

Using a national database to address inequity in psychosocial services for Māori cancer patients

Cancer Psychological and Social Support Service (CPSSS)

Asheel Ramanlal | Data nerd | Te Aho o Te Kahu



Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua.

I walk backwards into the future with my eyes fixed on the past.

Fewer cancers | Better survival | Equity for all

He Tangata (people at the centre)

What the national database (via the web tool) tells us about people referred to the CPSSS service

Tikanga (values in action)

How we uphold Tikanga values across the national system through a lens of national database and web tool

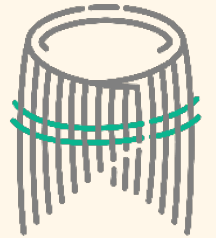
Te whero (purpose)

The why: the Kaupapa of the CPSSS national database



Te Aho

The central thread in the weave



Disclaimer: **He wāhanga nō te kete mātauranga te raraunga, ehara i te katoa.**
Data is part of the knowledge basket, not the whole

Fewer cancers | Better survival | Equity for all

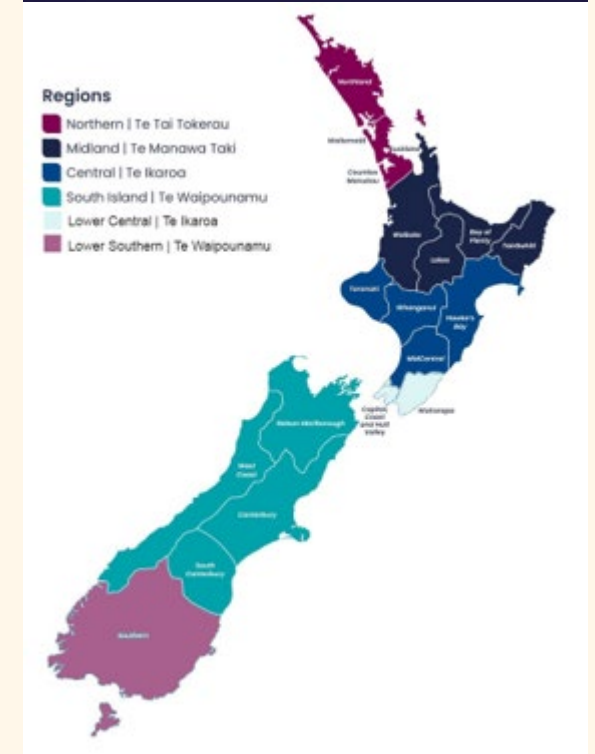
Te whero Tikanga He Tangata

*The why: the Kaupapa of CPSSS
national database*

That national database contains data collected by the CPSSS to support:

- Improving cancer patient and whānau **experience and access to timely psychosocial support.**
- Delivering a **nationally consistent service.**
- Prioritising **complex needs and communities facing access barriers.**

We use a **protected web tool** to present the national database and gives **visibility on how, who and where people receive support.**



Te whero
Tikanga
He Tangata

The values guiding us in the development of the national database and web tool:

Ōritetanga

(equity by design)

Kotahitanga

(integrated & connected care)

Kaitiakitanga

(responsible stewardship)

Manaakitanga

(respectful and safe use)

Whanaungatanga

(partnership & collaboration)

How we uphold Tikanga values across the national system through a lens of national database & web tool

Rangatiratanga underpins these values

It is the current that runs through these expressions of Tikanga.

Te whero
Tikanga
He Tangata

How we uphold Tikanga values across the national system through a lens of national database & web tool

Maintaining the national database's data and information flow:

1. **Service providers (District)**

Service providers submitted on quarterly basis.

2. **Secure transfers**

Client level data is received via Secure File Transfer Protocols



3. **Data Quality Assurance (QA)**

Meeting QA standards

5. **Dashboard reporting**

Insights are visualised through interactive dashboards at national and district level.

4. **Data processing and analysis**

Ensure data accuracy, consistency and readiness for reporting



Disclaimer: He wāhanga nō te kete mātauranga te raraunga, ehara i te katoa.

Te whero Tikanga **He Tangata**

*What the national database (via the web tool) **tells us about our patients referred to the CPSSS service***

How many referrals?

- **4,500 referrals in 2025** compared with 3,900 in 2021

Who?

- **~60% female**, ~40% male
- **18.2% Māori**, 6.2% Pacific, 7.9% Asian, 67.7% European/Other
- **76.3% urban**, 23.7% rural
- The highest proportion of patients seen in the service **have haematological cancer (19.7%), breast cancer at (17%)**
- **~9.9% proportion of patient in cancer register** who received support from CPSS



Disclaimer: He wāhanga nō te kete mātauranga te raraunga, ehara i te katoa.

Te whero Tikanga **He Tangata**

*What the national database (via the web tool) **tells us about our patients referred to the CPSSS service***

Who makes the referral?

- **~94% from hospital**

When are people referred?

- **~64% when receiving treatment**, ~22% at confirmed diagnosis, pre-treatment

When are we seeing people?

