Addiction Leadership Day Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland

Evaluation report, 31 July 2025

Acknowledgements

We sincerely thank and acknowledge all attendees who participated in the event and completed the survey.

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Summary of key findings

Tāmaki Makaurau | Auckland Addiction Leadership Day

Theme of the day: He Tirohanga a Muri Ake - Seeing into the future

👥 114 attendees | 📈 69 percent post-event survey response rate

- Over half of respondents (53 percent) were managers, followed by team leaders (17 percent), peer/lived experience roles (8 percent), and senior practitioners (5 percent).
- One fifth of respondents were Māori (20 percent), Pacific Peoples (11 percent), and others, with 73 percent identifying as New Zealand European/Pākehā.

Key outcomes

Respondents reported a 43-percentage point increase in their understanding of recent sector changes. The most highly rated session was *"Leadership in the Age of AI"* by Tim Corbett, with 74 percent of respondents identifying it as the most valuable part of the day. Three key take-ways from the event emerged:

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) – enhancing service delivery and reducing the admin burden
- mana motuhake – promoting self-determination and culturally grounded leadership
- Rainbow inclusion – creating affirming, inclusive services for LGBTQIA+ communities

Applying the learning

Most respondents (92 percent) indicated they plan to apply insights from the event in their work. Key areas of application include:

- reflective leadership and values alignment
- strengthening relationships and collaboration
- integrating learning into practice
- thoughtful use of AI
- data-informed decision-making.

Conclusion

The theme *He Tirohanga a Muri Ake – Seeing into the Future* clearly resonated with attendees, reflecting a sector committed to growth through leadership, collaboration, and innovation. Feedback highlighted the value of interactive formats that foster deeper engagement and inclusive, future-focused content aligned with sector priorities. These insights offer a strong foundation for designing future events that continue to meet the evolving needs of the addiction sector.

Background

The Addiction Leadership Days are held annually in three locations: Te Whanganui-a-Tara | Wellington (March), Tāmaki Makaurau | Auckland (July), and Ōtautahi | Christchurch (November). These events are organised by the National Committee of Addiction Treatment (NCAT) and supported by Te Pou. They serve as an important platform for leaders and decision-makers within the addiction sector to deepen professional networks, share sector updates and research, and strengthen and develop leadership. This report, prepared by Te Pou, summarises feedback from the Tāmaki Makaurau | Auckland Addiction Leadership Day, held on 31 July 2025. The theme of the event was "He Tirohanga a Muri Ake – Seeing into the future" (see Appendix A for the event agenda).

Purpose of this report

The evaluation is based on responses collected through a post-event survey to assess the impact of the event. It highlights how the event supported the addiction sector and provides insights to inform the planning and ongoing improvement of future Addiction Leadership Days. The report is primarily intended for organisers and facilitators, offering guidance for internal planning, impact assessment, and future event design and delivery. It is also relevant to addiction sector leaders and practitioners, as it sheds light on sector engagement, helps identify emerging needs, and supports strategic alignment with sector priorities.

Attendees were invited to complete an online survey administered via SurveyMonkey (See Appendix B for survey questions). The survey included a combination of closed and open-ended questions to gather both quantitative and qualitative insights. Quantitative data was analysed using Microsoft Excel, while qualitative responses were thematically analysed using MAXQDA, a software tool designed for in-depth analysis of textual data.

Key outcomes

The Tāmaki Makaurau | Auckland Addiction Leadership Day (See appendix B for agenda) was attended by 114 participants, of whom 79 completed the post-event survey resulting in a 69 percent response rate. This high level of engagement provides a strong foundation for the evaluation, offering a high degree of confidence in the representativeness of the feedback.

Participant profiles

Over half of the respondents were managers (53 percent), followed by team leaders (17 percent), consumer, peer support, or lived experience roles (8 percent), and senior practitioners (5 percent). The remaining 22 percent selected 'other', which included roles such as supervisor, board member, contractor, director, clinical supervisor, and administrative staff (see Figure 1.).

