Māori experiences of aphasia therapy: “But I’m from Hauiti and we’ve got shags”

Authors: McLellan KM et al.

Summary: This assessment of Māori experiences of aphasia therapy sought to determine what makes a service culturally safe as well as “accessible to and culturally appropriate for” Māori with aphasia and their whānau. In-depth semi-structured interviews were undertaken with 11 Māori with aphasia and 23 of their nominated whānau members. They reported a wide variety of experiences of aphasia therapy, embedded within 6 themes: We’re happy to do the work, but we can’t do it alone; Relationship; Our worldview; The speech-language therapy setting; Aphasia resources; and Is this as good as it gets? While some Māori with aphasia reportedly received an accessible and culturally appropriate service, others did not. The paper highlights the importance of a strong therapeutic relationship for Māori with aphasia. It advises that therapy will be successful when there is collaboration between the clinician and whānau, with therapy resources that affirm the identity of the person with aphasia.

Comment: Okay, a bit of a plug for my PhD student (who passed her exam last month, congratulations Karen!). Seriously however, speech therapy is an area often critiqued by Māori with stroke and their whānau. This study has shed light on the good and bad; plans are underway to refine or address these in ways that improve speech therapy and outcomes for Māori.


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.

Wharekauri, Rēkohu, Chatham Islands Health and Social Needs

In January a report on the health and social needs of Chatham Islanders was released. The Ministry of Health funded the report as part of its commitment to Whānau Ora and the Chatham Islands Māori health provider Ha O Te Ora O Wharekauri Trust.

This report is available for download from the Ministry of Health website http://www.health.govt.nz/publication/wharekauri-rekohu-chatham-islands-health-and-social-needs

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

www.maorihealthreview.co.nz