|  |
| --- |
| **Cultivating health and wellbeing for learning in school communities through courageous conversations: outcomes and case studies from Waitemata District Health Board’s Health Promoting Schools (HPS) service** |
| **Setting** International evidence shows healthy children achieve better educational outcomes, which leads to improved health in later life. HPS is a global initiative using a community development approach to support school communities address their health and wellbeing (H & W) priorities. In NZ, the Ministry of Health funds HPS. DHBs/Public Health Units deliver HPS locally to >1500 schools (Year 1-8). Low-decile schools/kuras and those with >35% Māori &/or Pasifika rolls are prioritised. Underpinning values: Te Tiriti o Waitangi (partnership, participation and protection), Whanaugatanga (strengthening relationships), Kotahitanga (partnerships in learning, reciprocity) and Rangatiratanga (uplifting, growing, leadership).  **Intervention** Across Waitemata, HPS Advisors offer support to principals and senior leaders in 52 priority schools (combined rolls >11,000). HPS Advisors add value by facilitating critical conversations and progressing schools through a HPS inquiry cycle. This entails: reflective practice; gathering a range of voices and evidence; establishing baselines and desired results; linking to evidence-based H & W resources; driving actions most likely to achieve results; and monitoring and measuring progress. A HPS self-review tool supports schools to identify health and wellbeing priorities.  **Outcomes** Since July 2017, positive outcomes in schools include: increased knowledge; improved/gained new skills; shift in attitudes; new practices adopted; behaviour change; improved staff hauora/wellbeing; and improved student achievement.  Case study 1 showed improved mental health across school community evidenced by reduction in minor behavioural incidents and increased ratings on staff and student wellbeing surveys. New classroom practices were adopted, student and staff voice was collected regularly, whānau were involved, and professional development provided.  Case study 2 showed a whole-of-school approach to nutrition. Whānau-led community garden produced nutritional foods, healthier foods at meetings, students actively engaged in nutrition programmes, water as the preferred drink, and new nutrition education was integrated with community support. Both Case Studies are from decile 2 schools with >70% Māori/Pasifika rolls.  **Implications** Courageous, challenging and critical conversations with principals and school leaders coupled with progression through the HPS Health & Wellbeing for Learning inquiry cycle have achieved positive and sustainable outcomes.  **Preferred presentation format** Oral |