Figure 1.Overview of respondents' role (64 respondents)

Over half of respondents were managers

Role	Percent
Manager	53%
Team leader	17%
Consumer, peer support or lived experience role	8%
Senior practitioner	5%
Planner and funder	3%
Other	22%
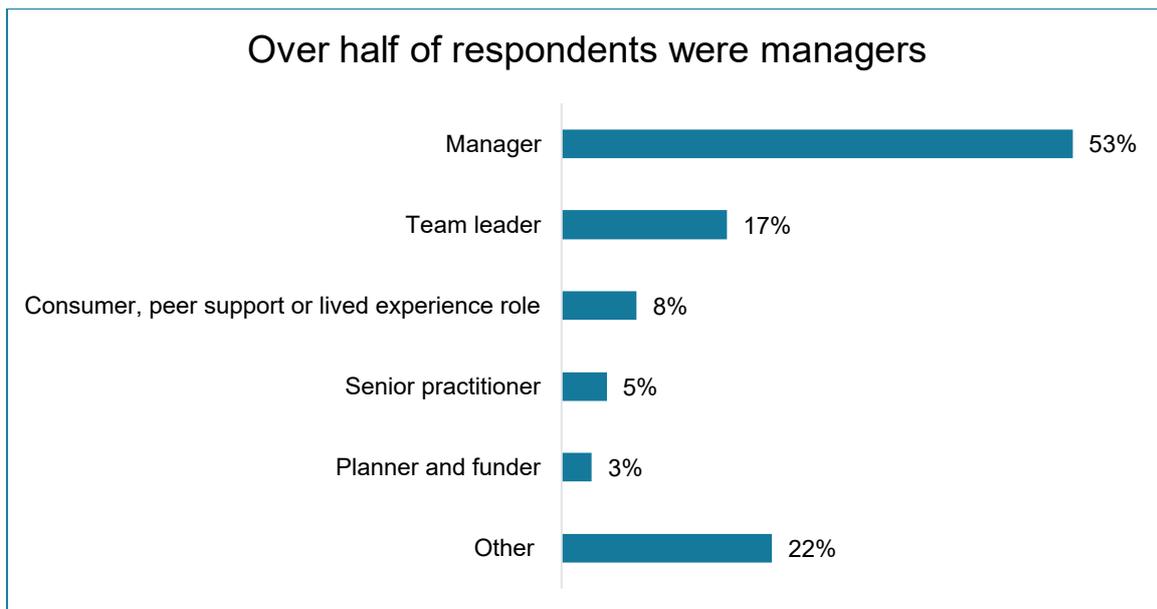
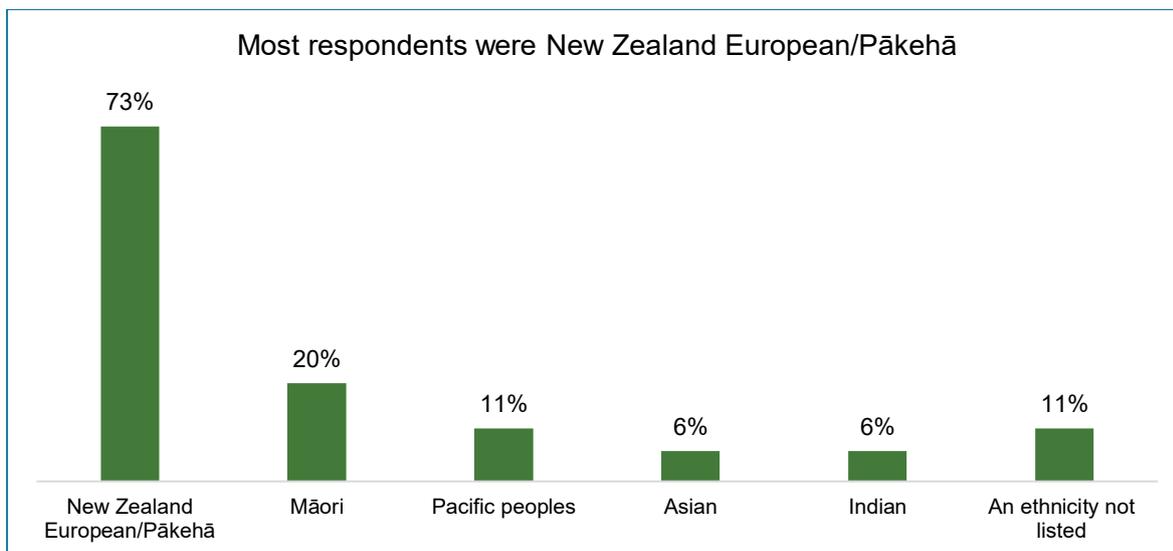The majority of respondents were New Zealand European/Pākehā (73 percent), followed by Māori (20 percent), Pacific Peoples (11 percent), Asian (6 percent), and Indian (6 percent). An additional 11 percent selected ethnicities not listed, including Afrikaans, Rohingya, and Irish (see Figure 2.).

