worldviews**

All Housing First providers interviewed are applying the Housing First principles and cultural values in the implementation of the service. However, how the principles are actioned reflects how the values are interpreted. The differing interpretations of the cultural values reflect differing worldviews – Māori and non-Māori.

Māori and iwi Housing First providers are applying a kaupapa Māori approach to delivering Housing First. Non-Māori providers, supported by their Māori advisors, are working to incorporate the three cultural values within their organisations and the delivery of Housing First. These differing worldviews underpin the variations in the implementation of Housing First noted in section 4.

## **Māori and iwi providers deliver Housing First using kaupapa Māori approaches**

**The practice of Māori and iwi providers is centred on mana motuhake<sup>29</sup>**

For Māori and iwi providers, the delivery of Housing First is centred on Māori philosophies, principles, and the values of local iwi. The three cultural values are embedded within their organisations and ways of working.

Māori and iwi providers focus on mana motuhake by enabling Māori to be Māori, to exercise their authority over their lives, and to live on their terms as Māori. Māori and iwi providers are working to create pathways for clients to strengthen cultural and spiritual connections with whānau, hapū, iwi and whenua. As a kaimahi from Kāhui Tū Kaha explains:

*I've never seen this level of tikanga being applied across a whole service. I've noticed coming under the auspice of Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whātua and the mana and the tapu of the iwi is given from the top down. Everyone has that sacred more-spiritual obligation to complement more so the governance from the top down. Those principles are working from the top to the bottom in the service, which is different to what I'm used to seeing. (Kaimahi)*

Another example is the Housing First approach of Mangatakitahi (Rotorua), which is based on the values and tikanga of Ngāti Whakaue.

<sup>29</sup> Mana motuhake: enabling the right for Māori to be Māori (Māori self-determination), to exercise their authority over their lives, and to live on Māori terms and according to Māori philosophies, values and practices, including tikanga Māori.

## Appendix A

*Mangatakitahi is a location and it was where those of very high rank were buried. If we think about that and its essence it is a very sacred space. It's full of tapu, it's full of also its own mana and uara. What we do under the guise of Mangatakitahi is use our values and our principles to breathe life and mana back into the people that are lost, wandering and just vagrant. In Housing First Rotorua they lie with our practice teams, or our service provision, making sure you do not create a barrier, making sure that you don't allow other people to use their barriers against themselves. Allowing somebody to make their own decisions and their own client-driven decisions is motuhake or Te Oranga, you're allowing them to make self-determining decisions that will affect their next steps in life. (Kaimahi)*

### **Kaupapa Māori values and principles are influencing Housing First principles**

#### **Strong alignment exists with offering immediate access to housing with no readiness conditions**

Māori and iwi providers lead with a whānau-centred approach. Māori and iwi providers work to support whānau to address immediate needs and work to prepare for the housing transition. Housing First is an important initiative as Māori and iwi providers can, (if houses exist) house whānau and continue to support whānau aspirations and moemoeā. Māori and iwi providers are not placing readiness conditions on whānau to gain access to houses.

*Housing First enables our whānau to have another opportunity to be housed. That's the bottom line of it. How we house them and how we look after them on their journey is the other important thing because it's all about sustainability. (Kaimahi)*

#### **The principle of individualised and person-driven support is adapted to a whānau-centred and collective approach**

Many Māori and iwi providers spoke of using a Whānau Ora approach in delivering Housing First.

*They work within a holistic approach and incorporate Whānau Ora principles into their mahi. For kaimahi, it is their natural way of being. They are whānau-led and place whānau at the centre. (Manager)*

Māori and iwi providers take a holistic Whānau Ora approach to assess clients' needs. Engagement is underpinned by manaakitanga, whakawhanungatanga, and rangatiratanga. For example, Kāhui Tū Kaha use whakatau and whananungatanga processes to engage and build trust with whānau. Staff reflect and document the ways they model these cultural values when working with whānau. A supportive network of kaimahi and other services is created to support whānau. One kaimahi describes the support network as the harakeke.

*You've got to do a bit of a whakatau with all the different people and whananungatanga. It's very much like we're their whānau where we look at the rito and pa harakeke and there's our tangata at the centre. We very much work as a whānau wraparound and then we go, "This is the other whānaunga, here's the other whānaunga."*

Māori providers are not assessing client needs using standardised tools (e.g., VI-SPDAT). These tools are not based on mātauranga Māori. Some Māori providers feel using standardised tools to categorise people's needs conflicts with manaakitanga (i.e., it is not mana enhancing).

## Appendix A

*The whole questioning is confronting. Some you can just ask them straight out because they know you quite well. But if you don't know them that well ... we've had people break down in front of us because it's actually putting their life in front of them. And if they're not ready to see this or hear it, it in a way can be harmful. It needs a cultural view or, for us, the Māori way because we know our way, yes, I guess somehow to manaaki those assessments because you're working with people's hurt and pain at the same time. (Kaimahi)*

### ***The principle of individualised and person-driven support can be at tension with the value of rangitirangatanga***

Tino rangatiratanga can be defined as absolute self-determination about doing the right thing in the right way for selves and others (Elder, 2020). Māori and iwi providers work with clients to address their individual needs and offer choice where choice exists (e.g., choice of house, service options, kaimahi). However, Māori and iwi providers also focus choice within the context of what is right within whānau, hapū and iwi.

*It's actually saying to them, "Hey, we've got your back. I just need you to do what you need to do to be able to stay there." So we're really upfront with our whānau. We're not going to sit there and massage your ego because it's not good for you. It does nothing for you. We're here to say, "Hey", hard conversations, "You're dropping the ball here. How can we pick that ball up? How can we do it safely?"*

The Housing First principle of self determination is focused on individual consumer choice which some Māori providers perceived was a flawed interpretation. They note that beyond seeing their kaimahi, clients do not have to engage in any programmes or face the consequences of their actions. These providers feel the individualised interpretation of self-determination overlooks the importance of reconnection to whānau and contribution to collective responsibilities.

*For them, there is no consequences of their behaviour. All the other programmes we have, the expectation is there's an obligation for them to go to their programmes... They don't have to attend their programmes [in Housing First]. Now that's not tika. There's some real basic fundamental flaws in the Housing First concept. (Manager)*

Others perceive the 'forever' nature of the programme risks building dependency. They perceive the programme should be a starting point for whānau from which they transition to other services as they make positive progress.

### ***Alignment exists with the principle of harm reduction and recovery-orientation approach<sup>30</sup>***

Most Māori and iwi providers work from a harm reduction and recovery-orientation approach to offer judgment-free solutions that mitigate risks from AOD abuse. These solutions involve the work of kaimahi and referral to appropriate AOD services, where available. Most AOD

<sup>30</sup> Harm minimisation encompasses the prevention and reduction of health, social and economic harms experienced by individuals, their families and friends, communities and society from AOD use. The promotion and protection of wellbeing integrates physical, mental and social needs to strengthen protective factors for individuals, families and communities (Inter-Agency Committee on Drugs, 2015).

## Appendix A

services in Aotearoa are based on the principle of harm reduction. Only one provider requires AOD abstinence within their iwi-owned properties as abstinence is required by local tikanga.

Some Māori and iwi providers are also connecting clients to traditional Māori healers. For example, in Kāhui Tū Kaha kaimahi have identified mate Māori<sup>31</sup> in some whānau and took them to tohunga or reconnected them to their whenua.

*We identified a mate Māori, which means there's mate Pākehā, but a Māori illness. We took him to the ones that can deal with that. The jump in their recovery through addressing that mate Māori is just amazing. (Kaimahi)*

### ***The principle of social and community integration is evident in reconnecting to culture and whānau***

Māori and iwi providers deeply appreciate the negative impacts of colonisation, land dispossession, and housing system failure on whānau Māori. These providers view clients as part of whānau, both whakapapa and kaupapa-based.<sup>32</sup> Whānau are viewed as a strength and part of the solution to enable clients. Consistent with this world view, a higher proportion of Māori and iwi providers clients are whānau, and in turn, a higher proportion are women (consistent with the important role they play within whānau who are experiencing chronic homelessness). Māori and iwi providers, through their networks, are well-positioned to support clients to explore their identity as Māori and reconnect with whānau if they choose to.

Māori and iwi providers focus on reconnecting with whakapapa, whānau and iwi. For example, Mangatakitahi (Rotorua) teaches clients about Ngāti Whakaue kawa and tikanga, and reconnects them to their whakapapa. As a result, clients are leading patere, doing rakau and poi. To support this work, Mangatakitahi (Rotorua) is introducing a Pou Whakahaere role to ensure service delivery leads from a Ngāti Whakaue perspective.

### ***Maōri and iwi providers are using kaupapa Māori approaches to deliver Housing First***

The emphasis on a kaupapa Māori approach aligns delivery towards the Whānau Ora housing model defined by Lawson-Te Aho et al. (2019) (Figure 4).

*I suppose some of the criteria is a barrier to that; whatever it takes, no wrong door. We work on a Whānau Ora model. They're still working to their contract. That's the difference. It is whānau-centred in terms of their practice but only to those who fit, whereas our model is we'll just find a solution across the collective or someone like my team will hold a person till someone else has capacity to pick them up. We worry about the contracting after that, that's the difference in terms of practice, in terms of kaupapa Māori. (Manager)*

<sup>31</sup> Mate Māori is defined as “Māori sickness – psychosomatic illnesses attributed to transgressions of tapu or to mākutu (physical and psychological harm and even death through spiritual powers).” ([Māori Dictionary](#))

<sup>32</sup> Whakapapa whānau means related through blood and ancestral links, and kaupapa whānau are those who share a common interest or connection (i.e., rough sleepers whānau).

## **Non-Māori providers apply the Housing First principles and are learning to embed the cultural values in their practice**

In introducing the cultural values, HUD offered little guidance on their application. Non-Māori providers worked with their cultural advisors or Māori and iwi providers to embed the values. Across non-Māori providers, the maturity of embedding the Housing First cultural values ranges from emerging to developing (refer [Table 3](#)).

### **Non-Māori providers at the emergent stage are new to delivering Housing First and have given limited consideration to the application of the cultural values**

At the emergent stage, managers are aware of the three cultural values. Managers tend to see kaimahi Māori as responsible for ensuring the values are applied in their work with Māori clients. Non-Māori staff defer to their Māori colleagues and greatly value their wisdom and insight. However, non-Māori staff have limited insight on how the values apply to their work with Māori or non-Māori clients.

At the emerging stage, the cultural values are interpreted literally, or the use of cultural practices is highlighted as their application (e.g., clients are welcomed, kai is offered, choice is given, daily waiata and karakia).

*Even if they come into our Pākehā offices and we offer a cup of tea, offer them a cold drink, that's manaaki. (Kaimahi)*

### **Non-Māori providers at the developing stage are actively working to identify how to apply the cultural values in their organisation and the delivery of Housing First**

At the developing stage, both managers and most kaimahi are aware of the cultural values. Managers have supported processes to explore applying the cultural values in delivering Housing First relevant to their region. Internal Māori cultural leaders or external Māori organisations support this work and train and support staff on applying the cultural values in their work. Some are actively reflecting on how well the cultural values are applied in their work.

*We talk about them often, because that's whenever we're working with our whānau and even with each other, we're always directed to those [value], "Is that manaaki?" And a lot of it is rangatiratanga. We're always reminding each other of that, "Is this about moving our whānau forward, or as team members, is this empowering for us and giving people a voice?" (Kaimahi)*

Examples include:

- Housing First Auckland's Kaupapa Māori Group's work to develop the Tāiki framework. Members of the Kaupapa Māori Group are providing training and guidance in their organisations in the application of the cultural values in the organisation and their Housing First mahi. Kāhui Tū Kaha is training and supporting non-Māori providers' staff on appropriate cultural practices.

