

Mātau ā-wheako consumer, peer support, lived experience:

Workforce strategy and action plan
2026 to 2031

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Te Pou is a national centre of evidence-informed workforce development for the mental health and addiction sector in New Zealand.

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- › Kaimahi who responded to the nationwide survey.
- › Lived experience leaders who work in government.
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- › Te Kauae Raro for guiding our team and project to uphold equity for Māori.
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Foreword

E ngā rau rangatira mā, Tēnei au e mihi atu nei ki a koutou.

*Ko tēnei taonga, he kupu whakaaro mō ngā kaimahi mātau ā-wheako,
Nō ngā pūtake o te ngākau, o te tinana, o te wairua,
Nō reira, tūturu whakamaua kia tīna, tīna hui e, tāiki e.*

The consumer, peer support, and lived experience (CPSLE) workforce grew from something no training manual can replicate. It grew from the lives of people who found meaning in their own journeys. As the workforce grows and embeds itself within our systems, there is a real responsibility to ensure that growth does not erase the very qualities that make it distinctive. Scaling must not mean standardising. The breadth of roles within this workforce like peer support workers, consumer advisors, lived experience advocates, whānau to whānau workers reflects the many different points at which connection and hope can be offered. That diversity is not inconsistency, it is resilience.

This strategy is built on one non-negotiable principle – the direction of this workforce is set by the people it exists to serve. Tāngata whai ora, people with lived and living experience, acknowledging that their voices are not a requirement of consultation processes but the very foundation of this mahi. They are the compass for government and funding partners, and this document sets out a clear and considered direction.

He tūī, he kākā, he kererū, he kōkō.

Each bird named here, the tūī, the kākā, the kererū, the kōkō brings its own song, its own call, its own character to the forest. None sounds like the other. None needs to. Together, they fill the canopy with something far greater than any single voice could offer, the full layered, living sound of a forest that is well.

Riana Manuel

Chief Executive Officer – Te Pou



**Riana
Manuel**

Who is this workforce strategy and action plan for?

This workforce strategy and action plan reflects the collective aspirations of the CPSLE workforce, gathered through engagement between October 2025 and May 2026. It is intended to guide planning, funding, and decisions that will enable this workforce to grow and develop sustainably while maintaining their special nature. Across the hui, a clear message emerged: this workforce no longer sees itself as ‘emerging’. Lived and living expertise needs to be recognised, supported, and sustainably resourced.

This strategy and plan has been developed by and for the CPSLE workforce and is relevant to everyone with a role in supporting its implementation, including commissioners, government health officials, workforce centres, advisory groups, employers, and the CPSLE workforce itself.

Commissioners and health officials are asked to fund our sector’s priorities, and to champion and enable their implementation. Workforce centres have a role in providing guidance, information, and resources to support progress. Advisory groups, organisations, services, and workforce leaders also have important roles in helping turn the plan into action.

Implementing this plan will require intentional partnership, shared responsibility, and sustained commitment across the mental health and addiction sectors. This plan is a workforce-led plan that came from and belongs to the CPSLE workforce.



Where have we come from?

The previous strategy and action plan

In 2021, the first *Mental Health and Addiction CPSLE Workforce Development Strategy 2020 to 2025* was launched to support the development, efficacy, and sustainability of this workforce. Pivotal at the time was the focus of ensuring this was led, written, and informed by the CPSLE workforce, for the workforce, and that remains as vital today.

This strategy was followed by an action plan of 22 actions to ensure the recommendations and vision of the strategy were successfully implemented. The strategy and action plan work concluded in 2025. This second CPSLE strategy and action plan (2026-2031) follows from the first and builds on the foundations and developments attained while recognising the changes, growth and maturing of our dynamic workforce.

An evaluation of the first strategy and action plan assessed its progress and identified priorities for the next phase of workforce development. The evaluation found strong progress, with 75 percent of planned activities completed and the remaining activities on track. The greatest progress was made in developing leadership and partnership infrastructure, while workforce growth and workplace development also advanced, albeit at a slower pace.

The first strategy and action plan provided important structure, direction, and visibility for the CPSLE workforce. Feedback from both the internal Te Pou Lived Experience team and Strategy and Action Plan Advisory Group members highlight that the plan helped to move the sector from working in isolation towards a more coordinated approach, strengthened collaboration, and increased recognition of CPSLE roles across the sector.

Key achievements include establishing advisory and partnership structures, creating communities of practice, developing practical guidance and resources, increasing research and training activity, and raising the overall profile of the workforce. These developments contribute to stronger leadership, improved capability, and greater sector awareness of the value of CPSLE work.

The evaluation also identified ongoing challenges. These include limited accountability for implementing and using the resources developed, unclear ownership of the strategy across the wider sector, inconsistent understanding of CPSLE roles, funding pressures, and broader system changes such as shifts in government priorities. These factors affected the ability to fully embed the strategy and actions across the sector.

Overall, the evaluation concludes that the previous strategy and action plan provided strong foundations for CPSLE workforce development. The next strategy and action plan will build on this progress by strengthening sector ownership, clarifying roles and responsibilities, broadening engagement across partners and communities, and placing greater emphasis on implementation, accountability, and long-term sustainability.

While the first strategy and action plan were developed consecutively, this 2026 edition includes both the strategy and actions developed together to be more efficient and user-friendly.



A steadfast commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi

The CPSLE workforce has clearly expressed its commitment to Māori and to achieving equitable outcomes for tāngata whai ora and whānau. Across the hui and throughout this plan, this commitment is reflected in calls to uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Te Tiriti) principles, strengthen partnership with Māori, support Māori leadership, and ensure services, roles, and workforce development are grounded in mātauranga Māori and Te Ao Māori frameworks.

Over the last 5 years, Te Pou Lived Experience team has used an equity tool named 'Taumata o te Maurea' to guide this work. The tool measures active protection, options, equity, self-determination, and partnership as practical expressions of this commitment to Te Tiriti.

Wider mental health and a sector context

Throughout recent consultation hui for this new CPSLE strategy and action plan, the CPSLE workforce has continued to call for the establishment of a National Professional Body, alongside a code of ethics to underpin and strengthen our work. These priorities are reflected in this 2026 strategy and action plan. However, successful implementation will require a coordinated whole-of-sector approach.

