

Building a Pacific health workforce in New Zealand: Initial findings from a transition project in first year health sciences at university. A practice report

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Abstract

Pacific peoples are a migrant minority ethnic group in New Zealand. They suffer disproportionately from poor health and education outcomes compared to the total population, and share similar socio-economic challenges with Māori the indigenous people of New Zealand. Improving education outcomes can contribute to improving health outcomes. Pacific peoples are poorly represented in the health workforce. The Pacific Orientation Programme at Otago (POPO) initiative is a new programme seeking to provide a holistic approach to improving academic outcomes for Pacific students in health sciences in New Zealand. The programme involved setting up systems for support, monitoring performance and addressing concerns early in the first year at university. This article outlines the development of the programme, lessons learnt, and early indications of its usefulness in improving academic outcomes for Pacific students studying first year health sciences at university.

The full Nuts & Bolts appears in Volume 2, Issue 2 of 'The International Journal of the First Year in Higher Education'

<https://www.fyhe.com.au/journal/index.php/intifyhe/article/viewFile/88/93>