

Ua tagi le fatu: Pacific families experiences of hard to reach health services

Despite a long term strategic focus and Government investment to improve health and access to services; poor health outcomes and disparities experienced by Pacific people in Aotearoa Niu Sila persist. Health researchers have shown that the health system does well in terms of efficiency, however there is considerable scope for improvement with respect to access, quality and equity - including for Pacific people.

The importance of including the perspectives and views of patients and their families in health services design, quality improvement, performance measurement and evaluation is increasingly recognised. This involves understanding the history and political contexts of Pacific people in the region and in Aotearoa Niu Sila, that are the determinants of health, social and service outcomes.

This paper presents insights from qualitative research with families, and Pacific workforce and organisational development support projects with Pacific provider organisations, that have been undertaken by Pacific Perspectives. The projects have used Pacific talanoa methods so that patients and their families were able to tell the stories focusing on the things that mattered to them. This was combined with research and evaluation approaches, to explore how service contexts influence outcomes. The projects show the importance of including Pacific ways of knowing; and Pacific values, perspectives and experiences in policy and service design and improvement initiatives and evaluation; and how these can be used to improve health outcomes in the future.