## Appendix A

- He Kāinga Ora ki Ōtautahi (Christchurch) has created guidance and induction processes on cultural values, and the cultural lead offers support and guidance to staff.
- Aro Mai Housing First (Wellington) describe themselves as working within a Te Ao Māori way. They have established a ‘toa’ role to provide kaimahi with guidance on how to work safely with Māori clients. They are also locating staff at Kōkiri Marae, so staff are immersed within the Māori values and the use of Whānau Ora.
- VisionWest staff in Housing First Auckland are using Te Whare Tapa Whā because it was centred around family, whānau, aiga, and fitted with ‘our cultural ways’.
- Lifewise, staff in Housing First Auckland are actively reflecting on the cultural values in their day-to-day practice.

### **Non-Māori providers recognise more work is needed to embed the cultural values**

To build cultural capability, some have employed Māori staff in a cultural advisor role. The role varies from a Māori staff member being allocated this role on top of their caseload to a dedicated role within the management team. The position tends to offer non-Māori staff with direction on working with Māori clients, and advice if questions arise. Some are educating on Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Matariki and te reo Māori.

*Our cultural competency needs to be strengthened and given a bit more importance especially when 67% of our clientele are whānau Māori. (Kaimahi)*

These roles are highly valued by non-Māori staff in supporting their work. However, these roles can create additional (and at times unrecognised) work for Māori staff who may be on their journey to reconnect with Te Ao Māori. The responsibility for applying the cultural values lies at all levels from the governing groups, management, through to frontline staff. As noted in [Table 3](#), more work is needed to embed the cultural values at governance and leadership levels in some non-Māori providers.

*We don't have anybody in Cultural Lead. It's been an ongoing discussion and it's been a big gap for us in terms of the place to go for consult advice. I think our cultural responsiveness remains a definite thing we would like to strengthen and improve on. (Kaimahi)*

Some non-Māori providers are offering training to support the implementation of the cultural values. For example, at Auckland City Mission in Housing First Auckland all staff attend a noho marae. Some staff reflected positively on their increased understanding of Māori concepts, such as tikanga and kaupapa. Staff also became more conscious of trauma stemming from colonisation occurring in the past, the present, and the future.

*It shows you where intergenerational trauma came from. It was pretty shocking and confronting. Being on that marae was just like a whole different vision. (Kaimahi)*

### **Non-Māori organisational values and Māori cultural values can be at tension**

Differing perspectives and tensions can exist between organisational values and Māori cultural values. Examples noted were:

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- processes to welcome and farewell staff in an organisation not aligning with cultural values
- Māori or iwi not being involved or heard in decision-making about the programme
- the international prescriptions on how to deliver Housing First having primacy over kaupapa Māori approaches.

*[Organisation] is not Kaupapa Māori or bicultural, it is a non-kaupapa Māori organisation. We've got Western systems that dominate the structure. When I look at an important project like Housing First that has Māori at its centre and is sitting in an organisation that doesn't have that, there's going to be tension and there is tension. (Manager)*

In some areas, the inability to resolve these tensions resulted in the departure of a Māori cultural advisor, and the withdrawal of a Māori Housing First provider from a collective and the support of local iwi.

*When our resources are being used to train others, when our resources are being used to provide that support to tauwi organisations, who will then in the click of a finger turn around and drop us at the first given moment. There's definitely some inequities in that. (Manager)*

### **Housing First principles are delivered in line with the international model**

Non-Māori providers are delivering Housing First in line with the five core principles. In delivering to the principles, the core focus is delivering to individual person-centred needs. Kaimahi seek to tailor their response to clients' needs. If staffing allows, attempts are made to match the ethnicity and gender of clients to kaimahi.

### ***Strong alignment exists with clients being offered a house with no preconditions (if housing exists)***

Non-Māori providers all agree clients should have unconditional access to housing with no pre-set conditions, except clients' willingness to engage. The lack of housing options is creating wait lists or clients being placed in emergency housing. Providers are particularly positive clients are not penalised if they lose a tenancy for whatever reason.

*We've seen it work and it's amazing. Because it means if someone gets kicked out of a house, we're still there. We don't drop them... So I think that's what I love about Housing First is that we keep on at it with them. We don't give up on them. (Kaimahi)*

### ***Alignment exists with offering individualised choice, although self-determination has differing interpretations***

While housing options are limited, providers work with clients to understand their housing preferences, particularly knowing what they do not want. Where possible, clients are offered some level of housing choice, at the least the option to decline the properties. Providers work to build trust and offer clients choice and control in determining their plans. Options relating to support and services to enable their plans are offered, if the choice exists.

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*It's ironic it's called Housing First, for us it's People First, because that's what it really is. it's all about the relationships. We support some people that have quite horrific backgrounds and experiences and the only way to break those barriers to get through to them, to have a connection with them, is by having a relationship with them. (Kaimahi)*

Providers acknowledge enabling clients to be self-determining is important in building their capabilities. However, the concept of self-determination is applied in different ways within and across Housing First providers. From a trauma-informed perspective, some staff are enabling clients' ideas and supporting their action within clear boundaries and expectations (e.g., the need to maintain their property, attend support services, work towards their goals). These staff are working with clients and acknowledge the impact of colonisation.

In contrast, other staff are doing to or for clients (e.g., doing their cleaning, shopping and calling services on their behalf). While clients may appreciate this help, the approach does not offer choice or control to clients. Some staff perceive the approach of doing for is building dependency on Housing First.

*There's a tendency to create a dependence as opposed to independence. Some people need more help than others, that goes right throughout life. But sometimes those that actually, if you're honest, don't need the help, they're given the help anyway. (Kaimahi)*

### ***Strong alignment is evident that providers are offering individualised support***

Non-Māori providers tend to focus on the individual client and work to meet their needs. Support and services offered are mainly focused on the individual needs of single men in urban areas. However, a few providers are supporting people with dependent children.

Non-Māori providers acknowledge the high housing needs of Māori. However, the depth of understanding of the impact of colonisation on Māori homelessness varies. Some staff appreciate Māori clients have differing needs from non-Māori clients due to colonisation. Concerningly, some kaimahi interviewed talked about treating all clients the same.

### ***Strong alignment is evident with a harm reduction and recovery-orientation approach***

Non-Māori providers are also working from a harm reduction approach through the work of their kaimahi and by linking clients to mental health and addiction services. However, the lack of services creates delays which can adversely impact client motivations and wellbeing. Some providers have developed services to address this shortfall. For example, Aro Mai Housing First (Wellington) started a harm reduction service for clients called Te Awatea (the dawning of a new day).

Some non-Māori providers are starting to work on systemic barriers to addressing homelessness. For example, He Kāinga Ora ki Ōtautahi (Christchurch) is trying to set up a Champions Group to reduce barriers in the wider system. The group includes stakeholders from iwi, health, council, housing and justice. Similar cross agencies groups are evident in Aro Mai Housing First (Wellington) and The People's Project (Hamilton and Tauranga).

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*[The MSD representative] said, "You just need to escalate those to me, and I will help you with that." So that's the kind of power of that Governance Board. Also, to influence up. They help us out with operational aspects of what we do and influence the government level, so they're taking stuff back to central government. It's fantastic. (Manager)*

### **Alignment exists with providers working to integrate clients back into the community**

Non-Māori providers are supporting clients to reconnect into their communities. Examples included taking clients out for walks, to the library, connecting to education or community groups. Providers have supported clients in education and employment. The focus of connections tends to be to community groups.

Non-Māori providers are aware many clients are no longer connected with their whānau as relationships are damaged. Perceptions of clients' whānau, both whakapapa or kaupapa, can be deficit-based and viewed as contributing to clients' addiction or behavioural issues. Some providers are concerned reconnecting with whānau may be damaging for clients.

Whakawhananungatanga, in this context, tends to be the connection between the provider and the client and, to a limited extent, wider whānau and hapū connections.

However, some non-Māori providers and individual Māori staff are working to connect Māori clients to their whānau. For example, in He Kāinga Ora ki Ōtautahi (Christchurch) the cultural lead works with clients wishing to reconnect with their whakapapa and whānau. They contact iwi representatives to help identify and connect clients with their whānau.

### **Non-Māori providers believe the Housing First programme can be adapted to Aotearoa**

As demonstrated, non-Māori providers are working to adapt the Housing First programme through embedding the three Māori cultural values in their work. The level of adaption reflects the length of time providers have delivered the service and the impact of COVID-19. Housing First Auckland and The People's Project are investing in research and working with their Kaupapa Māori Group to enable the ongoing adaption. In 2021, Housing First Auckland is focusing on how to address issues of decolonisation (Housing First Auckland, 2019).

Lawson-Te Aho et al. (2019) define decolonisation as unpacking the effects of colonisation and its contribution to homelessness (i.e., Māori homeless on their land). Internationally, work is also focused on decolonizing the Housing First programme in indigenous communities. As Distasio et al. (2019, p. 11) notes, this work must include '*acknowledgement of the self-determination and self-governance of Canada's Indigenous populations and leaders to address and respond to the needs of their peoples*'.

# **The responsiveness of Housing First to Māori experiencing chronic homelessness varies**

Without the input of Māori using the service, the evaluation cannot assess whether Housing First service delivery is responsive to them. However, the evaluation can provide insight on whether organisational structures, processes, and practices enable responsiveness to Māori.

## **Cultural safety is a critical element in considering responsiveness to Māori**

An analysis framework was developed to assess the responsiveness of Housing First services to Māori. The framework draws on work from the health sector to assess providers' cultural safety for Māori (Curtis et al., 2019; Ministry of Health, 2014; Papps & Ramsden, 1996; Ramsden, 2015).

Within the health sector, thinking has shifted from cultural competency to cultural safety and critical consciousness. This shift reflects that focusing solely on understanding Māori culture can ignore inherent power dynamics and imbalances within relationships (Curtis et al., 2019; Papps & Ramsden, 1996; Ramsden, 2015). Cultural safety and critical consciousness are reflective processes requiring organisations, managers and frontline staff to reflect on their attitudes and biases in delivering services for Māori. This process is confronting, requiring organisations and staff to critique their privilege and power. Given the power imbalance between Housing First providers and Māori experiencing homelessness, this critique is important.

## **Six organisational and staff dimensions are used to assess responsiveness to Māori**

Drawing on this wider knowledge base, international literature (Distasio et al. 2019) and provider feedback, six core organisational and staff dimensions of the framework were identified to assess responsiveness to Māori. In summary, the dimensions are:

- Governance and leadership to assess whether Māori leaders and Māori are influential in decision-making positions at all levels of the organisations
- Understanding of the needs and aspirations of Māori to deliver a wraparound service in line with the collective needs of Māori
- Delivery philosophy of the organisation to assess how Māori are engaged and whether engagement has respect for and knowledge of Māori cultural practices
- Workforce composition to assess the active recruitment and retention of Māori staff so Māori can, if wanted, engage with Māori staff

- Cultural competency of the workforce to assess the use of kaupapa Māori solutions, culturally safe practice, and ensure Māori are not disadvantaged if they choose to engage with non-Māori providers
- Interpretation of the cultural values to assess the application of manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, and rangatiratanga in service delivery.

### A continuum of responsiveness to Māori exists across Housing First providers

[Table 3](#) sets out the analysis of Housing First providers against the six dimensions and their associated assessment criteria. Table 3 demonstrates applying this framework reinforces Housing First is being delivered from two perspectives:

- Māori and iwi providers are using kaupapa Māori approach (by Māori, for Māori as Māori) to deliver Housing First – demonstrated in the right-hand column.
- Non-Māori providers are working to incorporate Māori culture values in their organisations and service delivery. In this framing, non-Māori providers cannot become kaupapa Māori providers as their underlying ownership and knowledge base is not Māori. However, they can be culturally safe and responsive to Māori clients.

#### **Non-Māori providers are working to strengthen their responsiveness to Māori**

Table 3 highlights non-Māori providers currently sit on a continuum, ranging from an emerging stage to a developing stage in their journey to be responsive to Māori. Three non-Māori providers are at the emerging stage and five are at the developing stage. The continuum is not linear, as some Housing First providers are at the emerging stage on one dimension (e.g., governance and leadership) and at the developing stage on another (e.g., in delivery philosophy).