- Time taken to initial assessment **median 9 days in 2025** (cf. 7 days in 2021) and **median 68 days in 2025** (cf. 42 in 2021) in service duration



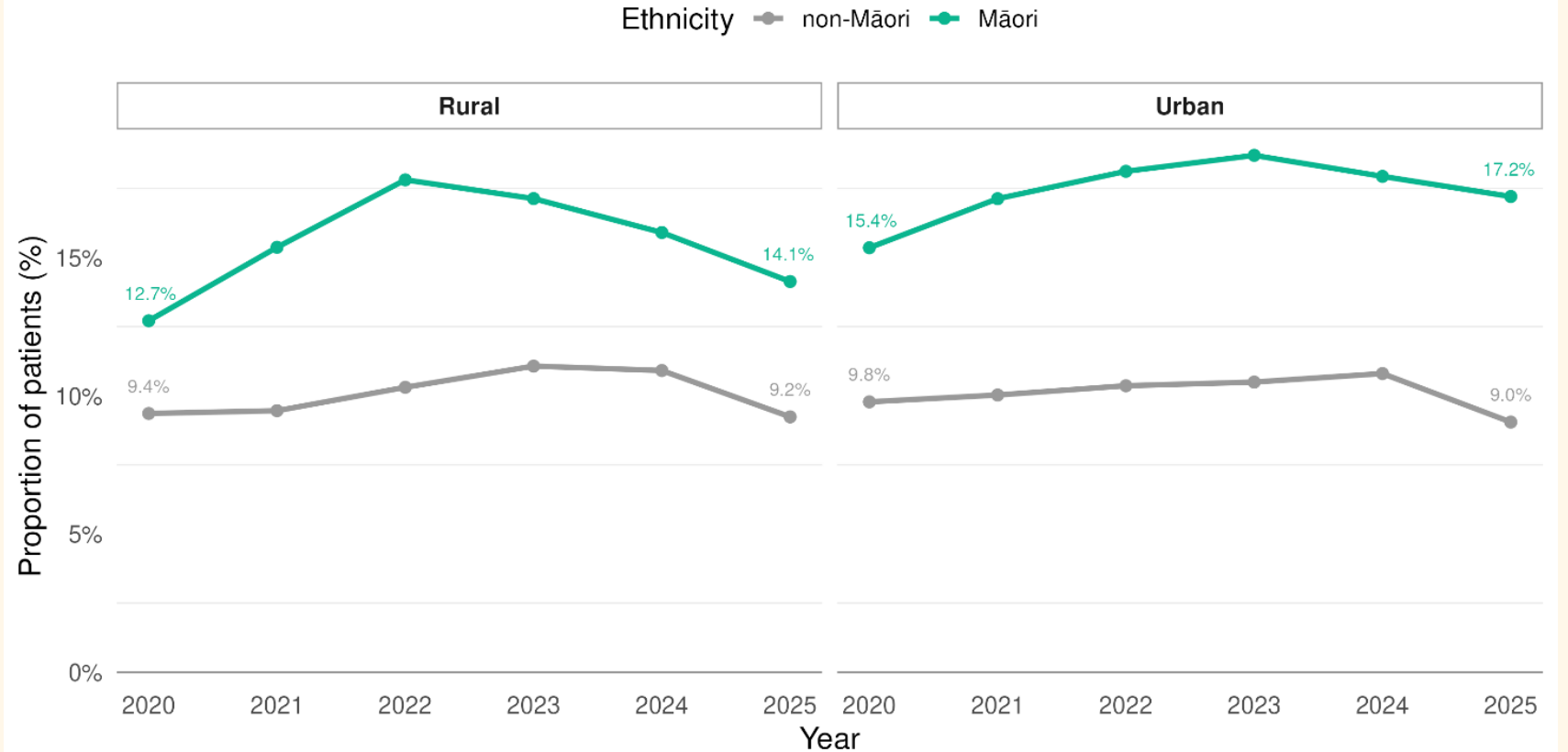
Disclaimer: He wāhanga nō te kete mātauranga te raraunga, e hara i te katoa.

Te whero Tikanga He Tangata

Insights from the national database examining referral rates by year, ethnicity, and rurality.

Figure 1.1: Proportion of patients on cancer registry who received CPSSS support

Trends in treatment-to-referral rates for Māori and non-Māori across rural and urban settings, 2020–2025.