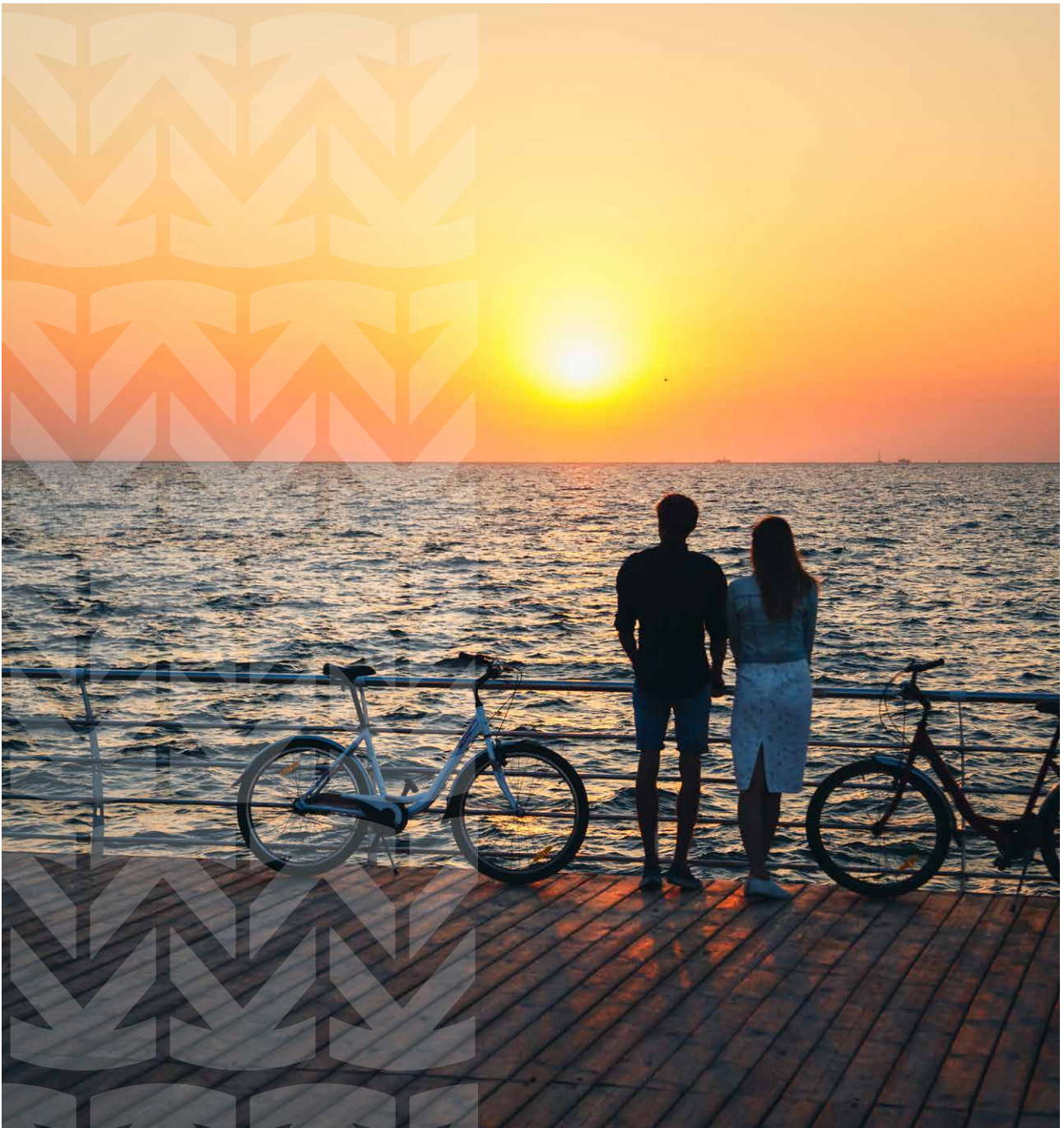
In recent years, there has been increased investment in CPSLE roles, specifically peer support in emergency departments, maternal mental health, and eating disorder services, within multi-disciplinary teams, as well as the establishment of crisis cafes and joint response teams for crisis and telehealth. It is important that this 2026 strategy and plan responds to the growing need for workforce development to support new roles, teams, and workplaces.

While there is a strong call for CPSLE roles working at various levels, it is important to recognise the diversity of roles in the CPSLE sector. This is reflected in the action items that outline increased support for systemic lived and living experience advisory roles, auditors, educators, researchers, and leadership roles.

Collective vision for 2026 to 2031

By 2031, the CPSLE workforce is thriving, visible, and sustainably resourced, with lived and living experience recognised as essential expertise across the mental health and addiction system. Grounded in Te Tiriti, equity, and cultural responsiveness, our workforce reflects the diversity of our communities and is supported by strong leadership, fair pay, quality reflective practice, professional development, and clear pathways for growth.

CPSLE kaimahi are valued partners at every level of service and system design and delivery, with our roles valued and clearly understood and embedded across the system. We are supported to contribute leadership, improve outcomes, and strengthen hauora for tāngata whai ora, whānau, and communities across Aotearoa.