Figure 2. Overview of respondents' ethnicity (64 respondents)

Most respondents were New Zealand European/Pākehā

Ethnicity	Percent
New Zealand European/Pākehā	73%
Māori	20%
Pacific peoples	11%
Asian	6%
Indian	6%
An ethnicity not listed	11%

Respondents were asked to indicate which Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora district they work. The majority of respondents (72 percent) were from the Northern Region, reflecting the event's location in Tāmaki Makaurau. This included Waitematā (38 percent), Te Toka Tumai Auckland (17 percent), Counties Manukau (11 percent), and Te Tai Tokerau (6 percent). Twenty-three percent worked nationally, followed by 11 percent from the Midland Te Manawa Taki region, eight percent from the Central Te Ikaroa region, and six percent from the South Island Te Waipounamu region (see Figure 3.).

Figure 3. Overview of respondents' Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora district locations (64 respondents)

National (All of New Zealand) (23%)

Northern
72 %

Midland Te Manawa Taki
11 %

Central Te Ikaroa
8%

South Island Te Waipounamu
6%
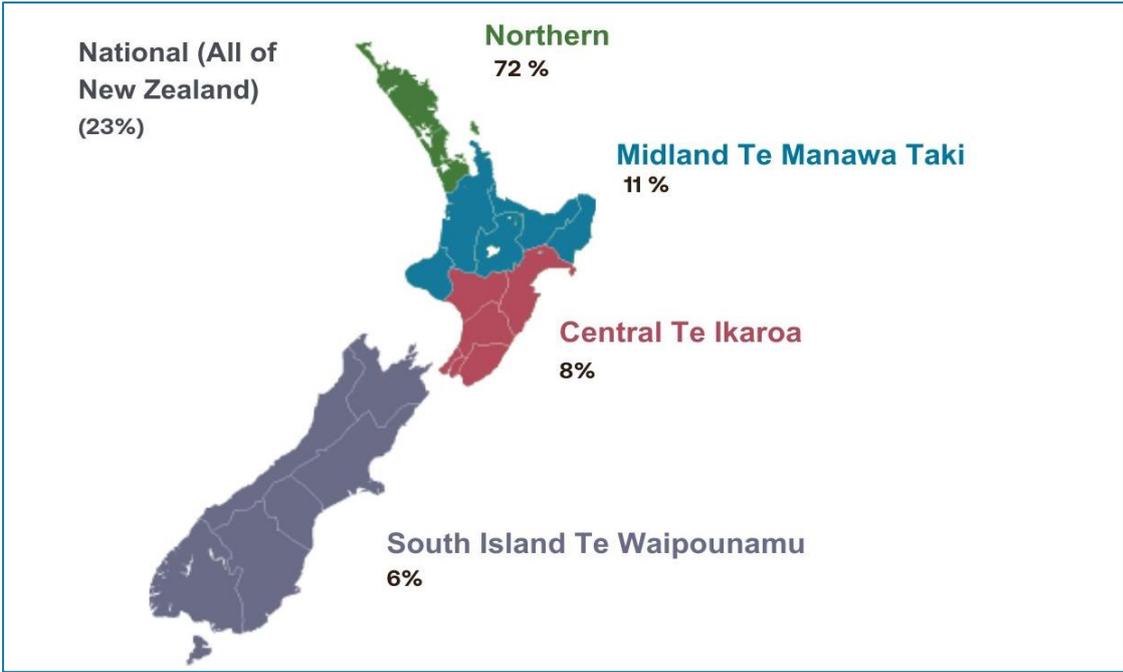
Knowledge on latest significant sector changes

