

Kō Hikurangi te maunga
Kō Waiapu te awa
Kō Ngāti Porou te iwi
Kō Uepohatu te hapu
Kō Rakaihoea te marae

Kō Karen Gallagher tāku ingoa

Tēnā koutou katoa. My introduction acknowledges my East Coast, Ngāti Porou ancestry, but I am also of Te Rarawa, (Northland) and Waikato-Tainui origins. As such I am an elected representative for Ooraeroa marae, Port Waikato on the Waikato Tainui Te Kauhanganui, the parliament of our iwi. I have also been invited to the trusteeship of Whare Oranga based in Port Waikato, which is a joint DHB and PHO funded health service.

For the past 16 years I have worked in private practice conducting driving and passenger assessments.

Following the resignation of Kevin Brown, I am honoured to undertake the role of NZAOT Council portfolio delegate for Māori Perspective. Kevin has been involved in a number of initiatives and developments with the council. As he hands over the paddle of this waka, I hope to consolidate gains he has made and contribute to ongoing discussions.

The role of Māori Perspective is currently under development, although key themes that have evolved include strategies which positively raise awareness and support best practice for Māori occupational therapists. This includes liaison and networking with Māori occupational therapists and the support of effective services to Māori.

Essential to this role, is the need to recognise and acknowledge that as a people, Māori are a broad church, being a diverse group of constituents, widely split among income and class lines. The occurrence of Māori membership to various political parties in New Zealand identifies and reinforces these points of difference. The recent inception of an alternative Māori political party further highlights this issue. Consequently as a people, Māori hold varied views and opinions, not unlike other ethnicities and cultures within Aotearoa.

Therefore at first glance the term Māori Perspective, appears relatively self explanatory and innocuous. However knowing there is much diversity within Māoridom, perspective becomes the paradox. Perspective from whom, by whom and to whom? To dismiss the notion of one size fits all, will come some way to addressing this anomaly.

The role of Māori Perspective from my position is to be a conduit for the flow of communication. Finding the fit to implement the response, or asking the question to achieve the answer, is the challenge. To positively affect our profession and the delivery of a safe and competent service both from and to Māori, requires a dynamic approach. I look forward to this

journey with the collective awahi and support from our kaumātua, our Māori rōpū, colleagues, whānaugatanga and tangata waiora.

Nō reira tihei mauri ora