

He Pu Korero

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Both your editorial and the article "... responsibility in health" page 26, April/May issue deserves further comment.

Pomare's study, 'Maori Standards of Health', December 1980, has been referred to by the author without any analysis. Furthermore, her article misrepresents the information as given in Pomare's study — "Statistics today show that Maori make up 8.6% of the total New Zealand population ..." in fact the population data was yesterday's figures of 1971. It may have been more useful to have discussed the trends of both morbidity and mortality affecting the Maori. More importantly, the article could have been more informative if she attempted to interpret the data presented.

Whilst Pomare's study provides a

comprehensive review of the health status of the Maori, his recommendations for further research on the nutritional status and eating habits, smoking habits, alcohol in relation to; nutrition, motor vehicle accidents, homicide, other accidents and injuries, ... Asthma, Cancer of stomach, breast and cervix, mental health disorders, ... must involve our people in the research field with the appropriate **funding**. The outcome of this research will then give us some ideas of what preventative programmes should be developed, such programmes could well be undertaken as a research topic in themselves.

I agree with the author where she advocates "... people to be responsible for themselves ..." so as to improve the health status of the Maori. In simple terms the definition of Health of the Maori would highlight the significance of the Wairua, the taha Maori, whanau-a-tanga, tipuna, and marae ... so that our cultural, social, physical and mental well-being may contribute to our

untapped potential as Maoris. The relevant health issues affecting the Maori today also include; Language, Bastion Point, Raglan, Land, Education, ...

It is the view of many Maoris that we should be looking at ourselves, our identity, but more importantly the world of today — development of 'our' lands, become more in tune with the business of growth and development. Such thinking is very much part of healthy living so as to foster the traditional values as determined by our tipuna.

The idea for the introduction of Maori values into the health care system may be sound in principle but to what extent will such values be acceptable to the other people? If the Wairua of the Maori is not questioned then a bilingual involvement becomes the obvious place for which the health care system will develop and flourish.

These two values must be foremost in our thinking whenever there is mention of translating values from one culture to another culture.



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