Respondents reported an increase in their knowledge about the latest significant sector changes following the event (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. Respondents' self-assessed knowledge of recent significant sector changes before and after the event (79 respondents)

47% ⟩⟩⟩ 90%

Respondents' knowledge of key sector changes increased by 43 percentage points following the event.
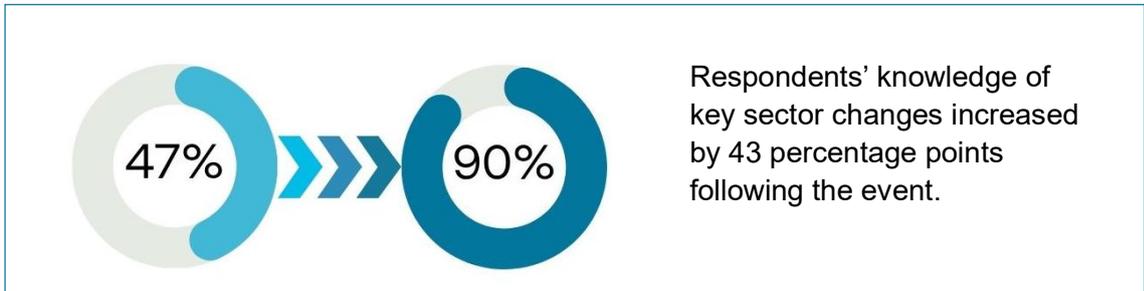
Most useful part of the event and take-home messages

Respondents rated the most useful part of the event as Embrace. Explore. Enable. Leadership in the age of AI – grounded in kaupapa, guided by curiosity, and shaped for impact by Tim Corbett which received the highest rating at 74 percent. This was followed by Addiction treatment Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora by Phil Grady (65 percent) and Mana Motuhake by Cory James and Cera James (60 percent) (See Figure 5.)

Figure 5. Respondents' rating of the most useful part of the day (68 respondents)

Session	Rating
Embrace. Explore. Enable. Leadership in the age of AI — grounded in kaupapa, guided by curiosity, and shaped for impact- Tim Corbett	74%
Addiction Treatment Health New Zealand -overview- Phil Grady	65%
Mana Motuhake- Cory James and Cera James	60%
The State of the Nation – the social statistics that contribute to social hazard harm- Bonnie Robinson	57%
Riana Manuel's opening address	49%
Standing with our Rainbow and Takatāpui Communities: Why and how your services can better serve our Rainbow Communities- Diana Rands,…	38%
Pacific Addiction Workforce Development- Nic Cao and Mark Esekielu	32%
Lived Experience Addiction Leadership Group Update - Melissa Roberts	28%
dapaanz update - Emma Hunter	28%
Reflecting our workforce and communities Keeping it Real | Kia Pono te Tika- Trish Gledhill	25%

These ratings closely aligned with the three key take-home messages shared by respondents, highlighting the themes that resonated most strongly. The highlights included:

1. The role of AI in the addiction sector

A major theme was the increasing relevance and urgency of artificial intelligence in the addiction sector. Attendees expressed a sense of curiosity and optimism, viewing AI not as something to fear, but as a powerful tool to enhance service delivery and streamline administrative tasks. Respondent reflections included:

"AI has some interesting potential for the addiction sector."

"We need to explore what AI can bring us."

"AI may become helpful for human services."

2. The importance of mana motuhake

The concept of mana motuhake self-determination and autonomy was highlighted as essential in tāngata whai ora-led care. Presentations by Cera and Cory emphasised the need to avoid disconnection and uphold dignity and leadership throughout all levels of service. Respondent reflections included:

> "Ensuring that the work we do in leadership filters down to workers – Mana Motuhake."