**At the emerging stage**, Māori tend not to be visible in governance, leadership and management tiers. Māori representation amongst the workforce tends to be low, and staff have limited cultural capability. Service delivery tends to focus on the client as an individual with a lack of understanding of the unique cultural needs of Māori. Whānau are often viewed as a contributor to a clients' homelessness.

**At the developing stage**, non-Māori providers are working to enhance their responsiveness to Māori. They may be attempting to do so by:

- seeking Māori input into governance
- developing mutually beneficial relationships with Māori organisations and providers
- increasing Māori representation in leadership/management positions
- taking formal steps towards recruiting more Māori to their workforce (for example, seconding staff from Māori organisations)
- undertaking cultural safety training.

*I think our mainstream whānau has still got a long way to go to stop using kaupapa Māori as a transactional thing. I think there's a long way to go. So we're always going to have that tension. I think [mainstream organisation] are still finding out who they are. They're still going through that process and their strategy and who are they and what their identity is.*  
*(Manager)*

### **Māori and iwi providers are responsive as kaupapa Māori providers**

Māori and iwi providers are driven by a Whānau Ora delivery approach that is strength-based, holistic, self-determining and mana-enhancing, and values the potential of whānau to drive positive change. A high proportion of their staff are Māori who can relate to Māori clients easily. Most are delivering Housing First in a way endorsed by mana whenua, and some are inclusive of mana whenua in their programme delivery.

Māori and iwi providers are using Housing First to build capability, options and opportunities to grow support for whānau Māori in the housing sector.

### **Access and outcomes are important elements in assessing responsiveness to Māori**

In assessing cultural responsiveness of Housing First to Māori, consideration is also needed on the ability for Māori to access the service and the outcomes achieved for Māori.

As demonstrated, Māori are over-represented in severe housing deprivation and thus Housing First services (58% of clients are Māori). Māori and iwi providers have the highest level of Māori clients at over 75%. While use is high, it is unknown whether Māori experiencing chronic homelessness cannot access the service.

The breadth of outcomes for Māori using the service are currently unknown and will be determined in the phase two evaluation.

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**Table 3: Overview of Housing First providers' potential responsiveness to Māori experiencing homelessness**

Assessment dimensions	Criteria demonstrating Non-Māori providers are at the <u>emerging</u> stage of their responsiveness to Māori	Criteria demonstrating non-Māori providers are at the <u>developing</u> stage of their responsiveness to Māori	Criteria demonstrating Māori and iwi providers are responsive as <u>kaupapa Māori</u> providers
<b>Governance and leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Non-Māori-owned</li> <li>▪ Accountability to organisation</li> <li>▪ No Māori input at a governance level</li> <li>▪ Few or no Māori in leadership or management roles</li> <li>▪ Starting to connect with mana whenua and other Māori organisations in the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Non-Māori-owned</li> <li>▪ Accountability to organisation</li> <li>▪ Māori have a heard voice in governance</li> <li>▪ Māori are in leadership and management roles</li> <li>▪ Established relationships with mana whenua and other Māori organisations in the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Māori-owned and governed</li> <li>▪ Accountability to iwi and community</li> <li>▪ Māori are in leadership and management roles</li> <li>▪ Strong relationships with mana whenua and other Māori organisations in the community</li> </ul>
<b>Understanding of the needs and aspirations of Māori as a client group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of understanding of the impact of colonisation on Māori experiencing homelessness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Negotiated partnership with Māori organisation or iwi deepens the understanding of the impact of colonisation on Māori experiencing homelessness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Deep understanding of the impact of colonisation in homelessness experienced by Māori</li> <li>▪ Focused on the interconnections of whakapapa, whenua, te reo, wairua and the environment</li> </ul>
<b>Delivery philosophy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Delivery style based in the philosophy and history of their organisation</li> <li>▪ Delivery is 'one size fits all', and Māori clients are not seen as having unique needs</li> <li>▪ Don't consider the ethnicity of key workers impacts on outcomes for clients</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Delivery is being adapted to meet Māori needs, e.g., processes to connect Māori to their culture if they choose to</li> <li>▪ Intergenerational trauma-informed delivery</li> <li>▪ Sees value in matching the ethnicity of key workers with the ethnicity of clients</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Delivery is grounded in mātauranga Māori, Te Ao Māori kaupapa and local iwi tikanga</li> <li>▪ Focused on a collective response based on whānau, hapū and iwi</li> <li>▪ Delivery is by Māori for Māori as Māori</li> </ul>
<b>Workforce composition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Majority of kaimahi are non-Māori or some kaimahi Māori or no Māori leaders</li> <li>▪ May have engaged a "cultural lead/kaumātua" who:</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Working to actively recruit/develop/grow kaimahi Māori, managers and leaders to reflect the representation of Māori clients</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Majority of kaimahi, managers and leaders are Māori from the local rohe</li> </ul>

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Assessment dimensions	Criteria demonstrating Non-Māori providers are at the <u>emerging</u> stage of their responsiveness to Māori	Criteria demonstrating non-Māori providers are at the <u>developing</u> stage of their responsiveness to Māori	Criteria demonstrating Māori and iwi providers are responsive as <u>kaupapa Māori</u> providers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- works with Māori client who they think would benefit from kaupapa Māori delivery</li> <li>- lead tikanga and cultural practices (pōwhiri, waiata, karakia, property blessings</li> <li>- provide on-the-job cultural competency training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Has cultural lead/kaumātua to offer guidance and cultural supervision</li> </ul>	
<b>Cultural competency of the workforce</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cultural competency is based on seeking to understand Māori culture and not on inherent power dynamics and imbalances within relationships</li> <li>▪ Use of karakia, waiata, te reo to demonstrate cultural competency</li> <li>▪ Cultural competency is dependent on networks with other Māori agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Demonstrate capability strategy and training to actively work towards lifting the cultural safety and competency of both organisation and staff (including leaders, management and kaimahi)</li> <li>▪ The organisation focuses on cultural safety and critical consciousness whereby staff question how their biases, attitudes, assumptions, stereotypes and prejudices contribute to lower-quality service</li> <li>▪ All staff have regular cultural supervision to reflect on and strengthen practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In-depth understanding and application of cultural safety and competency for organisation and staff</li> <li>▪ Kaimahi and managers engage in reflective practice with clients to collectively enhance engagement with Māori</li> <li>▪ All staff have regular cultural supervision to reflect on and strengthen practice</li> </ul>
<b>Interpretation of Housing First cultural values (manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, rangatiratanga)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Leaders aware of cultural values; kaimahi have limited awareness of cultural values</li> <li>▪ Look to kaimahi Māori to explain and apply cultural values</li> <li>▪ Cultural values are interpreted literally (e.g., we are welcoming when clients come into our office, we offer Māori clients a choice)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Developing deeper understanding of the values and their application to organisation and service delivery</li> <li>▪ Seek guidance from internal Māori cultural leaders and external Māori organisations (either in partner or other independent organisations)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Principles are embedded in the standard practice of the provider</li> <li>▪ Use of Whānau Ora delivery model focused on strengths-based, holistic, empowering, long-term, sustainable</li> </ul>

# **Housing First's alignment with MAIHI needs strengthening**

## **MAIHI and MAIHI Ka Ora are a fundamental shift in the Crown's response to housing**

MAIHI was released in 2020. The framework is in its early stages of implementation and is evolving. To recap, the MAIHI is a framework for action to support iwi and Māori to find and keep safe, secure, healthy and affordable housing to reduce the number of Māori becoming homeless (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2020a, 2020b).

In 2021, HUD launched MAIHI Ka Ora, the National Māori Housing Strategy. MAIHI Ka Ora was developed in partnership with Māori. The national housing strategy elevates MAIHI and uses the framework's 'respond, reset and review' structure to guide the strategic goals for Māori housing over the immediate and long term. MAIHI Ka Ora provides the strategic direction for the whole Māori housing system.

MAIHI Ka Ora represents a fundamental shift in the Crown's response to housing. MAIHI requires HUD to partner with Māori, take a system approach, and apply kaupapa Māori approaches. The 2020 Cabinet paper (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2020b) sets out the expectations for HUD programmes. Two principles are particularly relevant for assessing the alignment of the Housing First programme today and going forward with MAIHI.

The two MAIHI principles specify that HUD programmes and services should:

1. create a setting for iwi and Māori representatives to co-design, co-govern and deliver housing solutions for Māori
2. respond to homelessness amongst Māori in a way that aligns with their needs and aspirations, founded in Te Ao Māori kaupapa. In addition, programmes will embrace a collective approach of intergenerational connectivity and ensure sustainability.

While the Housing First programme started before MAIHI was released, assessing against the MAIHI principles identifies areas to strengthen going forward.

### **Iwi and Māori did not co-design the Housing First programme**

As noted, iwi and Māori representatives were not consulted before the Housing First programme was introduced into Aotearoa. Housing First is a Western-designed programme.

Māori, through Housing First Auckland's Kaupapa Māori Group, were involved in identifying three cultural values to strengthen the responsiveness of the programme for Māori. Iwi outside of Auckland had limited involvement in this design work.

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Feedback from some Māori and iwi providers in Arohanui ki te Tangata indicate they do not believe Housing First can be adapted to meet the needs of whānau Māori experiencing homelessness. This reflects Housing First is not based on mātauranga Māori and does not take account of the impact of colonisation or systemic issues contributing to Māori homelessness.

Māori and iwi providers are drawing on the insights of delivering Housing First to develop a kaupapa Māori response for whānau Māori experiencing homelessness. Through Arohanui ki te Tangata and the leadership of Te Matapihi, tangata whenua-led solutions for whānau Māori who are homeless are being developed. Given Arohanui ki te Tangata's establishment in 2019, this work is in the development stage.

*[Housing First] It is very much a regulatory business transaction, very transactional and lacks the scope for further development and sustainability based on a Māori approach, let alone iwi acknowledgement. They're our people. We are here to look after our people and take care of business. We don't need you to tell us how to take care of our business. What we need you to do is understand that there's a difference. (Manager)*

### Iwi and Māori are not co-governing the Housing First programme

Outside of HUD, an overarching governance structure for the Housing First programme in Aotearoa does not exist. Iwi and Māori representatives, therefore, do not have a role in the governance of the Housing First programme across Aotearoa.

Arohanui ki te Tangata and Te Matapihi are advocating for Māori housing outcomes. However, their ability to influence the governance and strategic direction of the Housing First programme in Aotearoa is not known.

### Opportunities for iwi and Māori providers to deliver the programme need to be increased

HUD is creating some opportunities for Māori and iwi providers to deliver Housing First. However, the level of kaupapa Māori delivery does not align with the level of representation of Māori amongst the homeless population.

### Housing First has two delivery approaches in Aotearoa – kaupapa Māori and culturally responsive

The evaluation has demonstrated two types of delivery. Māori and iwi providers are delivering Housing First using kaupapa Māori approaches. Non-Māori providers are working, with Māori advisors and partners, to strengthen their cultural responsiveness to Māori clients.

Māori and iwi providers' delivery of Housing First is in line with MAIHI Ka Ora. Māori and iwi providers' delivery is based on Te Ao Maori and embraces a collective approach of intergenerational connectivity.

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Consideration is needed on the duality of roles between Māori and iwi providers and non-Māori providers of Housing First. Pihama et al. (2018a) put forward two perspectives on the role of non-Māori organisations in the delivery of housing programmes, specifically:

- supporting culturally responsive approaches to Māori experiencing homelessness by acting as allies to remove structural injustices
- supporting capacity building of Māori organisations who are best placed to respond to the needs of Māori. Pihama et al. (2018a) note this support is seen by some as an interim measure.

### **Alignment to MAIHI can be strengthened through design, investment and governance**

In setting up the Housing First programme, HUD and MSD previously worked with non-Māori providers, who had the scale and extensive experience of delivering housing and other related health and wellbeing services to people experiencing homelessness. Given the scale of homelessness and a need to roll out Housing First at speed, these providers offered ready service solutions. However, most providers were not by Māori, for Māori, as Māori providers.