Māori and Pacific people's hui summary

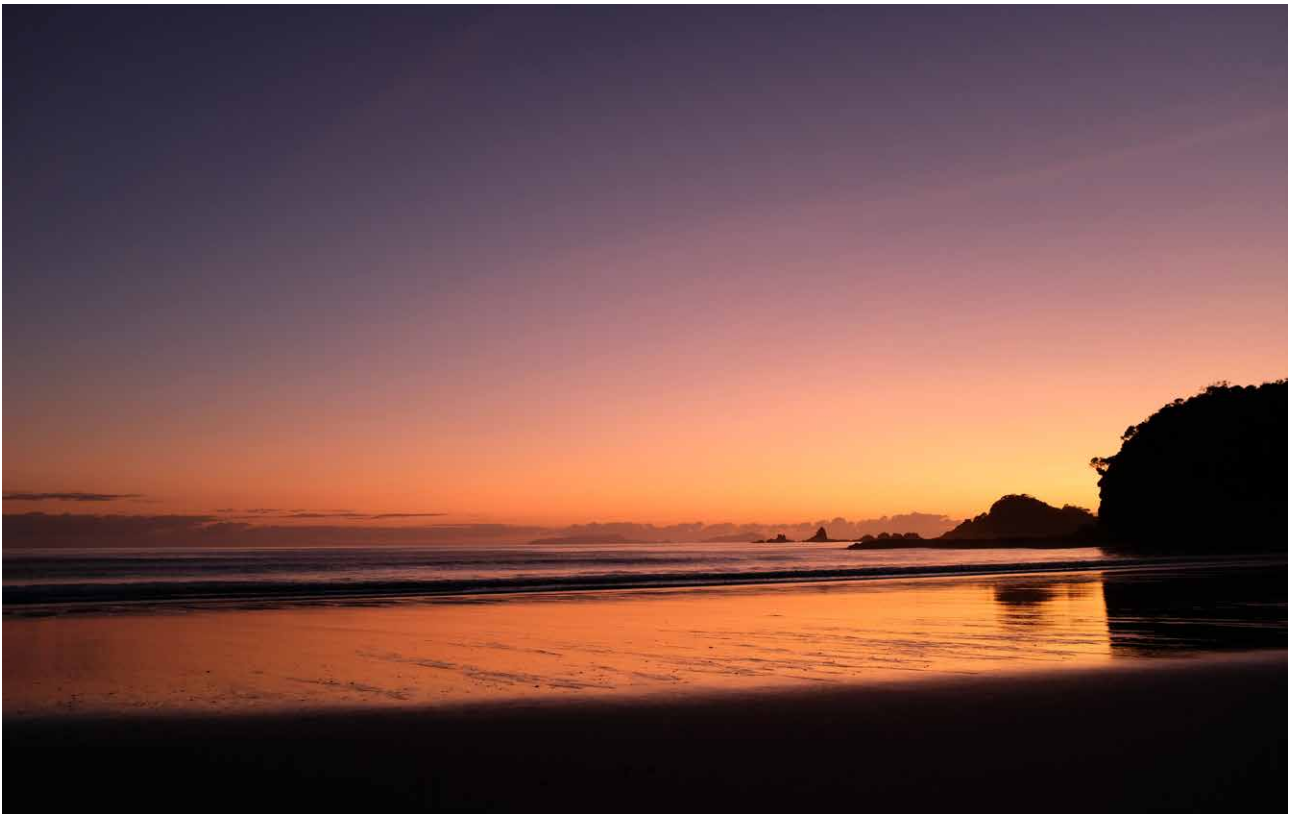
This section brings together the collective hopes shared at the Māori and Pacific people's hui in October 2025, about the future of the CPSLE workforce. It reflects a vision of a workforce that is culturally grounded, well supported, and recognised for its vital contribution across the mental health and addiction systems.

People's vision for the future workforce over the next 5 years includes the following

- › A thriving and self-determined workforce that is valued by everyone. This includes an effective mix of strategic, systems, and service roles embedding Te Tiriti principles and cultural values and practices.
- › Culture and diversity, including dedicated Māori and Pacific roles, reflecting the “intergenerational resilience of our tūpuna”, demonstrating the lived and living experience of whānau, disability, dual diagnosis, rainbow, rangatahi, kaumātua, and local communities.
- › Workers with access to sufficient resources, including to CPSLE leadership and reflective practice, pay equity, and professional development.
- › Practices that are consistent across the country, Māori and Pacific frameworks and models, data sovereignty, supported by ongoing education and recognition.

Māori and Pacific peoples' discussion groups included the following key themes

- › A health system that upholds Te Tiriti principles and values and promotes lived and living experience at systems and service levels, addresses inequities across the whole system, provides sufficient resources, and inspires collaboration between providers.
- › Workforce with access to the supports needed to thrive, including lived and living experience leadership and governance, professional development, reflective practice, leave, pay equity, outcome measures, and organisational supports like culturally relevant employment assistance programmes.
- › CPSLE workforce and services that reflect local communities using lived and living experience frameworks, models, and measures, with development based on tāngata whai ora and whānau feedback.
- › Lived and living experience practices that are culturally safe, recognise both individual and collective identities and rights grounded in cultural and lived and living experience values and mātauranga.
- › An accepted and valued CPSLE workforce, working alongside clinicians and other kaimahi, with lived and living experience being fully involved in organisation and service delivery systems and processes.
- › CPSLE practices that are grounded in cultural values and customs, that honour and accept individual people's beliefs.



Diversity and intersectionality

Across all consultation hui, participants strongly emphasised the importance of recognising the diversity of population groups within the mental health and addiction sectors. Feedback highlighted that the strategy and action plan need to reflect and respond to the experiences of disabled, neurodivergent, rural, Māori, Pacific, Asian, rainbow, and refugee and migrant communities, as well as youth, older people, people in forensic settings, those affected by eating disorders, perinatal mental health challenges, substance use, gambling, and other addictions.

Participants also emphasised the need to actively eliminate discrimination and the structural barriers experienced by people with intersectional identities. In this new plan, action items 1.5 and 3.2 focus on strengthening the CPSLE workforce's knowledge and skills, diverse leadership, and cultural responsiveness so we can better meet the needs of diverse communities.

Whānau workforce insights

We want to acknowledge the valuable contributions of the whānau advisory and whānau support workforces throughout the consultation hui for this document.

Their feedback was rich, insightful, and highlighted a distinct set of priorities and actions. This reinforced the importance of recognising the whānau lived and living experience workforce in their own right, and the unique role they play in supporting tāngata whai ora and whānau wellbeing, strengthening whānau voice and perspectives, and contributing to more responsive and holistic mental health and addiction services.

To ensure this workforce is not overlooked or folded into broader CPSLE planning, we recommend the development of a dedicated whānau workforce strategy and action plan.

The strategy goals

The strategy goals set out the key priorities for strengthening and sustaining the CPSLE workforce over the period from 2026 to 2031. Together, they provide a framework for building workforce capability, growing the breadth and diversity of roles, and strengthening the leadership and partnership infrastructure needed to support long-term sector development.

These goals are intended to guide coordinated action across the sector and support investment in a CPSLE workforce that is valued, effective, and best able to meet the needs of tāngata whai ora and whānau.