3. Rainbow awareness and inclusion

Creating inclusive, affirming environments for the LGBTQIA+ community was another key message. This includes providing rainbow-specific training, embedding gender affirmation practices, and ensuring that services are safe and welcoming for the rainbow community. Respondent reflections included:

> "Better understanding of LGBTQA+."

> "Rainbow and gender affirmation."

In addition to the top three themes, respondents also highlighted several other messages:

- sector updates – including contributions from Le Va, Riana Manuel's message on leadership, dapaanz updates, Phil Grady's presentation, and Dr Bonnie Robinson's insights on the context we operate.
- Keeping it Real | Kia Pono te Tika – updates and practical application
- collaboration and networking – fostering sector-wide connections
- social determinants – recognising broader influences on addiction
- the importance of data and evidence – using insights to inform practice.

Plans to use insights from the event

Most respondents (92 percent) indicated they plan to apply the insights from the event in their work (see Figure 6). They described using the information to reflect on values, foster connections, integrate learning, thoughtfully engage with AI and making data-informed decisions. Their responses can be grouped into five overarching themes, each illustrated with direct quotes from participants (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Respondents' plan to apply event insights (79 respondents)

92% — 9 out of 10 respondents agreed they plan to use the information from the event

Reflecting on values

- re-examine personal leadership and influence
- align service delivery with core values and written policies
- lead through whakapapa and uplift the mana of others
- stay mindful of the impact of decisions on people and communities

Supporting connection

- share learnings with colleagues, communities, and networks
- engage in kōrero and team discussions to deepen collective understanding
- collaborate with others in similar roles to exchange support and knowledge
- strengthen relationships with tāngata whai ora and whānau

Integrating learning

- enroll staff in further professional development
- embed resources like Keeping it Real and dapaanz competencies into practice
- reflect and integrate insights into team meetings, supervision, and service planning
- use learnings to inform strategic direction and service improvements

Using AI thoughtfully

- explore AI tools to reduce administrative burden and enhance frontline impact.
- begin developing or refining an AI policy
- use AI to support storytelling, resource implementation, and whānau engagement
- stay curious and informed about AI developments and their relevance to practice

Data-Informed decision-making

- review and discuss national and local statistics with staff
- use data to inform governance, cultural competency implementation, and service delivery
- monitor and evaluate the impact of changes to ensure alignment with community needs

Overall feedback

The overall feedback indicates that the event was highly valued, inspiring, and well-organised. Attendees frequently praised the quality of learning and the strength of networking opportunities, with many expressing appreciations for the effort invested in planning and delivery. Quantitative data supports these reflections: 90 percent of respondents rated the overall value of the day as good or very good, and 87 percent found the content highly relevant to their work in addiction services. Additionally, 73 percent reported a positive impact on the expansion of their professional networks, while 60 percent noted improved collaboration at the service level, and 58 percent identified enhanced collaboration at the strategic level (see Figure 7.).