In 2019, HUD worked to increase the number of Māori and iwi providers. However, as noted the level of kaupapa Māori service delivery approach does not align with the representation of Māori in the homeless population. In this context, the following opportunities were identified:

- shift the balance of investment funding towards a greater level of kaupapa Māori delivery by Māori and iwi providers
- continue to invest in building the capacity and capability of Māori providers (existing and others) to respond to the scale of Māori homelessness<sup>33</sup>
- work with Arohanui ki te Tangata to determine the appropriateness of the Housing First design in Aotearoa and design a kaupapa Māori response
- ensure non-Māori providers continue to build their cultural responsiveness to Māori
- Māori input in the governance and oversight of Housing First at a national level (e.g., a role for Iwi Chairs or Te Matapihi in the investment decision process)
- increased contractual accountability mechanisms for non-Māori providers to demonstrate their cultural responsiveness for Māori (based on the dimensions noted in [Table 3](#)), and the access and effectiveness of their service delivery in achieving positive outcomes for Māori experiencing homelessness.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> HUD's He Taupua investment fund was set up to build the capability of Māori and iwi to accelerate housing projects and provide support services (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2021d).

<sup>34</sup> Feedback from HUD indicates work has begun on how to best effect these opportunities. They note MAIHI Ka Ora identifies through Te MAIHI Whare Wānanga, HUD will reset the processes and policies to ensure Māori involvement in cross-government decision making that impacts Māori housing outcomes.

# Responsiveness of Housing First for Pacific peoples

## Programmes working with Pacific peoples need to acknowledge their diversity and challenges faced

Collectively, Pacific peoples make up 8% of Aotearoa's total population, and 16% live in Auckland (Statistics New Zealand, 2019). Most Pacific people are born in New Zealand (62%) (Thomsen et al., 2018).

In Aotearoa, Pacific peoples come from at least eight Pacific nations, including Samoa, Cook Islands, Tonga, Niue, Fiji, Tokelau, Tuvalu, and Kiribati (Thomsen et al., 2018). Collectively, Pacific peoples share many similarities (e.g., family, religion, values) and just as many differences (e.g., language, culture, worldview).

In Aotearoa, Pacific peoples have high rates of severe housing deprivation. They are less likely to be employed, have fewer employment opportunities, have lower median weekly incomes, and are more likely to face financial hardship than other groups (Health Quality & Safety Commission, 2021; Pasifika Futures, 2017).

## Housing first providers are strengthening their responsiveness to Pacific people

### Pacific peoples are accessing the Housing First programme

In three Housing First providers, over 8% of their clients identify as one of the Pacific ethnic groups – Housing First Auckland (17%), Aro Mai Housing First (Wellington) (8%) and Kahungunu Whānau Services (Wellington) (9%). This distribution reflects the urban areas where Pacific peoples live. Access by Pacific people to Housing First seems low compared to their severe housing deprivation prevalence rates.

### Pacific staff enable a Pacific way of working in Housing First

In working with Pacific clients, Housing First providers draw on the expertise of their Pacific managers and frontline staff. They are working to ensure a Pacific way of working is used.

*We have some Pacific workers – Samoan, Niuean – in our practice group. [Name] is absolute gold in gifts of knowledge openness to share and teach and coach and support others who where they might not be doing so well and says, "Hey if you want to know more come and have a chat with me. Come and ask questions, I'm open, I'm here." (Manager)*

### Providers are acknowledging the diversity of Pacific people

*We have to be diverse and understand the different needs. Samoan and Tongans are still quite strong on their spiritual sense of the foundation of the church. [Some] Cook Islanders and Niueans are not speaking their language and are not connected to the church. The biggest Pacific group we're trying to house right now are Tuvalu people. We've got the biggest Tuvalu population, I think, in Aotearoa. They have different needs. (Kaimahi)*

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### **Currently, Housing First has no agreed strategy to support Pacific clients**

Housing First providers are aware more work is needed to strengthen their cultural responsiveness to Pacific people. Feedback indicates this working is underway for some providers. At a programme level, discussion is needed on developing an overarching Pasifika framework.

The diversity of the Pacific population in language and worldviews must be considered in the design and delivery of Housing First. Approaches that resonate with all Pacific peoples exist. These approaches, such as the philosophy of *teu le va*, encompass the value and importance of family, collectivism and communitarianism, respect, spirituality, and reciprocity (Anae, 2016; Health Quality & Safety Commission, 2021; Thomsen et al., 2018).

## **Key insights on the responsiveness to Māori**

- The Housing First programme is evolving in Aotearoa to be more responsive to Māori who are overrepresented in severe housing deprivation.
- Adaption of Housing First is occurring along two pathways reflecting differing worldviews, organisational values, and levels of cultural responsiveness.
  - Māori and iwi Housing First providers are delivering a kaupapa Māori service based on local iwi tikanga and delivered through a Whānau Ora approach. Māori and iwi providers focus on mana motuhake to enable Māori to be Māori, to exercise their authority over their lives, and to live on their terms as Māori. In this context, a tangata whenua-led solution is being developed for whānau Māori who are homeless. Arohanui ki te Tangata supported by Te Matapihi are leading this transformational work on the Housing First design.
  - Non-Māori providers are working to encompass the three cultural values of rangatiratanga, whakawhanaungatanga and manaakitanga into their service delivery related to the five Housing First principles. This work aligns with the Tāiki Framework developed by Housing First Auckland's Kaupapa Māori Group. The extent to which the non-Māori providers have embedded the cultural values in their organisations, policies, and practices varies based on their level of cultural responsiveness to Māori. Some providers are actively working with Māori advisors and partners to strengthen their responsiveness to Māori across six core dimensions. Others are starting this journey.
- Housing First's alignment with MAIHI needs to be strengthened. Iwi and Māori were not involved in the co-design or governance of the programme. The level of kaupapa Māori delivery does not align with the representation of Māori experiencing homelessness. Alignment with MAIHI can be strengthened by continuing to invest in kaupapa Māori delivery by Māori and iwi providers, iwi oversight of the programme, review of the Housing First design for Māori, and monitoring cultural responsiveness across providers.
- Housing First providers are working to be responsive to Pacific clients through the guidance of their Pacific staff and the acknowledgement of the diversity of Pacific peoples. Consideration is need on whether a Pacific strategy, like the Tāiki framework, is needed to guide the implementation of the programme for Pacific peoples.

# 6 Enablers and challenges of Housing First

This section answers the following key evaluation question:

- What are the enablers and barriers for the successful delivery of the Housing First programme at the national, regional and local levels?

The section draws across the 12 case studies and interviews with HUD staff to present:

- the enablers for the Housing First implementation
- the challenges for the Housing First implementation.

## Enablers for the implementation of Housing First

Enablers for Housing First implementation occur at three levels: national, regional and local. National enablers reflect HUD's role and contract and the role of Arohanui ki te Tangata. Regional enablers highlight the importance of cross-agency networks. Local enablers reflect the adaptive leadership and Housing First staff capability.

### National-level enablers

#### HUD's trusting and flexible way of working is supporting the implementation

Feedback from providers indicates mainly positive relationships with HUD. The high-trust relationship with HUD strengthened through the COVID-19 response. Providers appreciate HUD offers contract flexibility in programme delivery to address local housing challenges. The flexibility enables providers to adapt the programme to their people and place.

The HUD contract offers discretion to work with clients who were homeless for eight months and support them to return to stable housing and address other needs. One provider notes this discretion is useful for clients coming out of residential mental health or addiction services or people released from Corrections.

In contrast, some Māori providers are concerned about the potential contractual risks of flexibility when their local adaption does not directly align to contract specifications. To mitigate the risk, they use the narrative report to showcase their work.

#### The Housing First contract value reflects the intensity of work

Providers acknowledge delivering the service is expensive. They note the amount of time needed to build trust with people who have been homeless for more than 12 months. The long-term wraparound services and tenancy support enable them to address complex needs

and support clients to achieve their aspirations. Māori providers using the Whānau Ora approach also indicated the additional costs needed to support this intensive way of working.

### **Arohanui ki te Tangata and Māori staff are strengthening responsiveness to Māori**

Arohanui ki te Tangata is building a response relevant for Māori. The response is developing a collective way of working based on mātauranga Māori (discussed [here](#)). Māori managers, staff and cultural advisors are working to strengthen cultural responsiveness in non-Māori Housing First providers.

*Just to be clear, our methodology and thinking about practice is our own to develop, which is why when we get invited to wider community housing hui and with mainstream, there's a bit of 'Oh, I don't think we want to go there and get our practice compromised'... I think what it does is signal that the Māori providers of Housing First really want to build and develop the Housing First model to be relevant for Māori. (Manager)*

## **Regional-level enablers**

### **Multi-agency networks enable the implementation of Housing First**

Collective ways of working are a key strength of the Housing First programme (discussed [here](#)). At governance or regional levels, having a range of agencies offering guidance and advice enables the programme. Working together, the agencies can respond to regional influences and structural system-level failures contributing to homelessness.

No examples were given where agencies' groups had removed the systemic determinants of homelessness. Provider feedback indicates cross-agency groups struggle when members do not have the decision-making rights for their organisations to create sustainable change.

A few providers with central hubs have invited key agencies like Work and Income and the Department of Corrections to co-locate once a week. Co-location enables clients to access their entitlements like their benefit, the Housing Register and other financial or employment support. One Housing First provider places a tenancy manager at the Kāinga Ora office for half a day every fortnight. The tenancy manager works to build an understanding of the programme and the intensive support received by clients.

## **Operational-level enablers**

### **Visionary, affiliative and adaptive leadership enables the implementation**

Many leaders across the Housing First programme have a depth of housing sector knowledge and a deep understanding of their communities. The leaders have deep and wide regional, national and international networks. They use a range of leadership styles to enable staff to do the challenging and complex work needed to support clients.

*The strength of our management team is that we have a CEO who challenges us and allows us to challenge her. We are able to replicate that with our teams within our areas. I think the other thing too is that there's the fact that no question is a stupid question and every opinion is a valid opinion. But there is also a lot of safety and a lot of security and knowing that whatever you bring to the table, you bring because you add quality to the table. (Key worker)*

### **Outreach services enable connections to people experiencing homelessness**

Outreach services and peer support workers are critical in connecting with people who experience homelessness, especially those who are hidden or reluctant to engage in services. Outreach by key and peer support workers builds trust and sets service boundaries.

Some peer support workers are celebrated as the face of success for the programme. However, peer support workers also face personal challenges and can relapse. Being an example of success can create barriers to asking for help when challenges occur.

### **A multi-disciplinary team enables the client-centred implementation of Housing First**

Most Housing First programmes are built around multi-disciplinary teams. A diversity of experiences and skills is critical to address the complexity of client needs and the housing market challenges. Locating multi-disciplinary teams within a central hub helps build a strong team culture and enables a collective response to clients' needs (discussed [here](#)).

### **Housing First staff have training opportunities aligned to the challenges they face**

The mahi of Housing First is challenging for frontline staff, given clients' level of need and relapse being part of the recovery journey. Frontline staff identified the following training opportunities as useful: safeguarding children, mitigating violence, non-violent communication, motivational interviewing and managing risk, basic training on mental health, cultural training, suicidal behaviour, addictions.

## **Challenges for the implementation of Housing First**

The challenges for Housing First fall into three categories: strategic and system-level challenges where Housing First providers have little control, and national and operational-level challenges.

### **Strategic and system-level challenges**

The lack of housing supply and high levels of competition for houses are the most significant challenges for all Housing First providers (discussed [here](#)). Other strategic and system-level challenges reflect the lack of wider housing and health services to support Housing First or a lack of access to these services.