Goal One: Develop knowledge, skills, and workplaces

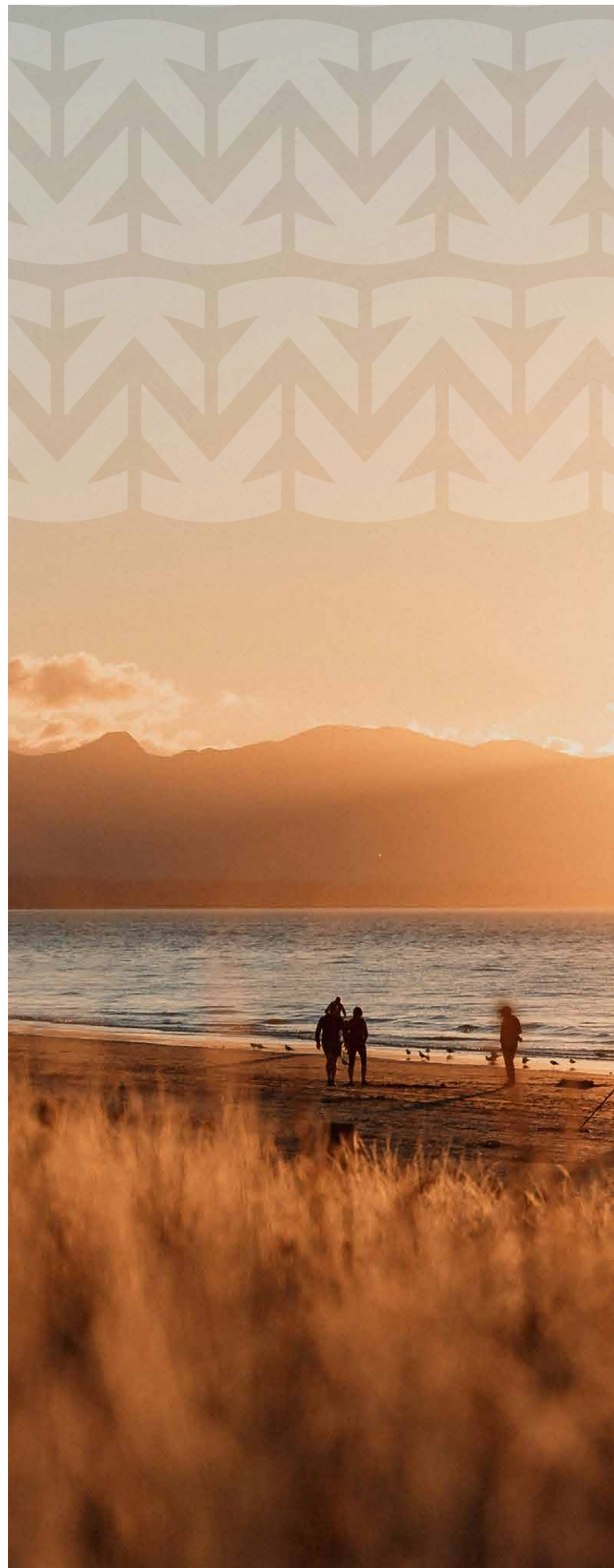
CPSLE kaimahi have access to what they need to develop their knowledge and skills to be effective in their roles and services. They work in well-resourced and supportive workplaces where they are valued and respected.

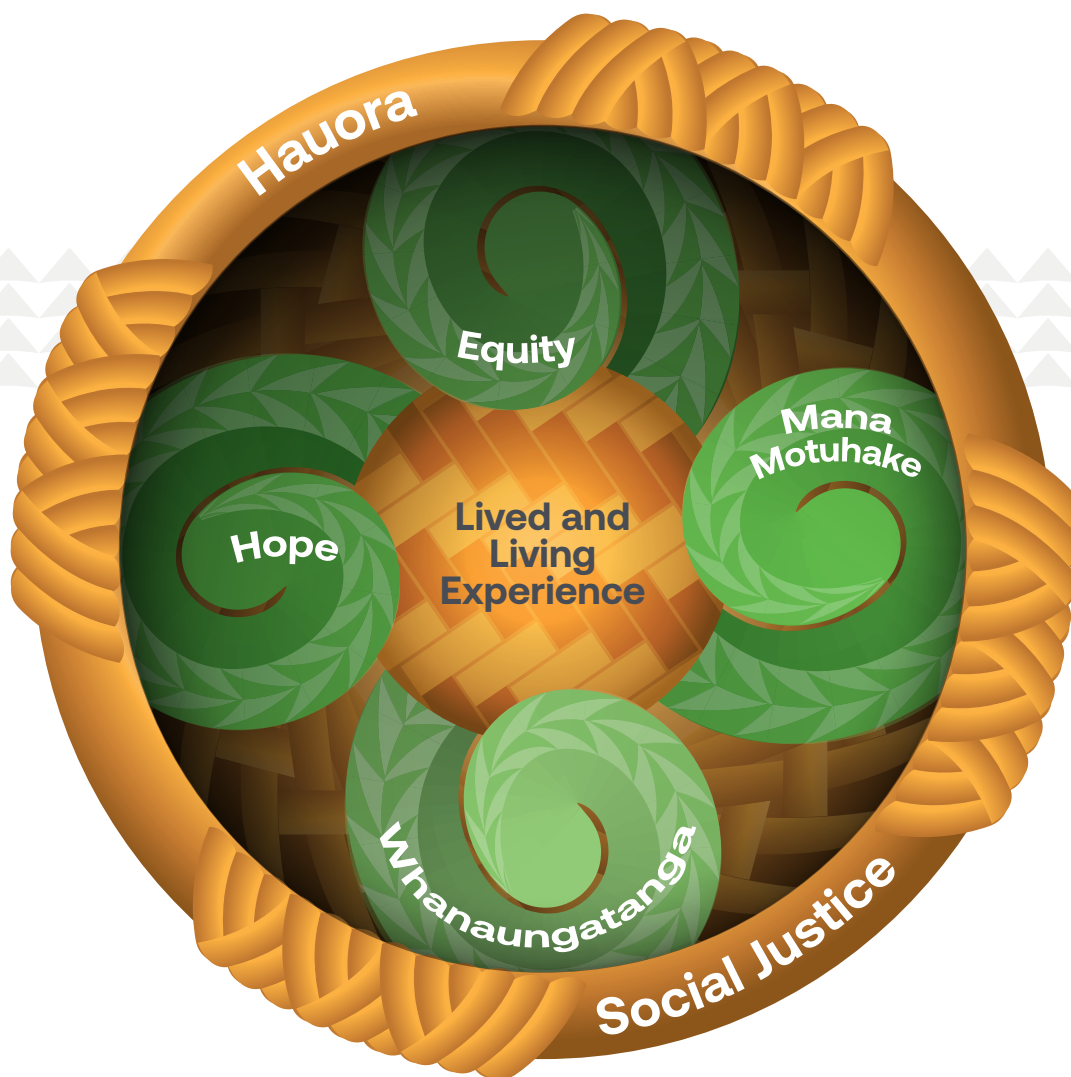
Goal Two: Grow the workforce size, roles, and diversity

CPSLE kaimahi are part of a growing, resourced, and supported workforce that is responsive to and focused on the needs of diverse tāngata whai ora and their whānau.