Figure 7. Ratings on event statement (79 respondents)
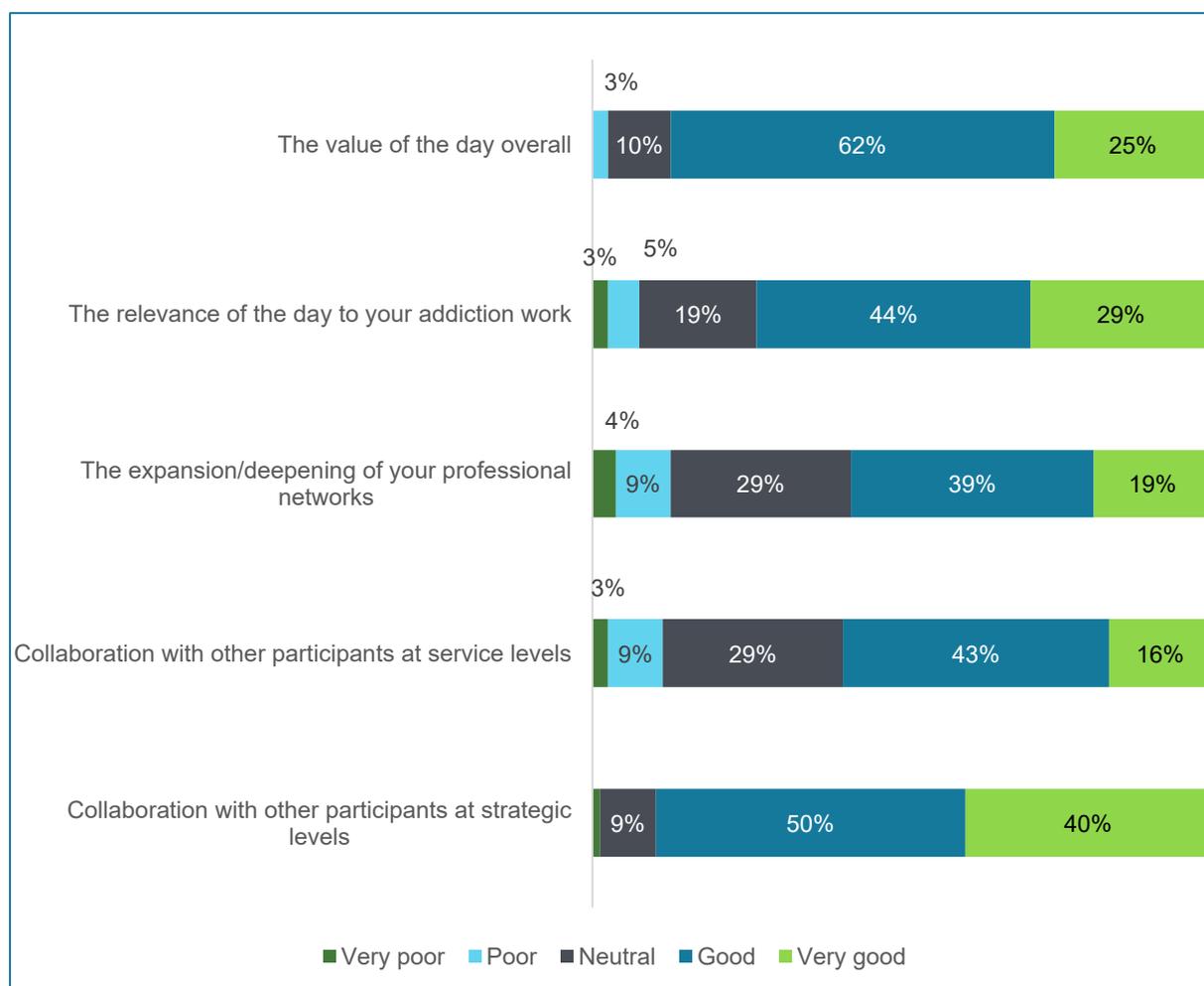
Suggestions for future events

Respondents shared a wide range of suggestions on topics for future event topics, as outlined in Table 1. In addition to topic ideas, several respondents expressed a strong interest in having more space for open discussion and meaningful dialogue.

Table 1. Suggestions for future events (45 respondents)

Category	Topics
Clinical practice and innovation	• medication trends, internal family systems • group/self-help interventions, Detox, ABI's • AI in treatment, database systems • private practice insights, best practices, residential research
Lived experience and peer support	• peer speakers, integrating peer support • clinicians using lived experience • lived experience data and stories
Leadership and workforce development	• leadership stories, values-based leadership • staff wellbeing, burnout, rural workforce development • workforce centre updates
Policy, funding and sector planning	• Health NZ updates, dapaanz role • funding strategies, commissioning • sector gaps, disinvestment, KPIs • Government actions on alcohol harm
Cultural approaches	• Māori, Pacific, Muslim communities • tikanga Māori, Te Ao Māori responses • cultural supervision
Engaging key populations	• youth, older adults, justice sector, whānau involvement • marginalised whai ora, financial hardship, family violence • gender-informed approaches, neurodiverse
Research and data	• national client trends, outcomes measures

Conclusion and future directions

The Addiction Leadership Day in Tāmaki Makaurau 2025 brought together a diverse group of leaders, practitioners, and lived experience voices to address key challenges and opportunities in addiction services. The positive feedback affirmed its value in fostering learning, connection, and inspiration. Three key themes emerged as particularly impactful: the transformative potential of artificial intelligence in addiction services, the centrality of Mana Motuhake in empowering tāngata whai ora, and rainbow awareness and inclusion. Attendees plan to apply insights through reflective leadership, stronger relationships, integrated learning, and data-informed decisions.