Data sourced from the CPSSS Dashboard Data at 24/03/2026



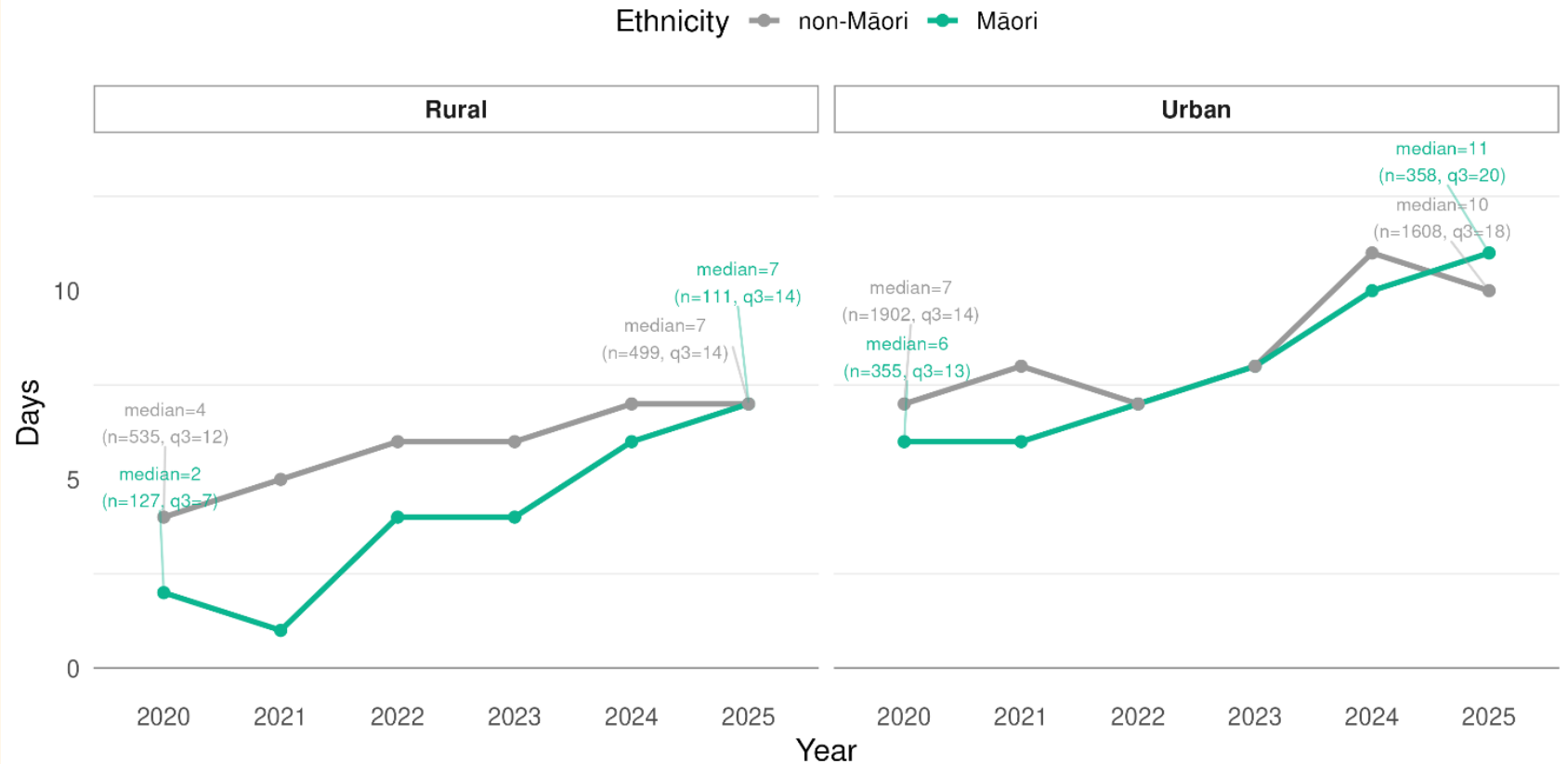
Disclaimer: He wāhanga nō te kete mātauranga te raraunga, ehara i te katoa.

Te whero Tikanga He Tangata

Insights from the national database examining days from referral to assessment by year, ethnicity, and rurality.

Figure 1.2: Days taken from referral to initial CPSSS assessment

Trends in medians for Māori and non-Māori across rural and urban settings, 2020–2025.



Data sourced from the CPSSS Dashboard Data at 24/03/2026 | n = number of records | q3 = 75th percentile

Take home messages

- Data is part of the knowledge basket, not the whole.
- Overall increases in referrals to CPSSS observed with some new patterns emerging and some remaining stabilised.
- The national database and webtool helps:
 - Improve visibility of referral patterns to encourage more **equitable referrals for Māori cancer patients**.
 - Encouraging data and information users to **continually self-assess unconscious bias**.
 - By having **clear Tikanga (societal lore) values woven throughout the data & analytical workflow**.

Using a national
database to address
inequity in
psychosocial
services for Māori
cancer patients

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi,
engari he toa takitini

*My strength is not mine alone, but the
strength of many.*

Ngā mihi

References

Te Aho o Te Kahu. (2026, March 13). *Cancer Psychological and Social Support Service Dashboard (in development)*. https://minhealthnz.shinyapps.io/CPSS-Dashboard-draft-v2/_w_606b316fcec2421486d210a73372601f/

Traditional Māori proverb. (n.d.). In *Te Ara – The Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. Retrieved from <https://teara.govt.nz>

Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora. (2025, May 22). *Cancer Psychological & Social Support Services celebrates a decade*. <https://www.tewhatauora.govt.nz/news-and-updates/cancer-psychological-and-social-support-services-celebrates-a-decade>

