***Hauiti Hauora:*** **A Case Study of establishing a Rural Māori**

**Health Promotion Service on the East Coast on the North island of New Zealand**

**Introduction**

As signal by the Maori part of the title, this is a research by an Indigenous Maori health promoter, on an Indigenous health provider.

This study examines and explains the community development and tikanga Māori approaches that underpinned the establishment of Hauiti Hauora, a unique example of a Māori led health promotion service that promotes health and wellbeing using tikanga Māori principles and values alongside education and prevention programmes to improve the wellbeing of whanau (extended family) and hapū (sub-tribe).

**Objectives**

The objectives of this case study are to document and explain the key social and cultural issues that influenced the community development processes used by the founding members to establish and develop their health promotion service, Hauiti Hauora; and how the community of Tolaga Bay has managed its community development process over the last twenty years.

The use of community development processes in health promotion is well documented and in general, collaborative partnership approaches between people, communities, organisations and the health sector are a prominent strategy for community health improvement. This study by contrast has aimed to highlight a wholly community inspired approach, and the points of difference by investigating the community development process undertaken by this community, to identify what social and cultural frameworks were used, and how the process was managed.

Furthermore, the study explores what motivated key people to initiate change and what conditions were prevailing at the time that influenced their decision making. The value of this research is in its potential to contribute to other rural Māori communities who may find usefulness in stimulating change from the ‘bottom up’.

**Methods**

This study is a qualitative research, using an intrinsic case study approach that is bounded, and assumes a kaupapa Māori theoretical position.

**Results**

The key findings of this research, include the important role that decolonisation and cultural frameworks played in a self-primed community development process, and articulate a Māori theoretical construct that may help to guide Māori health promotion practice in the future.

**Conclusion**

The study confirms that one of the key social influences in the development of the Hauiti Hauora was a cultural shift occurring for Māori throughout the country that included a movement of decolonisation training. Another key social influence was when the New Zealand Government’s health care reforms facilitated an opportunity to obtain health promotion contracts during this period. Cultural influences were intricately woven into and embedded in the work that they undertook, with the vision of self-determination adding underlying impetus. Cultural frameworks and tools were used in the management of the process.