The feedback provides a strong foundation for shaping future events to meet the sector's evolving needs. While collaboration was generally rated positively - 58 percent at the strategic level and 60 percent at the service level, respondents also underscored the need for more space for open discussion and meaningful dialogue.

To enhance collaboration and engagement, future events could consider:

- Expanding interactive formats such as facilitated workshops, roundtables, and peer-led discussions.

- Incorporating participant-suggested topics, focusing on seven key areas: clinical practice and innovation, lived experience and peer support, leadership and workforce development, policy and sector planning, culturally responsive approaches, engaging key populations, and research and data.

Appendix A: Agenda for the event

National Committee for Addiction Treatment

Addiction Leadership Day

Thursday 31 July 2025, 9am to 3pm
Kiwi Ballroom, JetPark Hotels, 63 Westney Road,
Māngere, Auckland

He Tirohanga a Muri Ake - Seeing into the future

8.00am	Registration on arrival	
9.00am	Mihi whakatau | welcome	
9.20am	Welcome and housekeeping	Deb Fraser-Komene, NCAT Co-Chair
9.30am	Opening address	Riana Manuel, Chief Executive Officer, Te Pou, Blueprint for Learning
9:50am	The State of the Nation – the social statistics that contribute to social hazard harm.	Dr Bonnie Robinson, Justice and Research Stream Lead, Director Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit, The Salvation Army
10:20am	Lived Experience Addiction Leadership Group Update	Melissa Roberts, Family Advisor, CADS Auckland, Lived Experience Addiction Leadership Group
10.30am	Morning tea	

11:00am	Addiction Treatment Health New Zealand - overview.	Phil Grady, National Director Mental Health and Addiction Enhancement, Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora
11:25am	**Embrace. Explore. Enable.** *Leadership in the age of AI — grounded in kaupapa, guided by curiosity, and shaped for impact.*	Tim Corbett, Director, The Change Lab, Co-Founder, HumanKindAI
12.15pm	dapaanz update	Emma Hunter, Social Mission Leadership Team, The Salvation Army, Chair of dapaanz board
12.25pm	**Lunch**	
1.15pm	Mana Motuhake.	Cory James, Clinical Lead, and Cera James, Business and Operations Manager, Clinical Supervisor, Tuhiata Mahiora
1.40pm	Reflecting our workforce and communities Keeping it Real | Kia Pono te Tika.	Trish Gledhill, Programme Lead- Keeping it Real | Kia Pono te Tika, Te Pou
2.05pm	Pacific Addiction Workforce Development.	Mark Esekielu, Senior Manager Mental Health and Addictions, and Nic Cao, Clinical Lead Mental Health and Addictions, Le Va
2.30pm	Standing with our Rainbow and Takatāpui Communities: Why and how your services can better serve our Rainbow Communities.	Diana Rands, AOD Clinician, Trainer, QT, Damian Blake, Youth AOD Clinician, LGBT Rainbow Focus, CADS Altered High Youth Service, and Namrata Gulani, Clinical Supervisor, CADS Central
2.55pm	Closing remarks and evaluation	Deb Fraser-Komene, NCAT Co-Chair
3.00pm	**Whakakape/Closure and farewell** "Ko te wa kei te heke mai ehara i te waahi e haere ana matou, engari ko tetahi e hanga ana e matou." The future is not some place we are going, but one we are creating.	

ncat.net.nz

Appendix A: Survey questions

National Committee for Addiction Treatment

Please help us understand your experiences of today and improve future events by completing this feedback form. It should take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

The information you provide will remain anonymous. It may be combined into a summary report, but no individual will be identifiable within it.