Goal Three: Leadership and partnership infrastructure

CPSLE kaimahi lead and work in partnership at every level of government, service delivery, and workforce development to ensure that lived and living experience expertise, perspectives and wisdom inform improvement that supports best outcomes for tāngata whai ora, their whānau, and communities.





Values

The strategy and action plan are underpinned by the seven core values identified as pivotal for this workforce in the *2026 Mental Health and Addiction Consumer, Peer Support and Lived Experience Competencies* (now published). These values guide the way this workforce works.

- › **Lived and living experience** (at the centre) – The collective knowledge and wisdom gained through a person’s first-hand experiences.
- › **Mana motuhake** – Upholding autonomy and enabling people and communities to define their own paths to wellbeing.
- › **Equity** – Commitment to ensuring fair access and successful outcomes, and addressing power imbalances for people experiencing disadvantages.
- › **Whanaungatanga** – Relationships grounded in mutuality, shared humanity, and genuine connection, where people, whānau, communities, and systems work together in ways that share authority and value lived and living experience leadership.
- › **Hope** – A belief in and commitment to possibility, growth, and change – even when facing ongoing challenges or systemic barriers.
- › **Hauora** – A person and whānau approach to wellbeing across physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and cultural dimensions.
- › **Social justice** – Addressing the social, cultural, and political conditions shaping mental health, addiction, and hauora.

Action plan and implementation

The next section presents our CPSLE workforce action plan for 2026 to 2031 across the three strategy goals. The timing column provides an indicative sequencing of when actions or next steps are expected to begin, progress, or be revisited across the five-year period. It is intended to support planning, prioritisation, and accountability, while recognising that some actions will be ongoing, staged across multiple years, or responsive to changing sector conditions and available resources.

Abbreviations

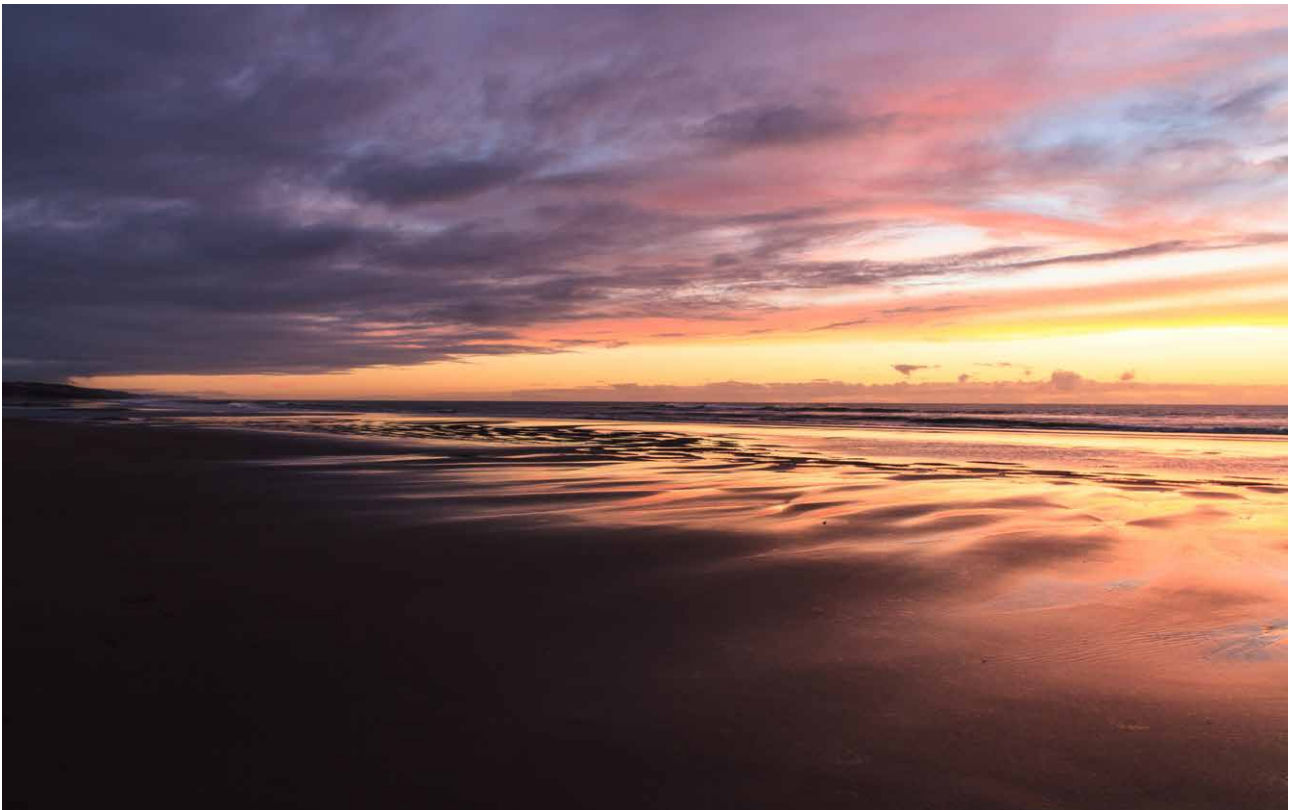
We have abbreviated some phrases for conciseness and brevity in the action plan tables below.

- › **LLE** – lived and living experience
- › **AI** – artificial intelligence

Implementation

These actions are designed to be delivered through collective effort rather than by any single organisation. Delivery will require shared responsibility across commissioners, employers, CPSLE leaders, workforce centres, and other sector partners, with different roles and skillsets brought in as needed. Implementing these actions will use a structured project approach, with each action scoped, sequenced, and progressed in partnership with the people and organisations needed to carry it forward.

