



A guide for kaimahi to support effective services for older people and whānau



Keeping it real
Kia pono te tika

More skills for working with older people in mental health and addiction services



This resource outlines the skills and knowledge needed to support older people and whānau accessing mental health and/or addiction services to have positive experiences and outcomes.

It adopts the values and attitudes described in Keeping it Real | Kia Pono te Tika and further develops the enhanced level of the seven Real Skills.

Whilst the Keeping it Real | Kia Pono te Tika framework incorporates a lifespan approach that includes older people, this resource is more specific and provides a comprehensive view of the knowledge and skills required when working with older people and whānau in services.

It is expected those using More skills for working with older people will also use and demonstrate proficiency at the essential and enhanced levels of Keeping it Real | Kia Pono te Tika, as well as the values and attitudes it describes.

Components of More skills for working with older people

The framework reflects the Aotearoa context and contemporary best practice. It is made up of three components to strengthen the quality of services and outcomes for people accessing these.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles guide and influence the entire framework and sets the context for all that we do in health in Aotearoa.

Real Skills describe what we do when we are working effectively alongside tāngata whai ora and their whānau.

Shared values and attitudes provide a foundation and are woven throughout the framework.

Values

Values guide our actions and are at the core of all relationships when working in health. The values in Keeping it Real | Kia Pono te Tika are: **Respect, Manaaki, Hope, Kotahitanga, Wellbeing, Whanaungatanga.**

Attitudes

Attitudes shape our interactions with others and can have a powerful and immediate impact. The attitudes in Keeping it Real | Kia Pono te Tika are: **Compassionate, Genuine, Honest, Open-minded, Optimistic.**

Why these knowledge and skills are important

A workforce responsive to older people's needs is essential given the rapidly growing and more ethnically diverse aging population.

More skills for working with older people helps:

The recognition of challenges specific to older people and whānau

Support older people to live fulfilling and enriching lives, filled with hope and free from discrimination

Protect and enhance the mana of older people and whānau by ensuring support for informed and shared decision making

More skills for working with older people

Values

Attitudes

Seven Real Skills

Working with older people adopts the values, attitudes and the seven Real Skills of Keeping it Real | Kia Pono te Tika.

The seven Real Skills

The indicators for each of the seven Real Skills are presented under sub-headings to reflect that older people are a distinct group with unique needs.

Real Skill	Key focus areas
Working alongside tāngata whai ora	Engagement; Diversity; Kotahitanga including supported decision-making; Assessment, planning support; Trauma-informed approach
Working alongside tāngata whenua	Te reo and tikanga; Māori; Whakawhanaunga; Manaaki; Wairua; Tuakiri tangata; Hauora Māori
Working alongside whānau	Whānau engagement; Self-determination and kotahitanga; Supporting parents and their children; Trauma-informed approach
Working within communities	Community concepts; Community connection; Promotion and prevention
Challenging discrimination	Human rights; Addiction and mental-health related discrimination; Self-stigma and associative stigma; Inequality and intersectionality; Language
Applying law, policy, and standards	Te Tiriti o Waitangi; Legislation, regulations, standards, codes, and policies; Rights; Ethics; Record-keeping and use of technology; Quality
Maintaining learning and kaimahi wellbeing	Professional development; Wellbeing; Communication; Teamwork

More skills assessment tool

The More skills assessment tool is online, easy to use, and is free. It allows kaimahi to reflect on their own knowledge and skills, and provides information on strengths and areas for development within a team. Kaimahi working with older people might also consider completing the enhanced assessment of the Keeping it Real | Kia Pono te Tika framework.

Who is it for?

More skills for working with older people is specifically tailored for kaimahi working with older people in mental health and addiction settings. It has been developed to align with, rather than replace, professional competency frameworks. The skills and knowledge are applicable to a range of roles, including clinical (such as nurses, psychiatrists, and allied health); support worker; cultural, and lived experience roles.

How to use it

More skills for working with older people can be used as a basis for professional development and quality improvement.

It is of value for kaimahi moving into a role that involves working with older people.

By using the associated Real Skills assessment tool, strengths and needs can be identified and embedded into workforce development planning and organisational aspirations.

More skills for working with older people can be used to guide:

- › quality and effective services for working with older people
- › ongoing kaimahi professional development by using the Real Skills assessment tool and resources
- › professional bodies in the development of competencies, education, training and learning resources
- › using a holistic and values-informed approach, such as being inclusive of models like Te Whare Tapa Whā
- › orientation of new kaimahi into work with older people
- › reflective practice, supervision, and mentoring
- › working with and advocacy for older people across a range of settings.