For any questions please contact Tayla at Tayla.Williams@tepou.co.nz

National Committee for Addiction Treatment

* 1. Please rate your level of knowledge about the **latest significant sector changes**:

	1=Very poor	2	3	4	5=Very good
Before today	○	○	○	○	○
After today	○	○	○	○	○

* 2. Please rate the following with 1=very poor and 5=very good:

	1	2	3	4	5
The relevance of the day to your addiction work	○	○	○	○	○
The expansion/deepening of your professional networks	○	○	○	○	○
Collaboration with other participants at strategic levels	○	○	○	○	○
Collaboration with other participants at service levels	○	○	○	○	○
The value of the day overall	○	○	○	○	○

* 3. I plan to use the information from today in my work.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Neutral ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

National Committee for Addiction Treatment

* 4. What were your top three take-home messages from today?

1. [   ]

2. [   ]

3. [   ]

* 5. What parts of today were most useful for you? Choose as many as apply.

☐ Riana Manuel's opening address

☐ The State of the Nation – the social statistics that contribute to social hazard harm- Bonnie Robinson

☐ Lived Experience Addiction Leadership Group Update - Melissa Roberts

☐ Addiction Treatment Health New Zealand -overview- Phil Grady

☐ Embrace. Explore. Enable. Leadership in the age of AI — grounded in kaupapa, guided by curiosity, and shaped for impact- Tim Corbett

☐ dapaanz update - Emma Hunter

☐ Mana Motuhake- Cory James and Cera James

☐ Pacific Addiction Workforce Development- Nic Cao and Mark Esekielu

☐ Reflecting our workforce and communities Keeping it Real | Kia Pono te Tika- Trish Gledhill

☐ Standing with our Rainbow and Takatāpui Communities: Why and how your services can better serve our Rainbow Communities- Diana Rands, Damian Blake and Namrata Gulani

☐ Other (please specify)

[   ]

* 6. How will you use the information presented today when you are back at work?

[   ]

7. How familiar are you with the Keeping it Real | Kia Pono te Tika framework?

◯ Not at all

◯ A little familiar

◯ Neither unfamiliar/ nor familiar

◯ Familiar

◯ Very familiar

National Committee for Addiction Treatment

8. Do you use or intend to use the framework in your mahi?

◯ Yes

◯ No

◯ Other (please specify)

[   ]

National Committee for Addiction Treatment

9. Please add any topics you would like covered at the next Addiction Leadership Day.

1. [   ]

2. [   ]

3. [   ]

10. Please add any other comments you have about Addiction Leadership Day.

[   ]

National Committee for Addiction Treatment

* 11. What is your current role?

☐ Manager   ☐ Planner and funder

☐ Team leader   ☐ Addiction nurse

☐ Senior practitioner   ☐ Consumer, peer support or lived experience role

☐ Other (please specify)

[   ]

* 12. With which ethnic group(s) do you identify? (please tick all that apply)

☐ Māori   ☐ Asian

☐ Pasifika   ☐ Indian

☐ New Zealand European/Pākehā

☐ An ethnicity not listed (please specify)

[   ]

* 13. Which Health New Zealand- Te Whatu Ora district do you work in? (Please tick as many as apply)

- [ ] Te Tai Tokerau
- [ ] Waitematā
- [ ] Te Toka Tumai Auckland
- [ ] Counties Manukau
- [ ] Waikato
- [ ] Lakes
- [ ] A Toi Bay of Plenty

- [ ] Tairāwhiti
- [ ] Taranaki
- [ ] Te Pae Hauora o Ruahine o Tararua MidCentral
- [ ] Whanganui
- [ ] Capital, Coast and Hutt Valley
- [ ] Te Matau a Māui Hawke's Bay
- [ ] Wairarapa

- [ ] Waitaha Canterbury
- [ ] Te Tai o Poutini West Coast
- [ ] Nelson Marlborough
- [ ] Southern
- [ ] South Canterbury
- [ ] Nationally

- [ ] Other (please specify)

_____

National Committee for Addiction Treatment

Thank you for taking part.