Action projects will be led by CPSLE workforce members and shaped through strong connection with the wider sector, so that delivery remains grounded in lived and living experience and responsive to what is happening across the system. This approach is intended not only to complete the actions in the plan, but also to strengthen leadership capability, relationships, and workforce development as implementation unfolds.



Action plan summary

CPSLE values: Lived and living experience, Mana motuhake, Whānaungatanga, Equity, Hope, Social justice, Hauora.

Goal One: Develop knowledge, skills, and workplaces	Goal Two: Grow the workforce size, roles, and diversity	Goal Three: Leadership and partnership infrastructure
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Advisory groups sit across – Strategy and Action Plan Advisory Group, Lived Experience Addiction Leadership Group, Te Kauae Raro

Action item area	Action item area	Action item area
1.0 Actively honour Te Tiriti		
1.1 Shaping career pathways and workplace environments	2.1 Investment, workforce development, and resourcing	3.1 National professional body, and sector connectedness
1.2 Competencies and values	2.2 Data and monitoring	3.2 Enable diverse leadership at all levels of the system (amplification and elevation of LLE voice pathways)
1.3 Reflective practices including supervision, coaching, mentoring, and communities of practice	2.3 Recruitment, retention, and wellbeing	3.3 Leadership training and development
1.4 Information clearing house for mātauranga, frameworks, best practice, research, and knowledge base	2.4 Role clarification eg profiles, standards, guidelines, ethics	3.4 Dedicated outcome measures, research, and evaluation
1.5 Develop knowledge and skills for services that respond to diverse populations and intersectional LLE	2.5 Create and refresh resources including a resource hub for employers to support kaimahi	3.5 CPSLE-led, CPSLE-influenced organisations, and CPSLE governance
1.6 Training, education pathways, professional development, and career progression	2.6 Grants and scholarships	

1.0 Actively honour Te Tiriti

Action	Next Steps	Expected outputs	Timing	Expected outcomes
1.0 Uplift CPSLE workforce culture and practice to actively honour Te Tiriti through sustained learning, partnership with Māori, and creating equitable outcomes	A. Develop a dedicated Māori workforce development framework in partnership with Māori CPSLE stakeholders	› Māori workforce development framework completed	Year 2	CPSLE kaimahi are upholding Te Tiriti in their roles and day-to-day mahi
	B. Develop and implement a strategy to increase cultural responsiveness and engagement with Māori across the CPSLE workforce	› A developed strategy to increase cultural responsiveness	Year 2	
	C. Develop a resource and training that supports and upholds Te Tiriti principles for CPSLE roles	› CPSLE kaimahi have completed training that strengthens their knowledge, understanding, and capability to uphold Te Tiriti in their roles and day-to-day mahi	Years 3-4	
	D. Develop an understanding of te ao Māori frameworks and how to implement them in practice	› Kaimahi complete training and have access to te ao Māori frameworks and resources to guide CPSLE practice	Years 3-4	
	E. Te Kauae Raro to monitor the upholding of Te Tiriti principles across all action plan projects	› Te Kauae Raro meeting regularly to consider 'Taumata o te Maurea'	Years 1-5	

Goal One: Develop knowledge, skills and workplaces

CPSLE kaimahi have access to what they need to develop their knowledge and skills to be effective in their roles and services. They work in well-resourced and supportive workplaces where they are valued and respected.

Action	Next Steps	Expected outputs	Timing	Expected outcomes
1.1 Shaping career pathways and workplace environments	A. Implement findings from existing career pathways analyses. Explore enablers and barriers to entering the workforce and career progression	› Implementation of actions from the career pathways analyses	Year 1	CPSLE workers have options for career pathways and training to help them get there. CPSLE workforce and CPSLE roles are understood, valued and supported CPSLE have equitable pay and conditions structures
	B. Update training needs analysis and CPSLE training directory	› An updated training needs analysis and directory	Year 3	
	C. Create training for non-LLE managers, employers, and people leaders to understand and support the CPSLE workforce, including building and maintaining trusting reciprocal relationships across workplaces, services, and the wider sector (note this is also a step in 1.6)	› Non-LLE managers, employers, people and leaders trained about the CPSLE workforce	Year 2	
	D. Shape and curate resources on workplace well-being	› A completed website that houses CPSLE-specific workplace wellbeing resources	Year 4	
	E. Write a paper on pay and conditions for the CPSLE workforce. Work towards the inclusion of CPSLE roles in multi-employer collective agreement(s)	› A completed CPSLE pay and conditions paper	Years 4-5	
	F. Develop workplace policy hub that responds to the needs of CPSLE workers	› A completed CPSLE policy hub for employers	Year 3	

Action	Next Steps	Expected outputs	Timing	Expected outcomes
1.2 Competencies and values	A. Continue to socialise the current CPSLE competencies and values across the sector through training, forums, and roadshows. The training needs to cover how to: › implement them in your workplace › use them to progress careers › utilise and measure progress against job descriptions	› Sector engagement opportunities are provided to the sector to support awareness and implementation of the current competencies and values	Years 2 and 4	Competencies and values are used widely across CPSLE workforce to assess competence, inform policy and workforce development and guide leadership
	B. Develop a competencies self-evaluation tool	› CPSLE competencies self-evaluation tool is made available and promoted to the sector	Year 2	
	C. Refresh existing workforce development resources to reflect updated competencies and values	› Numbers of refreshed resources	Years 1-5	
1.3 Reflective practices including supervision, coaching, mentoring, and communities of practice	A. Form an implementation plan for external independent reflective practice, supervision, coaching and mentoring across the CPSLE sector. Identify barriers and formulate solutions	› Completed plan for the implementation of independent, external reflective practice	Year 2	CPSLE kaimahi are easily able to access competent LLE reflective practitioners. CPSLE kaimahi demonstrate enhanced capability, confidence, and reflective practice
	B. Develop LLE-led reflective practice training to grow numbers of CPSLE reflective practitioners	› CPSLE kaimahi trained as reflective practitioners	Year 1	
	C. Implement training for the CPSLE workforce on how to participate in various reflective practices and including how to navigate ethics and boundaries	› CPSLE kaimahi trained in how to engage in reflective practice	Year 3	
	D. Scope what effective LLE coaching and mentoring looks like	› Publish a scope describing effective LLE coaching and mentoring	Year 5	
	E. Support the ongoing formation of communities of practice	› Communities of practice established	Years 1-5	