### The delays and challenges for clients to get on the Housing Register

At enrolment into Housing First, most providers work with clients to ensure they are on the Housing Register. Providers noted many clients are not aware of the Housing Register or don't know how to get on it. Some clients are reluctant to engage with MSD as they feel the enrolment process is intrusive, impersonal and re-traumatising. Some with a poor tenancy history or gang affiliation do not want to share their details.

Delays of up to two to three months exist to get on the Housing Register. The processing delay may reflect the growth of the Housing Register over the last five years, from less than 4,000 in June 2016 to more than 24,000 by June 2021<sup>35</sup>.

Not being on the Housing Register can create delays in moving into a house. Some property location organisations (e.g., Airdale Property Trust, iwi providers) cover the cost of the rent until clients are on the Housing Register.

### In some areas, Kāinga Ora is seen as risk-averse and not enabling clients into houses

Some providers highlighted the challenges of getting Housing First clients into Kāinga Ora houses. Clients can wait over six months to get a house. Providers also perceive Kāinga Ora see Housing First clients as a liability and are reluctant to house them. Delays in accessing permanent housing can dampen clients' motivation to engage with Housing First.

### A lack of information sharing across agencies creates barriers for clients

MSD and HUD have an enabling role in Housing First. However, providers note the lack of information sharing due to privacy considerations means clients have to repeat their stories multiple times, which can be re-traumatising.

### Clients do not gain access or timely access to mental health and addiction services

Many providers across Aotearoa commented on the lack of access or slow access to mental health and addiction services. Providers talked about wait times of between two and six months. The lack of access reflects the known limited capacity of mental health and addiction services in Aotearoa (Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction, 2018). The lack of services can result in delays which can be demotivating for clients.

*There's no one. We go and take whānau [to the DHB], but no one wants to touch them. They're too hard, they're too complex. They're suicidal regularly. They've had years on their system. [DHBs] can look at their system and know how high-risk and how much work it's going to be for them. So [whānau are] getting turned away. Nine times out of ten, they don't want to touch them and we're stuck with them. (Kaimahi)*

<sup>35</sup> Retrieved in November 2021 from [Housing Register - Ministry of Social Development \(msd.govt.nz\)](https://www.msd.govt.nz/housing-register).

A few Housing First providers are employing mental health and addiction specialists to address this shortfall (discussed [here](#)). In addition, a few providers are exploring alternative support options with MSD and DHBs (e.g., a motel with staff for people with complex needs).

### Clients face prejudice and stigma in their interactions with other services

Providers noted clients face stigma and prejudice in their access to and interactions with services. As a result, clients can withdraw or push back against services. Clients can also miss out on houses due to racism and stigma against people who are homeless.

*We had a homeless whānau ... he rang a real estate agent. He said he was with Te Piki Oranga and did they have anything on their books to rent, "No, no, no!" He rang back five minutes later, and said, "It's George Walker here, I've got some friends who have come down from the North Island, and they're looking for a home; would you have any three-bedroom? Oh, you'll send me the list, you'll fax me the list through." Within five minutes of "No, we've got nothing" to "We'll fax you a list". All he did was anglicise his name. (Manager)*

This stigma is also reflected in insurance companies refusing to insure a property or raising premiums for those involved in social housing. This prejudice restricts the number of properties available for Housing First. Clients can also face prejudice from services such as Police and Work and Income. Providers will go with clients to these agencies to build clients' confidence in engaging with them.

## National-level challenges

Housing First providers raised challenges about HUD's contract, staff turnover and reporting processes.

### Resource inequities and uncertainties exist in Housing First contracts

Most non-Māori providers are part of larger national or international organisations who have a long history of providing housing services (e.g., The Salvation Army). These providers have access to wider infrastructure, resources and services to support the programme. In contrast, some Māori and iwi providers are new to delivering housing services and do not have the existing infrastructure to draw on in establishing the programme.

The Housing First contract does not consider the different starting points for new providers or the cost of delivering services in rural areas. For example, in Te Tai Tokerau, Māori and iwi providers cover large rural geographical areas.

*What is so much missing is equity, equity based on rural Māori communities. An equity lens over the agreement and looking at what you invest and what you get out. (Manager)*

Some providers noted HUD is not providing timely information on their expectations relating to contract renewal.

## Appendix A

### Some providers are seeking a higher trust contract for Housing First

Iwi providers had hoped for a high-trust contract where they were trusted to deliver the service using a Whānau Ora approach. Some iwi providers feel they are being micro-managed due to frequent requests to meet and report.

*I thought they would give me a high-trust contract because I was a CHP provider, approved, and let me get on with my business. And take care of my whānau how I want to with a Whānau Ora approach. I believe that we can make a difference, and we would do that. That's it in a nutshell; that there would be a high level of trust around delivery. But we didn't even start, and they wanted to come and visit. (Manager)*

### HUD reporting is seen as onerous and unused

For the Housing First contract, HUD requires detailed personal data on each client in the programme. The reason for collecting this data and its use is not clear<sup>36</sup>. Some providers supplement the data with narrative reports to demonstrate their work and its effect on clients' lives. Housing First providers are not receiving any feedback on their reports.

*Some of the reporting requirements are pretty ridiculous and drive us insane, and it's just about a full-time job. I think it's unreasonable for HUD to have reporting requirements that mean small NGOs have to have such a big admin role just to do that. (Manager)*

### The Housing First contract does not cover the costs of outreach and insurance

The role of outreach is critical in finding people who have experienced homelessness, who are deeply distrustful of engaging with unknown agencies. Some Housing First providers highlighted outreach services are not included in the contract. A few noted the contract does not cover the costs of insurance for houses contaminated by methamphetamine.

*The big gap is the resource around Outreach. The amount of work that happens under that bridge or on that street or in that bus stop before we're even getting sometimes a full name, a real name, a date of birth, an acceptance of support or a willingness to engage, the participation, I'm not sure that the contracts quite understand that. (Manager)*

### Inconsistent funding models for housing maintenance increases provider risk

One property organisation noted the differences in the HUD funding models used in three locations. The differences across the regions are:

- paid per property with a fee for property management service and some funds for repairs and maintenance
- paid the market rent and a fee on top paid by Government
- paid a property management fee and costs to cover repairs.

<sup>36</sup> During the course of the evaluation, HUD developed summary dashboards to create better use and dissemination of this data.

Their preferred approach is receiving a monthly property management fee and allowance to create a sinking fund for repairs. This arrangement creates security as a deferred maintenance fund exists and reduces the risk for the organisation.

### **High staff turnover at HUD creates relationship disruption**

Providers have a mainly positive relationship with HUD. However, some providers note high staff turnover at HUD can be disruptive to their relationship. They noted the work needed to inform HUD staff about the programme.

*I talk to HUD and describe the work and I feel like I'm honestly talking to somebody I just met on the street who'd never heard that Housing First was around. (Manager)*

### **A lack of opportunity exists to share Housing First learnings across Aotearoa**

Providers are seeking regular opportunities to share learnings about Housing First across Aotearoa. Opportunities for providers to come together are rare. Some providers who attended these opportunities felt they did not respect Māori and iwi providers or give a safe space for their voice.

## **Operational challenges**

Housing First providers raised key operational challenges about negotiating the tension in the collective ways of working and workforce retention and recruitment.

### **Collective ways of delivering the programme can create tensions**

Key tension points are understanding and respecting different roles, resourcing, and accountabilities across Housing First providers. Providers need to meet regularly to discuss the programme and resolve any issues arising with delivery or their relationships. In some collective arrangements, some Housing First providers can feel unheard, resulting in a breakdown in relationships.

Providers noted some cross-provider tensions arise as they are not involved in agreeing on the contracting model with HUD. Some iwi providers noted they were not invited from the outset to be involved in the Housing First service.

*What we know is you let Māori decide what works best for Māori. And when we're being forced into these collectives, and we have no other choice, you are spending a year managing relationships when we should be helping our people. (Manager)*

### **Worker retention and recruitment is a critical challenge**

Providers in eight Housing First programmes are currently recruiting staff. These Housing First providers spoke of the challenges of workforce recruitment and retention. Key worker and team leader salaries are not competitive with government agencies. Peer support workers' salaries are just above minimum wage.

*We've had to look at our remuneration. I became aware that you could get the same job in another part of Auckland but not have to travel into the centre. One of our social workers out west left her job to do the same job for Oranga Tamariki and got a \$40k pay rise. (Manager)*

Providers noted the lack of staff with relevant skills results in competing against other similar providers for the same staff. Without qualified candidates, some providers focus on recruiting people with the right attitude and training them. Others are creating career development pathways for their staff.

### **Inappropriate referrals are made to Housing First services**

Examples include new mothers being discharged from maternity hospitals with no housing or people released from acute mental health services. Housing First providers are not proactively informed of referral and feel they need to step in to support.

## **Key insights on Housing First enablers and challenges**

**Enablers of Housing First implementation** include:

- HUD's trusted role and flexible contracting model enable the localisation of the programme across Aotearoa
- The role of Arohanui ki te Tangata and Māori and Pacific staff enables the adaption of the programme to Aotearoa
- Cross-agency networks supporting Housing First are trying, with some challenges, to address structural issues contributing to homelessness. The cross-agency networks also enable client-centred service delivery
- Visionary and adaptive leaders supported by outreach and multi-disciplinary teams enable client-centred service delivery.

Implementation challenges noted below draw from this section and the wider report.

**System-level challenges** to the implementation of Housing First include:

- The lack of housing supply and high levels of competition for houses
- Wider housing, social and health sector policies and processes, and prejudice, are not enabling clients to meet client needs and aspirations:
  - delays getting on the Housing Register and barriers to Kāinga Ora houses
  - a lack of information sharing across agencies
  - a lack of access or timely access to mental health and addiction services.

**National-level challenges** include:

## Appendix A

- The HUD contract is creating challenges in the delivery of the programme due to:
  - resource inequities in not recognising different starting points of providers and costs of rural delivery
  - not covering the costs of outreach and insurance for houses contaminated by methamphetamine
  - inconsistent funding models for housing maintenance
  - onerous and unused reporting
  - uncertain processes for renewal due to a lack of timely contracting information
  - not enabling clients to graduate or re-enrol if needed.
- High HUD staff turnover creates relationship disruption and need for providers to work to build HUD staff's programme knowledge
- A lack of opportunity to share Housing First learnings across providers in Aotearoa in a way that respects and gives voice to the range of providers
- Strengthening responsiveness to Māori and alignment to MAIHI (discussed [here](#))
- Strengthening responsiveness to Pacific people (discussed [here](#)).

**Operational challenges** noted in this section and section 4 on implementation include:

- Agencies within collectives negotiating differing roles, responsibilities, values and approaches in the delivery of Housing First
- Retention and recruitment of a diversity of kaimahi that reflects their clients
- **Referrals** challenges –
  - reaching people who may be eligible for Housing First and less visible to some providers (discussed [here](#))
  - Housing First providers stepping in to support people referred by other agencies in extremely challenging situations who do not meet the Housing First criteria
  - the lack of capacity for kaimahi to meet demand is creating waitlists (discussed [here](#))
- **Service delivery** challenges –
  - the impact of COVID response on setting up the services and being able to provide wraparound support to clients
  - stretched kaimahi capacity due to dealing with urgent client issues resulting in delays supporting other clients (discussed [here](#))
  - the potential risk to kaimahi safety due to the complexity of client need
  - in rural areas, the lack of agencies to support clients' needs and aspirations
  - no agreed graduation and maintenance process to enable clients to receive ongoing tenancy support and to return to the programme, if needed (discussed [here](#)).

## 7 Review of the early implementation of Rapid Rehousing

This section provides key insights into the early implementation of Rapid Rehousing in Aotearoa.

### Rapid Rehousing was introduced as a trial in 2020

Rapid Rehousing is a new trial developed as part of the Homelessness Action Plan. The trial aims to reduce pressure on Housing First and transitional housing. The Rapid Rehousing trial targets individuals and whānau experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness with low to medium complexity of social service needs.

