WALKING IN ANOTHER'S SHOES
te ao ki ōu karu

NEW ZEALAND DEMENTIA FOUNDATION

Dementia Canterbury

CONNECTING
CULTURE
AND CARE



Introducing Māori elders

Simple tips

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY MĀORI?

Māori are the indigenous people / first people that settled in Aotearoa New Zealand. 'Tangata whenua' literally means 'people of the land'.

WHAT MIGHT BE IMPORTANT?

Māori elders can be different from each other and everyone is unique. There are differences between individuals, whānau (family groups), across tribes, and between generations. Some values that are often important are:

- The relationship (whakawhanaungatanga) is incredibly important. Being genuinely interested when engaging with the individual and whānau will help strengthen your relationship. Remember trust may take time to develop.

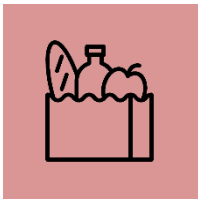
- Manākitanga is about hospitality and kindness. This includes welcoming and looking after guests by offering hospitality, generosity, and mutual respect. This may mean accepting a cup of tea when talking or taking your shoes off before going into a house.

- It is important is to ask about preferences and follow what has been said.



Tapu

People, places, events and objects can be tapu (sacred or restricted) and these should not be interfered with. Everything associated with the human body can be considered tapu, especially the head. Toanga are valuables, be careful when handling or removing these items.



Noa

Noa is the opposite of tapu and refers to ordinary, everyday things such as food. Tapu and noa should be kept separated. That's why you should avoid sitting on pillows and touching or passing food over a person's head.



Whānau

Depending on the situation, whānau can be close family, extended family, or even a group that the person belongs to. It can be very important to the person that their whānau is involved. Be sensitive to family roles, such as who makes decisions and who is appropriate to be involved.

Understanding

Mate wareware (dementia) may be considered as not an illness or a disease, but rather as part of a spiritual journey and as a normal consequence of growing old and preparation for joining tupuna (ancestors).

Traditionally, Māori have kept their older family members at home and taken care of them. However, with the demands of the present world this is not always possible, whānau can be riddled with feelings of guilt that they should be caring for their family member when they just can't.

> "For us as Māori with dementia... spiritually they are having a conversation... hallucination is the Pākehā word for it... but for some Māori it is actually physically seeing their tipuna (ancestor)...
>
> Whānau don't always have the resources to cope... not that they don't want to but that they don't have the resources to cope and sometimes the skills... whānau coping mechanisms and resources can be limited...

Some helpful phrases

Words can be broken into bits, this makes it easier to say. Usually the bits are two or three letter long.
Mōrena = Mo / re / na (morning) Whakarongo = Wha/ ka/ ro/ ngo (listen

"Hello"		"Thank you"		"Goodbye"	
Phrase	Pronunciation	Phrase	Pronunciation	Phrase	Pronunciation
Kia ora	kee-ah or-ah	**Kia ora**	kee-ah or-ah	**E noho rā** (said when you leave)	Eh naw-haw raah
Mōrena (good morning)	more-eh-nah			**Ka kite anō** (See you later)	Ka kee-tay ar-naw
tēnā koe (more formal to 1 person)	te-nah ko-eh			**Haere ra** (Said when they leave)	high-reh rah
tēnā kōrua (more formal to 2 or more)	ten-ah kor-roo ah				

Pronunciation tips: **Vowel sounds** a, e, i, o, u. A dash above the letter makes it into a long sound, and this can change the meaning of the word.

Short

- a as in about
- e as in entry
- i as in eat
- o as in ordinary
- u as in to

Long

- ā as in car
- ē as in led
- ī as in sheep
- ō as in store
- ū as in boot

Your Māori clients and families won't expect you to know everything about Māori culture, but they will appreciate that you are making an effort. Lead with your heart, be open and observant and if in doubt ask.
The Mate Wareware app and website provides an introduction to dementia from a Māori perspective.
Quotes in the 'Understanding' section have been drawn from Marie Townsend (2011)