



Research Project Impact Case Study

He Tūāpapa Hauora: Housing-Related Health Outcomes in Te Tai Tokerau:
A Mixed Methods Study “A foundation for health”

Key researchers

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Introduction

The project has achieved significant momentum during the last few months of 2025, demonstrating science excellence through the integration of kaupapa Māori methodologies, epidemiological rigour, and extensive iwi and sector engagement. Substantial progress has been made across both the quantitative and qualitative data streams.

Research activities

The quantitative workstream completed the full cleaning and structuring of the NMDS hospitalisation dataset, a critical foundation for accurately quantifying the burden of housing-related infectious diseases in Te Tai Tokerau. Cleaning steps included removing ineligible records, grouping transfer sequences, merging NHI demographic fields, and assigning ICD-10 codes into the study's infectious disease categories. Initial case counts have been generated, and the next phase will analyse demographic patterns, compare Northland to national trends, and calculate population-adjusted rates. This level of epidemiological precision positions the project to produce one of the strongest Māori-led housing–health datasets in Aotearoa.

In parallel, the sector survey launched at the International Indigenous and National Māori Housing Conference generated 150 responses to date. This dataset provides rich insight into housing conditions, infection risk drivers and system readiness across housing providers, CHPs, health services, social service organisations, and local government partners. The breadth of respondents reflects strong sector engagement and national recognition of the project's significance.

The community survey underwent a robust kaupapa Māori testing and refinement process with 13 iwi and hapū and 9 NGOs/community providers. The launch was intentionally delayed until two large health providers and the Iwi Māori Partnership Board completed their review and approved the final version. Their endorsement ensures that the survey upholds local tikanga, respects whānau realities, and protects Māori data sovereignty. The survey went live late last week and is now ready for broad distribution across Te Tai Tokerau.

Impact

Overall, the project is already achieving meaningful early outcomes:

- strengthened iwi-led research governance and capability
- increased collaboration between housing, health, and social sectors nationally and globally.
- enhanced visibility of housing as a public health issue
- strong demand for participation from communities and providers
- creation of a high-quality, mixed-methods dataset that will inform policy, investment, and service design.

The integration of all datasets will result in one of the most comprehensive housing–health evidence platforms available in Aotearoa, grounded in Māori leadership, mātauranga, and lived experience.