

Māori Health Review™

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Making Education Easy

Inequities in provision of seizure care across the Wellington Region

Authors: Joshi P et al.

Summary: These researchers conducted a retrospective review of 250 consecutive adult patients (aged ≥ 16 years) presenting to Wellington Hospital and Hutt Hospital Emergency Departments (EDs) with the primary diagnosis of a seizure between 11 February 2013 and 30 December 2013. Patient electronic records were examined to determine the proportion of patients discussed with the inpatient neurology team and referred to the neurology outpatient clinic. A significantly higher proportion of the patients presenting to Wellington Hospital ED with a seizure were referred to neurology, compared with those presenting to Hutt Hospital ED (52% vs 13.6%; $p < 0.0001$). Similarly, the proportion of 'first seizure' patients referred to neurology was 63.2% for Wellington Hospital versus 9.8% for Hutt Hospital ($p < 0.0001$). The difference in referral rates was primarily attributable to the difference in inpatient referrals. Māori were over-represented in the patients presenting to ED with a seizure, compared to their population composition: 16% of the seizure patients presenting to Wellington Hospital were Māori, compared to the population composition of 11.1%; 22% of the seizure patients presenting to Hutt Hospital were Māori, compared to the population composition of 17.8%.

Comment: I've included this paper as this is the first study I'm aware of that has looked at epilepsy and Māori. These findings and the fact that risk factors for epilepsy are higher for Māori than non-Māori (such as brain injury) would suggest that epilepsy is a major health issue for Māori. The impacts on work, school, driving and quality of life deserve further investigation.

Reference: *N Z Med J.* 2015;128(1417):30-5

[Abstract](#)

Independent commentary by Dr Matire Harwood

Dr Matire Harwood (Ngapuhi) has worked in Hauora Māori, primary health and rehabilitation settings as clinician and researcher since graduating from Auckland Medical School in 1994. She also holds positions on a number of boards, committees and advisory groups including the Health Research Council. Matire lives in Auckland with her whānau including partner Haunui and two young children Te Rangiura and Waimarie.

Research Review publications are intended for New Zealand health professionals.

Disclaimer: This publication is not intended as a replacement for regular medical education but to assist in the process. The reviews are a summarised interpretation of the published study and reflect the opinion of the writer rather than those of the research group or scientific journal. It is suggested readers review the full trial data before forming a final conclusion on its merits.

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TATAU KAHUKURA: MĀORI HEALTH CHART BOOK 2015 (3RD EDITION)

The Ministry of Health released *Tatau Kahukura: Māori Health Chart Book 2015 (3rd Edition)* on 9th October. The chart book provides a snapshot of Māori health in the early 2010s. This chart book, like previous editions, presents key indicators relating to the socioeconomic determinants of health, risk and protective factors for health, health status, health service use and the health system. The most recent data available for each indicator was used. The indicators align to those used in more general annual monitoring at a national level.

The chart book shows that Māori have higher rates than non-Māori for many health conditions and chronic diseases, including cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and asthma. Māori also experience higher disability rates.

The Ministry intends to continue to update this profile of Māori health regularly (every three to five years).



Hard copies of the chart book can be ordered from the Ministry website www.health.govt.nz.

The publication is also available to download with the full suite of data tables.

For more information, please go to <http://www.maorihealth.govt.nz>

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