



Te Arataki Mental Health Framework moves ahead

Last year we released *Te Arataki mō te Hauora Ngākau mō ngā Mōrehu a Tū me ō rātou Whānau: The Veteran, Family and Whānau Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy Framework* — otherwise known as *Te Arataki*.

Following its release, *Te Arataki*'s project team met with over 25 government and non-government agencies. For many of those agencies, it was the first time they had participated in an in-depth discussion about veterans. From them, we heard how much they want to show their respect for veterans and acknowledge them as a client group with specific needs.

The discussions then focussed on what they could do better to understand and improve the wellbeing of veterans and their whānau. A draft Strategic Action Plan was then developed and tested with key veteran groups, and now we have a agreed Strategic Action Plan with an initial work programme.

The actions within the work programme fit into three broad themes:

1. Investigating what we know about the mental health and wellbeing of Aotearoa New Zealand's veterans and the use of veteran identifiers. This is important because without data we can't all plan together or work better together.
2. Better connecting with those veterans who may be missing out.
3. Educating/training public sector workers around veteran and whānau needs and responses and ensuring that strategies, plans and service delivery align with and support *Te Arataki*.

Some actions have already been implemented. These include extending access to transition support so that it is available for up to two years after leaving the NZDF and bringing together a veterans network.

There's a lot of work to do, but those discussions have already succeeded in putting veterans on the radar of a number of agencies that previously never considered them. Those actions and the overall response so far give us a lot of encouragement that with *Te Arataki* we have a path to improve the mental wellbeing of veterans.

Date

20 September 2023

Tags

[Health \(https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/news-events/articles/?tag=57\)](https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/news-events/articles/?tag=57)

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