### Fourteen Housing First providers deliver Rapid Rehousing

In 2021, 14 Housing First providers were contracted to deliver Rapid Rehousing (refer [Appendix 1](#)). These providers wanted the Rapid Rehousing contract to work with people who do not meet the Housing First eligibility criteria (i.e., the 12-month period of being homeless).

Some Housing First providers did not want the contract as they did not feel well-placed to meet the needs of people experiencing episodic homelessness who are likely to be families. Others believed the contract was unrealistic, given the lack of houses.

*How do they expect us to rapidly rehouse? We can't even house slowly. (Manager)*

### For some, Rapid Rehousing is an opportunity to stop the shift to recurring or long-term homelessness

Rapid Rehousing providers said the contract offers the opportunity to support people who become homeless due to changing personal or housing circumstances (e.g., relationship break up, their rental property is sold). Rapid Rehousing tends to be seen as supporting single-parent families and whānau with children.

Some providers see Rapid Rehousing as enabling people to overcome emerging challenges that resulted in the loss of their house. Using Rapid Rehousing, they can provide wraparound support and avoid recurring or long-term homelessness.

### Rapid Rehousing is at the very early stages of implementation

The Rapid Rehousing trial commenced in most areas in 2020. Given the early stage of implementation, feedback on Rapid Rehousing implementation was limited. Providers were assessing eligibility to Housing First and Rapid Rehousing on referral. Clients are then allocated to the appropriate programme based on their duration of homelessness.

Provider feedback indicated little differentiation in the services clients receive on Housing First or Rapid Rehousing. Both clients receive wraparound and tenancy support services based on their needs. The level of support received on Rapid Rehousing is not as intensive or for as long as Housing First. Some providers are working with clients to focus on building housing location and tenancy skills so if future challenges arise, they can resolve the issue themselves.

*How the [Rapid Rehousing] service is delivered is exactly the same way as the Housing First service but we've got a graduation point in mind for Rapid Rehousing. (Manager)*

### Key insights on Rapid Rehousing implementation

- Holding the Rapid Rehousing contract enables providers to support clients who do not meet the Housing First criteria
- Feedback indicates clients' service experience is similar to those on the Housing First programme with the exception of the 12 months' duration
- The implementation of Rapid Rehousing will be explored further in the second phase of the evaluation.

## 8 Housing First and Rapid Rehousing roles in the housing sector

This section concludes the phase one Housing First evaluation report by focusing on the role and contribution of the two programmes within the wider housing sector.

The section addresses the following key evaluation question:

- How does the implementation of the Rapid Rehousing trial fit with the Housing First programme and other existing housing services to meet the diversity of people's needs?

The section draws across the 12 case studies and interviews with HUD staff to present:

- Contribution of Housing First and the Rapid Rehousing trial to the vision of the Homelessness Action Plan
- The role of Housing First and Rapid Rehousing in the wider housing support services.

### Housing First and Rapid Rehousing contribute to the Homelessness Action Plan's vision

Housing First and the Rapid Rehousing Trial contribute to the delivery of the Homelessness Action Plan vision that homelessness is prevented where possible or is rare, brief and non-recurring (New Zealand Government, 2019). The Homelessness Action Plan has four focus areas: prevention, supply, support and system enablers.

#### Housing First and Rapid Rehousing contribute to the support area

Housing First and the Rapid Rehousing trial are focused primarily on the support area by seeking to secure housing and access to support to meet clients' needs and aspirations. As noted, the lack of housing supply is impeding the programmes.

Most providers are working collectively to respond to local challenges when delivering Housing First services. Providers have some contribution to the system enablers' focus area (i.e., building Māori and iwi providers' housing capability).

#### A few providers want to be involved in the supply focus area

A few Housing First providers want to contribute to the supply focus area.

*So much as we have conversations with HUD about our homelessness contracts – Housing First, Rapid Rehousing, Sustaining Tenancies – and those are all great. But unless somebody is building social housing like Kāinga Ora... Unless supply is part of the equation, we are going just to be managing homelessness. (Manager)*

## Appendix A

Several providers have put forward suggestions to increase housing supply to HUD, which have not gained traction. Examples of innovative housing solutions put forward are:

- Housing First Nelson suggested relocatable cabins placed around the whare with toilets and showers, and kitchen located in a community with a wider support network.
- Hau Kāinga (Far North) want to build on whenua or papakāinga land. They are exploring options of tripartite arrangements with HUD, Kāinga Ora or developers.
- Kāinga Pūmanawa (Whangarei) approached the DHB to transform an old building into shared accommodation with individual bedrooms and a communal kitchen and living areas. HUD advised their preference was for individual accommodation.

### Housing First programme has some alignment with the guiding principles

The Housing First programme is whānau-centred and strength-based and focuses on stable homes and wellbeing. Through joined-up approaches across agencies and communities, the programme is delivering supporting and enabling approaches. More work is needed to align with Te Tiriti o Waitangi and kaupapa Māori principles.

### Housing First and Rapid Rehousing support people and whānau with the highest need

Housing First and the Rapid Rehousing trial are core responses to people experiencing chronic homelessness with moderate to complex need. The programmes address a known service gap. Before Housing First, no government-funded service existed to meet the needs of people who have experienced long-term homelessness. The Rapid Rehousing trial enables people who do not meet the Housing First criteria to be supported into housing and receive wraparound support. Having the two services allows providers with both contracts to meet the diverse needs of people experiencing long-term homelessness.

**Diagram 1: Overview of general housing services to meet the diversity of need**



### Providers indicate fragmentation exists across housing services

Housing First and Rapid Rehousing are competing for resources against other housing services. Providers noted that due to a lack of houses, people in transitional housing are remaining on this service beyond the intended 12 weeks, even up to 12 months. The lack of housing supply means Housing First and Rapid Rehousing providers compete against other housing services for limited stock.

Some providers also expressed frustration trying to unlock resources to support Housing First and Rapid Rehousing whānau.

*Oh, the frustration of working with your funder. You've got to work with the other agencies to unlock the resource. It never sits in one place in a tub. (Manager)*

### Providers with multiple housing contracts work around the fragmented system

Not everyone experiencing or at risk of homelessness needs the intensity of support offered through Housing First and Rapid Rehousing. Many Housing First providers hold other housing contracts such as Sustaining Tenancies and transitional housing. These providers can ensure people experiencing housing issues have a pathway to the appropriate housing services based on their level of need.

Some providers who do not have other housing contracts refer people to other services and walk alongside to ensure engagement. These providers want to ensure Housing First and Rapid Rehousing places are given to people with high needs and have experienced long-term homelessness.

*Sometimes in that triage process, it's quite clear that they don't fit Housing First or Rapid Rehousing. We will talk to them about the options of emergency housing. We try to kindly move them to Work and Income. We're not an emergency accommodation provider. We want to make sure that we take in the people who need our help because of their complex needs rather than just because they don't have anywhere to live. (Manager)*

### Māori and iwi providers are working towards an inclusive whānau-centred approach

Māori and iwi providers find the eligibility criteria in the housing sector too rigid. Some Māori and iwi providers based on manaakitanga will not turn away whānau regardless of the housing contracts held. The quote below explains this way of working:

*I suppose some of the criteria is a barrier to that 'whatever it takes; no wrong door'. We're still working to their (HUD) contract - that's the difference. Our model will find a solution across. It's a big collective. The collective or someone like my team will hold a person until someone else has the capacity to pick them up. We worry about the contracting after that. That's a difference - in terms of practice in terms of kaupapa Māori. It's the contract and their (HUD) inability to flex that's the issue. (Manager)*

Their approach can create tension with the rules and processes of government agencies, as demonstrated in the quote below.

*Woman with X kids had nowhere to go. We put her into emergency housing and they needed two units to fit her whole family. That was all right, but it only went week by week. We told them, "We need two months to fix this house up, get her in." We had to go and apply every week. Then one week, there was this different person on, and she said, "No, they have to get out." (Key worker)*

### **Some providers are streamlining the housing system for clients**

Having multiple services can confuse clients seeking support and requires housing providers to 'fit' clients into the 'right' service. Some providers are working to create a seamless and enabling process for people coming to their services to address this tension. For example, Auckland City Mission has developed a person-centred approach (Street to Home) where people are triaged on referral and then allocated to the appropriate housing pathway.

### **Consideration is needed on the policy settings within the housing sector to enable a whānau-centred response with no wrong door**

Providers acknowledge the importance of the Housing First and Rapid Rehousing contract to support people with moderate to complex needs experiencing chronic homelessness. They also acknowledge the growing and changing face of people needing housing support.

Some providers are concerned that with the increasing demand, Housing First clients may become less of a priority than families and those with less complex needs. This concern reflects the prejudice faced by people experiencing long-term homelessness.

At a policy level, consideration is needed on how to create a cohesive whānau-centred, no wrong door, housing system which addresses immediate needs (i.e., houses) and enables long-term aspirations. Insights from Housing First delivery can inform this policy work as well as the kaupapa Māori response being developed by Māori and iwi providers.

### **Key insights on roles in the housing sector**

- Housing First and Rapid Rehousing contribute to the Homelessness Action Plan in the support area. The Housing First programme has some alignment with the Plan's guiding principles. More work is needed to align with Te Tiriti and kaupapa Māori principles.
- Housing First and the Rapid Rehousing trial have an important role in meeting the needs of people with moderate to complex needs who experience long-term homelessness. However, sector fragmentation, increasing housing demand and a lack of houses is creating housing sector competition and adversely impacting the programme.
- At a policy level, consideration is needed on how to create a whānau-centred housing system that addresses immediate and long-term needs for the diversity of people and whānau.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Profile of Housing First Providers

**Table 4: Overview of Housing First and Rapid Rehousing providers**

Location	Name	Providers	Years service (as of 2021)	Contracted no. of clients	No. of accepted clients	No. of housed clients	No. of exited clients <sup>37</sup>	Rapid Rehousing
Far North <sup>38</sup>	Hau Kāinga - Kāinga Whenua	He Korowai Trust	<1 year	22	-	-	-	No
		Ngāti Hine Health Trust	<1 year	22	-	-	-	Yes
		Te Hau Ora O Ngāpuhi	<1 year	22	-	-	-	No
		Te Rūnanga o Whaingaroa	<1 year	10	-	-	-	Yes
Whangarei	Kāinga Pūmana wa	Kāhui Tū Kaha	<1 year	55	65	29	24	Yes
		Ngāti Hine Health Trust	<1 year	55	69	17	13	Yes
		One Double Five Whare Āwhina Community House Trust	<1 year	-	-	-	-	Yes
Auckland	Housing First Auckland	Auckland City Mission	>3 years	72	160	77	24	Yes
		Kāhui Tū Kaha	>3 years	155	596	340	233	Yes
		Lifewise Trust	>3 years	113	205	167	62	Yes
		Linkpeople	>3 years	95	277	168	77	Yes
		VisionWest	>3 years	45	239	168	100	Yes
Hamilton	The People's Project Hamilton	Mental Health Solutions Ltd	>3 years	65	695	344	496	Yes
Tauranga	The People's Project Tauranga	Mental Health Solutions Ltd	>2 years	35	166	85	68	Yes

<sup>37</sup> Number of exited clients comprised of Graduated, Withdrawn and Deceased. Data provided above is correct to 31 Jan 2021.

<sup>38</sup> No data for Far North and Whangarei as the contract has just started.

