

New Zealand communities` response to COVID-19

Sho Isogai

Aotearoa New Zealand is at alert level 4/Eliminate and in lockdown. The Government declared a state of national emergency in late March 2020. Educational facilities and non-essential businesses are closed and people required to stay in their households.

Various community development approaches are being used to respond to COVID-19 in Aotearoa. Government organisations are applying a social planning model to create initiatives to support the public during the lockdown period. The Unite against COVID-19 website¹, welfare information², social services guidance³, employer wage-subsidies⁴, and grant funds⁵ support businesses, startups/social enterprises, social services and the public. Government ministries provide regular updates and professional/expert advice on COVID-19 to the public via social media⁶. Local governments are focused on providing essential/lifeline services to the public, such as drinking water and other public amenities.⁷

Many charities/NGOs are using a community-led development approach. Seeds Podcast produces YouTube videos on the collective charity/NGO sector response to COVID-19⁸. Philanthropy New Zealand has published an open letter⁹ on the current situation outlining principles for philanthropists/grant-makers. Community housing organisations such as Community Housing Aotearoa¹⁰ and Te Matapihi¹¹ are working closely with government organisations and actively supporting their members through the lockdown period. The Real Estate Institute of New Zealand (REINZ) has produced online assistance and advocacy to support members` businesses and property management¹².

The mental health and addiction body (Platform Trust¹³) and workforce centre (Te Pou) have been re-developing training and guidance¹⁴ into online formats to meet emerging workforce needs among community providers. Mental health organisations such as Changing Minds¹⁵ are using social media

¹ <https://covid19.govt.nz/>

² <https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/MOH-COVID-19-Welfare-Info-Sheet-A4-v3.pdf>

³ <https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/newsroom/2020/covid-19/the-latest-guidance-and-information-for-all-social-services.html>

⁴ <https://covid19.govt.nz/government-actions/financial-support/>

⁵ <https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/newsroom/2020/covid-19/community-awareness-and-preparedness-grant-fund.html>

⁶ <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

⁷ <https://www.lgnz.co.nz/news-and-media/2020-media-releases/strong-local-response-to-covid-19-displays-community-spirit/>

⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nz2RkDp4ZRU> and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3HYr_YLbDgM

⁹ <https://philanthropy.org.nz/covid-19-and-philanthropy-open-letter/?fbclid=IwAR1oytwOSNK42HG0BM221Yk3HonqOvI-anqbtQ5PWWEIWzrC3xdWeLQdWcE>

¹⁰ <https://my.send.net.nz/t/ViewEmail/r/EAC9AAA1A01D7F8C2540EF23F30FEDED/FBF06D6E8D5981ACAF060D655554232> and <https://my.send.net.nz/t/ViewEmail/r/D1C2A062F7F643D12540EF23F30FEDED/FBF06D6E8D5981ACAF060D655554232>

¹¹ <https://tematapihi.squarespace.com/s/2020-03-25-COVID-19-Pandemic-Response.pdf>

¹² https://www.blog.reinz.co.nz/blog/reinz-issues-further-update-covid-19?fbclid=IwAR1YlqWuhNc0XuNFVORAcMwX8oz7fxiruHNd1Y_O44UkYnky6u7bSrKRI6U and http://www.flexisign.co.nz/?fbclid=IwAR2tXq_wN3kjTtFptawLiRFx57OoefYIij_Reyzk8qPTFmJlFfs-lfx8nlo

¹³ <https://www.platform.org.nz/covid-19>

¹⁴ https://www.tepou.co.nz/initiatives/covid-19/253?utm_source=Te+Pou+and+Matua+Raki&utm_campaign=842004886f-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_01_31_12_57_COPY_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_61074e4163-842004886f-46132257

¹⁵ <https://changingminds.org.nz/>

to actively inform their communities on their services, campaigns (i.e. Getting through together¹⁶) and/or support¹⁷ regarding COVID-19¹⁸. Kaupapa Māori¹⁹ and Pacific people's²⁰ community organisations are taking proactive cultural leadership in their communities, while Rainbow YOUTH is continuing its support services for queer, gender diverse and intersex youth²¹ - with well-practiced in peer support throughout this period.