Action	Next Steps	Expected outputs	Timing	Expected outcomes
1.4 Information clearing house for mātauranga, frameworks, effective practice, research, and knowledge base	A. Identify what effective practice and evidence-based practice looks like for CPSLE roles across mental health and addiction	› A completed paper on effective practice and evidence-based practice	Year 3	The mental health, addiction, and CPSLE workforce recognises, values, and applies evidence-based CPSLE approaches and mātauranga Māori in their practice
	B. Promote the benefits and impact of CPSLE roles to the wider mental health and addictions sectors	› Promotion of the benefits of CPSLE roles	Years 3–4	
	C. Identify and showcase relevant sector mātauranga Māori, such as: › Māori health models and frameworks › mapping the whakapapa of the Māori CPSLE workforce › exploring Māori LLE practice and whānau engagement principles	› Promotion of mātauranga Māori	Years 3–4	
1.5 Build knowledge and skills for workforce and services that respond to diverse populations and intersectional LLE	A. Develop and implement a diversity strategy for the CPSLE workforce to: › increase diverse representation across the workforce › increase cultural responsiveness and engagement for all CPSLE kaimahi › identify gaps › identify pathways for youth to progress into CPSLE workforce roles	› A completed CPSLE diversity strategy › CPSLE workers trained in cultural competency	Year 2	Tāngata whai ora and whānau experience services that are responsive to diverse needs
	B. Develop workplace policies that respond to growing Māori, Pacific, Asian, youth, older persons, Rainbow, and disabled peoples' needs for services	› Workplace policies for diverse workforce	Year 3	
	C. Create recruitment resources, scopes, and career pathways that reflect diverse services	› Completed recruitment resources, scopes, and career pathways analysis for diverse CPSLE roles	Year 2	
	D. Create additional competencies for emerging diverse roles	› Competencies updated to include diverse roles	Year 3	

Action	Next Steps	Expected outputs	Timing	Expected outcomes
1.6 Training, education pathways, professional development and career progression	A. Identify training priorities for the workforce. Develop training in line with sector priorities Note. Many training needs were identified during the consultation for this document. These are some of the priorities that are consistently described I. A training for non-LLE managers, people leaders, and employers to help them understand the CPSLE workforce II. Role-specific training for advisory and other systems roles – understanding systems and influencing change III. Role-specific training for peer support workers, particularly those entering new work environments (eg multi-disciplinary teams, crisis cafes, emergency departments, eating disorder and maternal mental health services), including navigating legislation, supported decision making, and working alongside clinical colleagues IV. Cultural responsiveness when working with tāngata whai ora and whānau from diverse and intersectional communities V. LLE essentials for tāngata whai ora and allies who are curious about the CPSLE workforce, including a whakapapa component VI. Advocacy, rights, and challenging discrimination VII. Role-specific trauma responsiveness training VIII. Digital literacy, the role of AI in CPSLE work, telehealth, and online engagement training	› Training completed for non-LLE managers, people leaders, and employers to help them understand the workforce › Training and resources completed for advisory and other systems roles to help them understand systems and influence change › Training and resources completed for peer support workers entering new work environment(s) › Training and resources on cultural responsiveness completed › Training and resources on LLE essentials completed › Trainings and resources on advocacy rights completed › Role specific trauma responsiveness training completed › Training and resources on digital literacy completed and made and made available to the sector	Years 1-5 (develop one training per year)	CPSLE kaimahi are applying knowledge skills and confidence gained from role-specific trainings into their practice
	B. Explore opportunities to create micro-credentials for the prioritised trainings	› Micro-credentials created	Years 1-5	
	C. Grow and support the role of LLE educators	› Growth in numbers of LLE educators	Year 4	

Goal Two: Grow the workforce size, roles, and diversity

CPSLE kaimahi are part of a growing, resourced and supported workforce that is responsive and focused on the needs of diverse tāngata whai ora and whānau.

Action	Next Steps	Expected outputs	Timing	Expected outcomes
2.1 Investment, workforce development, and resourcing	A. Enable responsive workforce development planning for CPSLE population groups eg Māori, youth, disabled, perinatal, forensics, eating disorders, older persons, Pacific, Asian, refugee and migrant, rainbow, rural etc	› Workforce development planning for population groupings	Years 1-5 ongoing	The CPSLE workforce is well resourced, diverse, and sustainable with strengthened LLE leadership capacity and ability to meet the needs of diverse communities and government priorities
	B. Grow the number of LLE managers and people leaders in the mental health and addiction sectors	› Emerging and current CPSLE leaders attend leadership development, mentoring, and professional learning opportunities that support their growth and professional development		
	C. Provide workforce development support to innovative programmes such as CPSLE roles that may come about due to changes to the Mental Health Act	› Workforce development support provided for CPSLE roles in new services		
2.2 Data and monitoring	A. Explore LLE data sovereignty and digital literacy for the CPSLE workforce, and the role of AI in CPSLE work alongside other CPSLE data projects	› CPSLE data sovereignty literature review	Year 4	The CPSLE workforce recognises the importance of data and upholds data sovereignty in practice Regular CPSLE workforce surveys mean the workforce is well understood and their needs identified and addressed
	B. Conduct a workforce survey › Count the workforce (full time, part time positions, regional representation) › Monitor access, barriers, and enablers to reflective practice › Measure diverse representation (eg Māori, Pacific, Asian, youth, older persons, Rainbow communities, disabled people) › Monitor numbers of CPSLE leadership roles	› Completed CPSLE workforce survey	Year 2	