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Location	Name	Providers	Years service (as of 2021)	Contracted no. of clients	No. of accepted clients	No. of housed clients	No. exited clients <sup>37</sup>	Rapid Rehousing
Rotorua	Mangatakitahi	Te Taumata o Ngāti Whakaue Iho Ake (subcontracting Lifewise Trust and LinkPeople)	1 year	105	165	95	46	Yes
Hawke's Bay	Te Tahi Whare Ora/ Housing First Hawke's Bay	Whatever It Takes Charitable Trust (subcontracting Te Taiwhenua o Heretaunga)	1 year	100	84	16	36	No
Wellington	Aro Mai - Housing First Collaboration	Downtown Community Ministry Wellington Inc (partner agencies include Emerge Aotearoa, Wellington Homeless Women's Trust, and Linkpeople)	2 years	150	144	93	21	Yes
Wellington	Kahungunu Whānau Services (Wellington and Hutt)	Kahungunu Whānau Services	2 years	100	112	44	15	No
Nelson	Housing First Nelson	The Salvation Army NZ (subcontracting The Male Room Te Piki Oranga)	1 year	50	78	36	32	Yes
Blenheim	Housing First Blenheim	Christchurch Methodist Mission (subcontracting Gateway Housing Trust, St Marks Society, and Maataa Waka)	1 year	50	57	33	8	No
Christchurch	He Kāinga Ora ki Ītautahi / Housing First Christchurch	Christchurch Methodist Mission (subcontracting Comcare Trust, Emerge Aotearoa, Christchurch City Mission, Otautahi Community Housing Trust, and Te Whare Roimata)	2 years	170	284	179	52	Yes (Comcare Trust contract)

## Appendix 2: Detailed evaluation method

### A developmental evaluation approach was used

In phase one, the evaluation focused on a systems approach to demonstrate the wider social and economic system in which the programme and services are situated. Phase two will take a whānau-centred approach to understand experiences and benefits for clients in the Housing First programme or the Rapid Rehousing trial.

### The evaluation addressed eight key evaluation questions

Table 5 presents the key evaluation and sub-evaluation questions for the Housing First evaluation and Rapid Rehousing review.

**Table 5: The key evaluation and sub-evaluation questions**

Key evaluation questions	Sub-evaluation questions
1. How are the Housing First programme and the Rapid Rehousing trial being implemented in Aotearoa?	<p>Governance and operational structures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ What are and how do governance, funding, and management structures vary across providers and collectives?</li><li>▪ How effective is the collective impact model in delivering Housing First's goals?</li><li>▪ What are and how do the different operational models work and vary across providers and collectives?</li><li>▪ How well do providers and external partner and support agencies work together to meet the needs of individuals and whānau?</li></ul> <p>Intake and assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ How do providers reach and enrol individuals and whānau who meet the Housing First criteria?</li><li>▪ How is the eligibility of individuals and whānau assessed?</li><li>▪ How do the criteria differ across providers and why?</li></ul> <p>Service delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ To what extent do providers have the workforce capability to deliver services?</li><li>▪ To what extent do providers have the capacity to deliver services?</li><li>▪ What are the range of services and support people are receiving? How well does this align with the diversity of needs and changing needs?</li><li>▪ How and how often do providers engage with individuals and whānau?</li><li>▪ What tools, guidelines, policies, and procedures do providers use to implement Housing First and Rapid Rehousing? How useful and fit-for-purpose are they?</li></ul> <p>Service maintenance in Housing First</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ How are services tailored to support people over the long term?</li><li>▪ What enables people to stay engaged with Housing First? Why do people disengage from the programme?</li></ul>
2. How are the Housing First programme and its principles being tailored to meet the diverse and complex needs of people	<p>How Housing First is tailored across Aotearoa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ How has Housing First been adapted for the Aotearoa context and different local contexts and people?</li><li>▪ How are the Housing First principles being tailored across providers and across regions? How do the principles work in practice?</li></ul> <p>How Housing First is tailored to diverse individuals and whānau</p>

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<b>Key evaluation questions</b>	<b>Sub-evaluation questions</b>
experiencing homelessness across regions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How flexible and agile are providers in supporting the diverse needs of individuals and whānau?</li> <li>▪ How do providers assess changing needs of individuals and whānau over time? What are the delivery challenges and opportunities given these changing needs?</li> </ul> <p>How Housing First responds to external circumstances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How and why has the implementation of Housing First changed over time?</li> <li>▪ How has COVID-19 affected the implementation of Housing First and Rapid Rehousing?</li> </ul>
3. How does implementation of the Rapid Rehousing trial fit with the Housing First programme and other existing housing services to meet the diversity of people's needs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What roles do Housing First and Rapid Rehousing play in the homelessness response in Aotearoa? Across regions?</li> <li>▪ What groups are missing out on Housing First, Rapid Rehousing, and other housing support services?</li> <li>▪ How are Housing First and Rapid Rehousing contributing to the vision of the Homelessness Action Plan?</li> </ul>
4. How are the design and delivery of the Housing First and Rapid Rehousing trial programmes working for Māori experiencing homelessness?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How well do HUD/collectives/providers/kaimahi understand the Māori population need for support with homelessness through Housing First?</li> <li>▪ How does delivery of Housing First, and the design and delivery of the Rapid Rehousing trial, align with the obligations of the Crown as a Treaty Partner at the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- national HUD level?</li> <li>- collective level?</li> <li>- provider level?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ How does delivery of Housing First, and the design and delivery of Rapid Rehousing, enable/hinder Māori to exercise control, authority and take responsibility for delivering to Māori who experience homelessness at the collective, provider and frontline levels?</li> <li>▪ How do providers apply rangatiratanga (self-determination), whanaungatanga (positive connections), and manaakitanga (self-worth and empowerment) when working with Housing First and Rapid Rehousing clients?</li> <li>▪ How does delivery of Housing First, and the design and delivery of Rapid Rehousing, align with Te Maihi o te Whare Māori – the Māori and Iwi Housing Innovation Framework for Action (MAIHI)?</li> <li>▪ What are the opportunities and challenges with aligning delivery of Housing First, and the design and delivery of Rapid Rehousing, with MAIHI?</li> <li>▪ How are Housing First and Rapid Rehousing contributing to reducing Māori representation amongst people who are homeless? (Funder perspective)</li> <li>▪ What other opportunities and challenges exist for the Housing First and Rapid Rehousing programmes to help reduce Māori representation amongst people who are homeless?</li> </ul>
5. What are the experiences and emerging outcomes of those individuals and whānau supported through the Housing First programme and the Rapid Rehousing trial?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are the experiences and journeys of individuals and whānau in Housing First and Rapid Rehousing?</li> <li>▪ To what extent have Housing First and Rapid Rehousing achieved intended outcomes for individuals and whānau? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- improved health and wellbeing</li> <li>- social and community integration</li> <li>- house sustainment</li> <li>- programme retention</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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Key evaluation questions	Sub-evaluation questions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- cost effectiveness</li><li>▪ What are unintended outcomes?</li><li>▪ How sustainable are the outcomes?</li><li>▪ Could these outcomes be achieved without these services?</li></ul>
6. What are the enablers and barriers for the successful delivery of the Housing First programme and Rapid Rehousing trial at the local, regional, and national level?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ To what extent do local and regional factors (e.g., community, availability of social services, housing market) act as enablers or barriers to providers and the implementation of Housing First and Rapid Rehousing?</li><li>▪ To what extent do HUD's policy, funding model, and contracting model act as enablers or barriers to providers and the implementation of Housing First and Rapid Rehousing?</li><li>▪ How will the ongoing and future needs of providers and the programme evolve?</li><li>▪ To what extent is Housing First sustainable? What are the policy and funding implications?</li></ul>
7. What is and is not working well with the Housing First programme and Rapid Rehousing trial?	
8. What improvements, if any, are needed in the Housing First programme and the Rapid Rehousing trial to sustain a consistent service and support the attainment of functional zero homelessness?	

### A two-stepped approach was adopted in phase one

Between December 2020 and February 2021, the evaluation team met and built connections with Housing First providers. The purpose of the meetings was to introduce the evaluation team and explain the purpose and approach of the evaluation. Provider input was sought to inform the sample design.

Between February and May 2021, the evaluation team returned to the 12 Housing First locations and interviewed providers. All providers of Housing First, whether directly contracted to HUD or subcontracted, had an opportunity to take part in an interview. Feedback was also sought on the implementation of Rapid Rehousing from Housing First providers delivering the trial.

The evaluation team was assigned across the programme locations (Table 6). Team members worked with the same Housing First and Rapid Rehousing providers across the evaluation phases to build relationships.

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**Table 6: The evaluation team's roles, responsibilities and assigned programme locations**

Team members	Assigned programme locations	Location
<b>Liz Smith</b> Project lead	Rotorua, Blenheim, Nelson	Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington)
<b>Carmen Lau</b> Evaluator	Hawke's Bay, Blenheim, Christchurch, Wellington, Wellington	Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington)
<b>Maria Marama</b> Māori evaluator	Northland, Whangarei, Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, Rotorua	Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland)
<b>Lisa Davies</b> Māori evaluator	Hawke's Bay, Wellington, Wellington, Christchurch	Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington)
<b>Marty Rogers</b> Māori evaluator	Northland, Whangarei	Te Tai Tokerau (Northland)
<b>Lanuola Asiasiga</b> Pacific evaluator	Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga	Tauranga Moana (Tauranga)
<b>Roimata Hanchard</b> Evaluation assistant	Hamilton, Tauranga	Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington)

### **160 people were interviewed across 12 Housing First locations**

Table 7 has an overview of the range of people interviewed for each programme at the governance, management and frontline levels. A mixture of individual, paired and group interviews were completed. Key stakeholders who are involved in multiple Housing First programmes were interviewed once. Ten HUD staff were interviewed.

## Appendix A

**Table 7: Sample achieved for phase one of the Housing First evaluation**

Programme name	Location	Governance No.	Management No.	Frontline No. <sup>39</sup>	Total
Hau Kāinga - Kāinga Whenua	Far North	-	4	4	8
Kāinga Pūmanawa	Whangarei	-	4	8	12
Housing First Auckland	Auckland	4	24 <sup>40</sup>	24	52
The People's Project Hamilton	Hamilton	-	2	3	5
The People's Project Tauranga	Tauranga	1	1	2	4
Mangatakitahi	Rotorua	1	8	10	19
Te Tahi Whare Ora / Housing First Hawke's Bay	Hawke's Bay	1	2	2	5
Aro Mai Housing First Collaboration	Wellington	2	3	10	15
Kahungunu Whānau Services	Wellington	1	2	3	6
Housing First Nelson	Nelson	3	2	3	8
Housing First Blenheim	Blenheim	6	1	4	11
He Kāinga Ora ki Ōtautahi / Housing First Christchurch	Christchurch	6	2	7	15
<b>Total</b>		25	55	80	160

### **Informed consent processes were followed**

Face-to-face interviews and group discussions with providers, lasting around 60 minutes, were completed. With permission, interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Those who requested it received a copy of their transcript for review.

The information sheets, consent forms and discussion guides used are below.

<sup>39</sup> Frontline staff were often interviewed in pairs or groups.

<sup>40</sup> Includes people from the Kaupapa Māori Group who are Māori leads from four providers and representatives from Kāhui Tū Kaha. The group was established to lead the Tāiki framework.

## Appendix A

### Information sheet



HF evaluation\_info  
sheet\_providers\_.docx

### Consent form



Consent form\_HF  
evaluation.docx

### Discussion guides

#### HUD



HUD  
stakeholders\_intervie

#### Governance



Provider  
governance\_interview

#### Managers



Provider  
management\_intervie

#### Kaimahi



Provider  
kaimahi\_interview gui

#### Rapid Rehousing



Rapid  
Rehousing\_interview

#### Master



Master  
guide\_table.docx

## A comprehensive case and cross-case analysis was completed

On completion of each programme visit, the evaluators developed a summary of key findings. A thematic analysis of transcripts documents received was completed. A draft case study report was developed for each programme. The case studies describe how Housing First is set up and delivered in each area. Each case study contains:

- the local context
- the governance, management and operational structure
- delivery of service
- key enablers and challenges
- programme value.

The draft case study report was reviewed by Housing First providers and then finalised. Where consented, the case studies have been published.

This cross-case report presents the analysis of the 12 case studies, documents reviewed, HUD data and HUD interviews against the key evaluation questions. The cross-case analysis involved the full evaluation team in a two-day analysis hui to explore similarities and differences in the implementation of Housing First across Aotearoa. Cases were systematically coded to identify the range of governance and operational models, alignment with MAIHI, and shared enablers and challenges.