For example



“ Kaimahi recognise our unique roles as kaumātua and kuia. We are carriers of whakapapa, and can support and provide an understanding of wellbeing, connection, and mana.

“ As the psychiatrist in a multidisciplinary team, this allows a shared understanding across the roles in our team.

“ As a person with lived experience, I now feel seen, heard, and respected.



“ The learning I do against these Real Skills provides more information about the specialist areas of knowledge and skills I need when working with older people. I can use this for my nurse competency assessments and reflective practice.





“ I am now comfortable providing whānau-centred care when working alongside older people. I understand the importance of whakapapa and supporting connections with community, marae and iwi-based supports.

“ It’s nice to have whānau included in decision-making around care planning with my kuia.



“ It’s good to know that the kaimahi that work with me understand the important role I play within my whānau.

“ As a Health NZ | Te Whatu Ora educator I can support kaimahi to build knowledge about ageing, mental health, addiction, cultural safety, and the specific needs of kaumātua.



“ As an older adult who has lived experience, I sometimes struggle with others who don’t seem to “get it”. This really helped to guide me in my responses so I can remain helpful but not become overwhelmed by the relationship.

“ As a tertiary educator, this helps me ensure the curriculum reflects what quality care looks like when working with older people.



“ As a kaimahi working for a community organisation, I am now more confident to start working with kaumātua and kuia.

“ In my kaupapa Māori service for older people, I’m now confident my team includes kaumātua perspectives and whānau-centred practices in their work.

“ As an addiction practitioner working with older adults, I often reflect on my own substance use and mental health journey. This reminds me that at different stages of life that different needs become apparent, and that approaches and considerations need to be tailored to take into consideration generational factors.



Why More skills assessments matter

As all kaimahi are using the same language when doing the assessment, discussions are easier when collaboratively planning for ongoing learning and development needs. The chart below indicates possible uses for individuals, teams, organisations, and across health.

Individuals

Reflect on current knowledge and skills

Identify and articulate strengths and areas for growth

Plan professional development



Teams

Gain insights into team capabilities

Support reflective practice, supervision and mentoring

Enable targeted training

Track team progress over time



Organisation

Inform workforce planning

Build a confident, person centered workforce

Improve outcomes for tāngata whai ora



Sector

Inform national and regional workforce planning

Understand workforce development needs

Identify learning and development opportunities



Resources to support learning

Kaimahi can use the collection of resources to build knowledge and skills for working with older people in mental health and/or addiction services.

Scan or click the QR code to see the resource



He kete rauemi: More skills for working with older people in mental health and addiction services (Te Pou)

A collection of resources to build knowledge and skills for working with older people in mental health and/or addiction services.



Frailty care guides (Health Quality & Safety Commission | Te Tāhū Hauora)

The frailty care guides can be used to support communication and care planning with older people and their whānau.



More skills assessment tool (Te Pou)

An assessment to allow kaimahi to reflect on their own knowledge and skills.



HoNOS family of measures (Te Pou)

HoNOS65+ is part of a family of clinician-rated outcome measurement tools and is designed specifically for older adults. It captures the severity and change over time of a person's mental health, cognitive, physical, and social functioning.



Real Skills assessment tool (Te Pou)

An assessment for kaimahi working in health. It is aligned with the seven Real Skills of Keeping it Real | Kia Pono te Tika.



Cognitive impairment guidelines for AOD services (Te Pou)

These guidelines are for identifying and supporting people's cognitive impairment in alcohol and other drug (AOD) settings.



Working with older people - posters (Te Pou)

A set of five posters and accompanying discussion cards has been developed to support meaningful conversations among people who support older people experiencing mental health challenges and/or addiction.



Working with Kaumatua (New Zealand Dementia Foundation)

The Māori Assessment of Neuropsychological Abilities (MANA) is a suite of tools for the holistic assessment of mate wareware (dementia) in Māori.



Keeping it Real | Kia Pono te Tika (Te Pou)

Keeping it Real | Kia Pono te Tika describes the values, attitudes, knowledge, and skills required for working effectively alongside tāngata whai ora and whānau experiencing addiction and/or mental health challenges.



The Difference podcast (Te Pou)

These podcasts are by and for support workers in the mental health and addiction sector. They feature a range of guests discussing the challenges and rewards of the role including working with older people. Season two, episode two focuses specifically on supporting older people in mental health and addiction services.



Talking therapies for older adults (Te Pou)

This resource is focused on adapting and delivering talking therapies for older people. It supports mental health and addiction practitioners working therapeutically with people aged 65 years and over in Aotearoa New Zealand.



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tepou.co.nz