Action	Next Steps	Expected outputs	Timing	Expected outcomes
2.3 Recruitment, retention, and wellbeing	A. Conduct a literature scan on LLE recruitment practices and include a piece on what culturally informed recruitment practice looks like for Māori, Pacific peoples, Asian, youth, older Persons, Rainbow communities, disabled people	› Literature scan on culturally informed recruitment practice	Year 3	A recruitment resource hub supports the CPSLE workforce to be culturally responsive and wellbeing aware with fair and equitable pay and conditions
	B. Develop a recruitment resource hub (eg job description templates, policy templates, interview templates, guides)	› Recruitment resource hub created	Year 3	
	C. Develop and showcase CPSLE workforce wellbeing resources, including guidance on burnout, vicarious trauma, moral injury, reflective practice, and psychological safety	› CPSLE workforce wellbeing resource produced	Year 4	
	D. Explore and advocate for pay and conditions, and retention issues for CPSLE workforce	› Pay, conditions, retention issues paper produced	Year 4	
	E. Develop a resource and training on how to get into the CPSLE workforce	› Resource and training on entering the workforce created	Year 2	
2.4 Role clarification, profiles, standards, guidelines and ethics	A. Continue to develop mental health and addiction CPSLE role profiles	› Role profiles	Year 1	CPSLE workers have clear role profiles that direct their roles and prevent role drift protecting the special nature of CPSLE work and roles
	B. Socialise developed role profiles across the sector including promotion of benefits of the roles to the wider sector	› Promotion of benefits to the sector of CPSLE roles	Year 1	
	C. Explore what a CPSLE code of ethics, or guidelines could look like	› Code of ethics scoping paper produced	Years 4-5	

Action	Next Steps	Expected outputs	Timing	Expected outcomes
2.5 Create and refresh resources (resource hub for employers to support CPSLE kaimahi)	A. Develop CPSLE resource hub to include: › job descriptions and profiles › orientation to role and induction guides › policies that support CPSLE workers › guides and videos about the different roles for people, whānau, and communities	› Resource hub created and promoted to the sector	Year 2	Employers demonstrate increased capability to recruit and retain CPSLE workers
	B. Refresh or review guides from previous action plan	› Refreshed resources	Years 3-5	
2.6 Grants and scholarships	A. Run regular opportunities for the CPSLE workforce to obtain study grants for relevant sector trainings and development across the mental health and addiction sectors	› Role profiles	Year 1	CPSLE workers have clear role profiles that direct their roles and prevent role drift protecting the special nature of CPSLE work and roles
	B. Scope out grants for CPSLE workforce to connect as a sector, such as attending forums and CPSLE conferences	› Promotion of benefits to the sector of CPSLE roles	Year 1	

Goal Three: Leadership and partnership infrastructure

CPSLE kaimahi lead and work in partnership at every level of government, service development and delivery to ensure that lived and living experience perspectives and wisdom inform improvement that supports best outcomes for tangata whai ora and whanau.

Action	Next Steps	Expected outputs	Timing	Expected outcomes
3.1 National professional body and sector connectedness	A. Develop a national professional body for the CPSLE workforce	› A national professional body is created	Years 3-5	The national professional body is a respected and resourced independent entity that supports the continual growth and efficacy of the CPSLE workforce
	B. Bring the sector together to implement workforce development forums, trainings, conferences, and/or roadshows	› CPSLE kaimahi participate in networking opportunities like trainings, conferences and roadshows	Bi-annually	
3.2 Enable diverse LLE leadership at all levels of the system (amplification and elevation of voice pathways)	A. As part of the workforce survey, monitor the numbers of diverse leadership roles. Analyse barriers and enablers to diverse leadership	› Monitoring of diversity in leadership roles	Year 2	There is obvious growth and recognition of LLE leadership across diverse areas of mental health and addiction services
	B. Develop training and professional development pathways tailored to diverse roles	› Diverse role trainings and pathways developed	Years 3-4	
	C. Profile diverse roles on online platforms	› Articles about diverse roles published online	Year 3	
	D. Increase supports to diverse leadership, including diverse reflective practitioners and communities of practice	› Workshops, wānanga, and advocacy activities promoting diverse reflective practitioners and communities of practice implemented	Years 4-5	

Action	Next Steps	Expected outputs	Timing	Expected outcomes
3.3 Leadership training and development	A. Develop a CPSLE governance training	› CPSLE governance training	Year 3	CPSLE kaimahi demonstrate increased capability, confidence and effectiveness in their roles through targeted trainings and development opportunities
	B. Develop a CPSLE leadership community of practice	› CPSLE leadership community of practice created	Year 4	
	C. CPSLE leadership development training for kaimahi Māori	› CPSLE leadership training for kaimahi Māori completed	Year 4	
	D. Hold a biannual conference or forum to train leaders, showcase CPSLE leadership, and highlight sector issues	› Biannual conference or forums held	Years 2-4	
3.4 CPSLE outcome measures, research and evaluation	A. Develop LLE research hub	› LLE research hub completed and promoted to the sector	Year 3	CPSLE researchers use support structures including a code of ethics and community of practice available to them CPSLE research and researchers demonstrate capability to generate, share and apply evidence that matter to tāngata whai ora and whānau
	B. Support LLE research community of practice or research group	› Meetings of community of practice and LLE research group	Ongoing	
	C. Foster and showcase CPSLE-led research, including: › Indigenous research › diverse areas research (youth, forensics, older persons, Rainbow communities, disabled communities, eating disorders, perinatal, Asian, Pacific)	› Promotion of CPSLE-led research	Years 3-5	
	D. Develop an LLE research ethics framework	› LLE research ethics framework	Years 3-5	
	E. Develop co-design e-module for the CPSLE workforce	› Co-design e-module completed, launched, and promoted to the sector	Years 3-5	
	F. Contribute to person-reported experience measure and outcome measure development work to ensure these meet the needs of tāngata whai ora and whānau	› CPSLE influence evident in ongoing experience and outcome measures work	Ongoing	

Action	Next Steps	Expected outputs	Timing	Expected outcomes
3.5 CPSLE-led, CPSLE-influenced organisations, and CPSLE governance	A. Define CPSLE-led and CPSLE-influenced organisations and networks	› Paper on the definition of CPSLE-led CPSLE-influenced organisations and networks	Year 4	The CPSLE sector demonstrates a clear understanding of CPSLE-led, CPSLE-influenced, and CPSLE governed organisations and services and information on what currently exists in our sector
	B. Conduct an analysis of what CPSLE-led and CPSLE-influenced organisations and networks exist	› Analysis of CPSLE organisations and networks completed		

Conclusion

We are so grateful to the many CPSLE kaimahi and non-CPSLE allies who contributed to the first strategy and action plan and building on that success, this new one for 2026 to 2031. The strength, enthusiasm, passion, and commitment of our workforce is undeniable, valued, and influential.

Our focus remains absolute – to ensure that people and whānau experiencing mental health and addiction challenges get what they need to grow lives that matter to them. We bring our hard-won expertise, wisdom, and compassion into everything we do and this 2026 strategy and action plan provides a new platform to build on for the future.



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