Community-based organisations and business networks are taking a sustainable community development approach. The Ākina Foundation has published a COVID-19 recovery article²² to support social/impact enterprises across the country. Sustainability and waste-management organisations such as Sustainability Business Network (SBN)²³ and Zero Waste Network (ZWN)²⁴ offer support to local businesses and/or enterprises.

A centralised government and NGO working-group in response to the COVID-19 is working in the domestic family and sexual violence sector. The Family Violence Clearinghouse²⁵ and the COVID-19 website²⁶ have created a central platform for all COVID-19 resource page. A social media campaign, called Catch yourself was created by Le Va²⁷. In the disability sector, organisations such as Disability Connect have undertaken initiatives to co-ordinate the delivery of donated groceries and care-packages for people with disabilities and their families via disability NGO's collectives and volunteers.²⁸

Migrants^{29, 30} and refugees³¹, deaf³², blind/low-vision³³, aged-care³⁴, international development³⁵, volunteering³⁶, and business/investment³⁷ sectors and communities are also actively tackling COVID-

¹⁶ <https://www.allright.org.nz/campaigns/getting-through-together>

¹⁷ <https://www.jazzthornton.com/post/fighting-mental-illness-during-covid-19?fbclid=IwAR0vEe1dvLc4l7JHe13UrKv8zX72jqGRfTfpTB-bNrwGvFQegITfg5Toi4c>

¹⁸ <https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/get-help/covid-19/wellbeing-for-frontline-health-workers/>

¹⁹ <https://terauora.com/news/respect-the-rahui/>

²⁰ <http://pasifikafutures.co.nz/covid-19-support/>

²¹ <https://ry.org.nz/what-we-do/covid-19-support>

²² <https://www.akina.org.nz/covid19>

²³ <https://sustainable.org.nz/sustainable-business-and-covid-19/> or <https://mailchi.mp/sustainable/nprw19f7gs-875871?e=fe338f83e5>

²⁴ <http://zerowaste.co.nz/covid-19-advice-and-resources/> or <https://mailchi.mp/0834cbdf09ef/zero-waste-news-action-from-aotearoa-6396408?e=6b5c87d249>

²⁵ <https://nzfvc.org.nz/covid-19>

²⁶ <https://covid19.govt.nz/individuals-and-households/health-and-wellbeing/family-violence-and-sexual-violence-prevention/>

²⁷ <https://www.leva.co.nz/our-work/catchyourself>

²⁸ <https://disabilityconnect.org.nz/covid-19-updates-and-information/>

²⁹ <https://naumainz.studyinnewzealand.govt.nz/help-and-advice/healthcare/the-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know>

³⁰ <https://www.belong.org.nz/covid19-resources?fbclid=IwAR1k89zXYZ818Ke62Jh15lpNWSvXLfqYIjsxjWi959Zf0UjQYLjJSTUkCrS>

³¹ <https://rasnz.co.nz/covid-19-resources/>

³² <https://www.deaf.org.nz/covid-19/>

³³ <https://blindlowvision.org.nz/community/covid-19-updates/>

³⁴ <https://nzaca.org.nz/covid-19/>

³⁵ <https://www.cid.org.nz/connect/news/covid-19-cid-update-april-3/>

³⁶ <https://www.volunteeringnz.org.nz/home/vnzs-response-to-covid-19-essential-services-volunteering/>

³⁷ https://www.aucklandnz.com/news/business-resources-during-covid-19?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=covid19-business&utm_content=body&cldee=c2hvbWF0dGVycyAyMDJAZ21haWwY29t&recipientid=contact-42e3fc16e532e6119425005056ae049e-6511ad47ed35474da48376dac5e592cd&utm_source=ClickDimensions&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ED%20-%20COVID-19&esid=0264832f-4c78-ea11-a811-000d3a6aacaf and https://www.manaaki.io/?cldee=c2hvbWF0dGVycyAyMDJAZ21haWwY29t&recipientid=contact-42e3fc16e532e6119425005056ae049e-6511ad47ed35474da48376dac5e592cd&utm_source=ClickDimensions&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ED%20-%20COVID-19&esid=0264832f-4c78-ea11-a811-000d3a6aacaf

19 in Aotearoa. Powerful local/national responses to global challenge are exemplified in various sectors and communities at all levels in Aotearoa.

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