



# TE RAU HINENGARO THE NEW ZEALAND MENTAL HEALTH STUDY



TE RAU HINENGARO IS THE LARGEST MENTAL HEALTH STUDY<sup>i</sup> EVER UNDERTAKEN IN NEW ZEALAND.

A TOTAL OF 2374 PACIFIC PEOPLE WERE INTERVIEWED:  
49.2% SAMOAN, 20.7% COOK ISLAND MAORI, 16.5% TONGAN AND 17.5% OTHER PACIFIC PEOPLES.  
THE OVERALL RESPONSE RATE WAS 73.3%.



### One in four Pacific people (25.0%) experienced a mental disorder in the past 12 months compared with 20.7% in the general New Zealand population.

In the past 12 months, a serious mental disorder was experienced by 5.9% of Pacific people. The most commonly reported disorders were anxiety disorders (16.2%)<sup>ii</sup>, followed by mood disorders (8.6%)<sup>ii</sup>, and substance use disorders (5.3%)<sup>ii</sup>.



### 12-month access to health service treatment is very low.

Of Pacific people with a serious mental disorder only one in four (25.0%) had a mental health visit in the health care sector compared with the general New Zealand population (58.0%).



### Suicidality is increasing amongst Pacific people.

A suicide attempt within their lifetime was reported by almost one in 20 Pacific people.



### Pacific people born in the Pacific Islands who migrate to New Zealand after the age of 18 experience far less mental disorders.

Of New Zealand born Pacific people, 31.4% had a 12-month prevalence of any mental disorder compared with 15.0% of Pacific people who migrated to New Zealand after the age of 18.



### Higher rates of hazardous alcohol use was also found to be more prevalent amongst Pacific people.

12-month reported alcohol abuse was 3.7% among Pacific people compared with 2.6% of the total New Zealand population.  
12-month alcohol dependence was 3.4% among Pacific people compared with 1.3% for the total New Zealand population.



### Having a mental disorder or substance use disorder increases the frequency of co-morbid mental disorders.

Of Pacific people with a mood disorder, 16.8% also have a substance disorder compared with 5.0% of the wider Pacific population (Table 1).

Figure 1: Cumulative lifetime risk, by disorder.

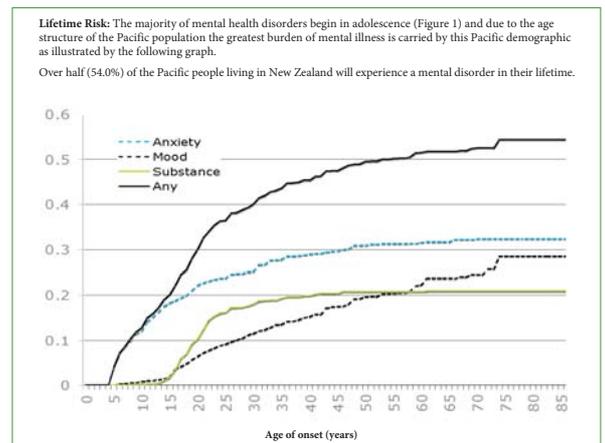


Table 1: Percentage of co-morbid mental disorder for Pacific people in the past 12 months.

Disorder group <sup>iii</sup>	Percentage 95% CI		
	Any anxiety disorder <sup>iv</sup>	Any mood disorder	Any substance use disorder
Any anxiety disorder <sup>iv</sup>		18.6 (14.4, 23.7)	13.7 (9.5, 19.4)
Any mood disorder	34.9 (26.0, 44.9)		16.8 (10.5, 25.7)
Any substance use disorder	41.8 (30.2, 54.3)	27.6 (17.9, 40.0)	
Total Population	16.2 (13.9, 18.8)	8.6 (6.8, 10.9)	5.3 (4.1, 6.8)

TE RAU HINENGARO HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT PACIFIC PEOPLE EXPERIENCE MENTAL DISORDERS AT HIGHER LEVELS THAN THE GENERAL POPULATION. THIS IS PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT AS IT IS CONTRARY TO PREVIOUS HELD BELIEFS THAT PACIFIC PEOPLE HAVE RELATIVELY LOW LEVELS OF MENTAL ILLNESS. THIS PROVIDES IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR FUTURE POLICY PLANNING. THE SURVEY ALSO FOUND THAT PACIFIC PEOPLE IN THE SURVEY WHO EXPERIENCED SERIOUS DISORDERS WERE LESS LIKELY TO ACCESS TREATMENT THAN THE TOTAL NEW ZEALAND POPULATION. THIS IS A SERIOUS CHALLENGE FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH SECTOR.

i. Foliaki S, Kokaua J, Schaff D, Tukuitonga C. Pacific people. In: Oakley Browne MA, Wells JE, Scott KM, eds. Te Rau Hinengaro: The New Zealand Mental Health and Wellbeing Survey. Wellington: Ministry of Health, 2006.

ii. Foliaki S, Kokaua J, Schaff D, Tukuitonga C, for the New Zealand Mental Health Survey Research Team. Twelve-month and lifetime prevalences of mental disorders and treatment contact among Pacific people in Te Rau Hinengaro: The New Zealand Mental Health Survey. Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry 2006; 40: 924-934.

iii. DSM-IV CIDI 3.0 disorders with hierarchy

iv. Assessed in the subsample who did the long form of the interview