## **Appendix A**

The draft cross-case report was shared with HUD and Housing First providers. A series of hui were held to gain feedback on the report with:

- HUD
- members of Arohanui ki te Tangata and Te Matapihi He Tirohanga Mō Te Iwi Trust (Te Matapihi)
- all Housing First providers
- Housing First Auckland providers and The People's Project
- The Housing First Auckland Kaupapa Māori Group.

All feedback was carefully reviewed. The evaluation team collectively agreed on the changes to the draft report and reviewed and refined the revised report.

## **Appendix 3: Profile of Housing First clients<sup>41</sup>**

**Table 8: Age profile of Housing First clients**

Programme Age	0-17	18-24	25-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	65+
<b>Kāinga Pūmanawa (Whangarei)</b>	0%	8%	26%	22%	22%	20%	1%
<b>Housing First Auckland (Auckland)</b>	0%	10%	28%	26%	23%	11%	1%
<b>The People's Project Hamilton (Hamilton)</b>	0%	10%	24%	25%	26%	13%	3%
<b>The People's Project Tauranga (Tauranga)</b>	0%	8%	29%	25%	26%	11%	1%
<b>Mangatakitahi (Rotorua)</b>	0%	8%	32%	20%	22%	16%	2%
<b>Te Tahi Whare Ora / Housing First Hawke's Bay (Hawke's Bay)</b>	0%	5%	37%	21%	19%	13%	5%
<b>Aro Mai Housing First Collaboration (Wellington)</b>	0%	4%	33%	25%	26%	10%	1%
<b>Kahungunu Whānau Services (Wellington)</b>	1%	21%	30%	26%	17%	4%	0%
<b>Housing First Nelson (Nelson)</b>	3%	1%	26%	35%	19%	17%	0%
<b>Housing First Blenheim (Blenheim)</b>	0%	0%	21%	26%	35%	14%	4%
<b>He Kāinga Ora ki Ōtautahi / Housing First Christchurch (Christchurch)</b>	0%	10%	31%	28%	21%	8%	1%

<sup>41</sup> As at March 2021, HUD does not have data on clients in Hau Kāinga - Kāinga Whenua (Far North); all percentages are rounded to the nearest whole per cent.

## Appendix A

**Table 9: Gender profile of Housing First clients**

Programme Gender	Number of clients or households	Male	Female	Gender Diverse
<b>Kāinga Pūmanawa</b> (Whangarei)	n = 134	63%	37%	0%
<b>Housing First</b> <b>Auckland</b> (Auckland)	n = 1,477	59%	40%	1%
<b>The People's</b> <b>Project Hamilton</b> (Hamilton)	n = 695	64%	36%	0%
<b>The People's</b> <b>Project Tauranga</b> (Tauranga)	n = 166	71%	29%	0%
<b>Mangatakitahi</b> (Rotorua)	n = 165	58%	42%	1%
<b>Te Tahi Whare Ora</b> <b>/ Housing First</b> <b>Hawke's Bay</b> (Hawke's Bay)	n = 84	81%	19%	0%
<b>Aro Mai Housing</b> <b>First Collaboration</b> (Wellington)	n = 144	74%	26%	0%
<b>Kahungunu</b> <b>Whānau Services</b> (Wellington)	n = 112	29%	71%	<1%
<b>Housing First</b> <b>Nelson</b> (Nelson)	n = 78	81%	19%	0%
<b>Housing First</b> <b>Blenheim</b> (Blenheim)	n = 57	67%	33%	0%
<b>He Kāinga Ora ki</b> <b>Ōtautahi / Housing</b> <b>First Christchurch</b> (Christchurch)	n = 284	79%	21%	0%

## Appendix A

**Table 10: Ethnicity profile of Housing First clients**

Programme Ethnicity	Number of clients or households	Māori	European	Pacific peoples	Asian	MELA	Other	Choose not to answer
<b>Kāinga Pūmanawa (Whangarei)</b>	n = 134	82%	14%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%
<b>Housing First Auckland (Auckland)</b>	n = 1,477	56%	19%	17%	2%	3%	0%	1%
<b>The People's Project Hamilton (Hamilton)</b>	n = 695	57%	27%	3%	0%	0%	2%	12%
<b>The People's Project Tauranga (Tauranga)</b>	n = 166	45%	31%	0%	2%	0%	2%	20%
<b>Mangatakitahi (Rotorua)</b>	n = 165	84%	8%	1%	0%	1%	0%	6%
<b>Te Tahī Whare Ora / Housing First Hawke's Bay (Hawke's Bay)</b>	n = 84	77%	20%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%
<b>Aro Mai Housing First Collaboration (Wellington)</b>	n = 144	53%	34%	8%	1%	3%	0%	1%
<b>Kahungunu Whānau Services (Wellington)</b>	n = 112	79%	10%	9%	1%	1%	0%	0%
<b>Housing First Nelson (Nelson)</b>	n = 78	53%	41%	5%	0%	0%	1%	0%
<b>Housing First Blenheim (Blenheim)</b>	n = 57	44%	53%	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>He Kāinga Ora ki Ōtautahi / Housing First Christchurch (Christchurch)</b>	n = 284	45%	46%	3%	0%	1%	0%	4%

## Appendix A

**Table 11: Number of dependents of Housing First clients**

Programme Dependents	Number of clients or households housed	None	One or more	Unknown
<b>Kāinga Pūmanawa (Whangarei)</b>	<b>46</b>	16	18	12
<b>Housing First Auckland (Auckland)</b>	<b>920</b>	413	166	341
<b>The People's Project Hamilton (Hamilton)</b>	<b>344</b>	83	5	256
<b>The People's Project Tauranga (Tauranga)</b>	<b>85</b>	35	3	47
<b>Mangatakitahi (Rotorua)</b>	<b>95</b>	6	17	16
<b>Te Tahi Whare Ora / Housing First Hawke's Bay (Hawke's Bay)</b>	<b>16</b>	13	1	2
<b>Aro Mai Housing First Collaboration (Wellington)</b>	<b>93</b>	0	6	87
<b>Kahungunu Whānau Services (Wellington)</b>	<b>44</b>	15	23	6
<b>Housing First Nelson (Nelson)</b>	<b>0</b>	0	0	0
<b>Housing First Blenheim (Blenheim)</b>	<b>33</b>	25	2	6
<b>He Kāinga Ora ki Ōtautahi / Housing First Christchurch (Christchurch)</b>	<b>179</b>	146	4	29

## Appendix A

**Table 12: Status of clients in Housing First using HUD's four outcome categories**

Programme Status	Number of clients or households	Continues to need support <sup>42</sup>	Withdrawn <sup>43</sup>	Graduated	Deceased
<b>Kāinga Pūmanawa (Whangarei)</b>	134	82	49	2	1
<b>Housing First Auckland (Auckland)</b>	1477	899	501	48	29
<b>The People's Project Hamilton (Hamilton)</b>	695	150	497	37	11
<b>The People's Project Tauranga (Tauranga)</b>	166	92	70	2	2
<b>Mangatakitahi (Rotorua)</b>	165	109	54	0	2
<b>Te Tahi Whare Ora (Hawke's Bay)</b>	84	41	42	0	1
<b>Aro Mai Housing First Collaboration (Wellington)</b>	144	117	23	1	3
<b>Kahungunu Whānau Services (Wellington)</b>	112	94	15	3	0
<b>Housing First Nelson (Nelson)</b>	78	39	38	0	1
<b>Housing First Blenheim (Blenheim)</b>	57	46	10	0	1
<b>He Kāinga Ora ki Ītautahi (Christchurch)</b>	284	219	59	1	5

<sup>42</sup> Continues to need support, includes transfer to housed, transfer back to engaged, Covid-19, and tenancy ended so transfer back to engaged.

<sup>43</sup> 'Withdrawn' includes no longer wants to take part; evicted or tenancy lost; housed; left area; not suitable; declined by client; Corrections (Prison); withdrawn; transferred to another service.

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### Phase One report – Key findings

1. Housing First and Rapid Rehousing contribute to delivery of the Homelessness Action Plan.
2. Rapid Rehousing is in early implementation stages and will be further explored in Phase Two of the evaluation and review.
3. Housing First is evolving to meet specific circumstances in Aotearoa through Māori and Iwi and non-Māori/non-Iwi provider pathways.
4. Some Māori and Iwi Housing First providers are concerned about the suitability of Housing First for Māori and are developing a tangata whenua-led solution (Arohanui ki te Tangata supported by Te Matapihi are leading this work). HUD is currently addressing these concerns through discussions with Te Matapihi and Arohanui ki te Tangata, and will utilise findings from both phases of the evaluation and review to inform programme and policy improvements with a focus on suitability and responsiveness for Māori.
5. More work is needed to align the Housing First programme with Kaupapa Māori principles and MAIHI. The report recommended a number of ways that alignment with the MAIHI Framework might be achieved, including:
  - i. Māori partnership in the governance and oversight of Housing First at a national level (e.g., a role for Iwi Chairs or Te Matapihi in the investment decision process);
  - ii. shifting the balance of investment funding towards a greater level of Kaupapa Māori delivery by Māori and Iwi providers;
  - iii. continuing to invest in building the capacity and capability of Māori providers (existing and others) to respond to the scale of Māori homelessness;
  - iv. working with Arohanui ki te Tangata to determine the appropriateness of the Housing First design in Aotearoa;
  - v. where appropriate, enabling a parallel Housing First design and ensuring non-Māori providers continue to build their cultural responsiveness to Māori;
  - vi. increasing contractual accountability mechanisms for non-Māori providers to demonstrate their cultural responsiveness for Māori.
6. Providers are working to be responsive to Pacific clients. They feel consideration should be given to whether a Pacific strategy (like the Tāiki framework)<sup>1</sup> is needed to guide programme implementation for Pacific peoples.
7. Providers want more clarification on the Housing First graduation process.
8. There are various structural and operational barriers to more effective programme delivery. Structural barriers include access to housing stock, a lack of alcohol and other drugs (AOD) services, prejudice from a range of organisations and individuals against clients, and not enough information sharing between agencies.

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<sup>1</sup> In 2018, Housing First Auckland's Kaupapa Māori Group developed the Tāiki framework. The framework is based on mātauranga Māori and assumes a Māori-centric position.

## **Appendix B**

9. Operational barriers to more effective programme delivery include challenges with negotiating roles and responsibilities within collectives, retention and recruitment of kaimahi, accessing people not visible to providers, and supporting those not meeting programme criteria who still require support.

### **Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga response to Housing First Evaluation and Rapid Rehousing Review Report**

The Housing First and Rapid Rehousing programmes are part of our broader housing and support response to homelessness in Aotearoa. Since the launch of Housing First in 2017 and the drafting of this report Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga has:

- Worked flexibly and in partnership with providers to ensure they could continue to deliver the essential support services offered through these programmes, particularly during lockdowns, with Rapid Rehousing being introduced as a new service during the first lockdown in 2020 and forming a part of our COVID response
- Reviewed contracting arrangements as part of our ongoing relationship management approach
- Worked with Māori and iwi providers and Te Matapihi to reflect on and make changes to contracting arrangements to ensure these services are responsive to Māori and our Aotearoa context
- Released the Government Policy Statement on Housing and Urban Development and MAIHI Ka Ora – National Māori housing strategy, and worked with government agencies on an 18-month review of the Homelessness Action Plan

Learnings from these actions and ongoing work to respond to the Wai 2750 Kaupapa Inquiry into housing policy and services will also help inform work to address homelessness.

These actions signal new ways of working and partnering with individuals and organisations across the housing and urban development system to deliver change and address critical gaps for Māori going forward.

We welcome this report and look forward to findings from the second phase of the evaluation and review. The second phase will incorporate the voice of whānau and individuals receiving Housing First and Rapid Rehousing services.

HUD will provide a comprehensive response upon completion of the evaluation and review. Insights and findings from both reports will be incorporated and used by HUD to develop and improve its policies, design and implementation of these housing programmes.