

Understanding non-attendance for Māori at ophthalmologist and related eye clinics

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ANZEF Grant Round 2025 Recipient

A recent audit of missed Orthoptic and Optometry clinic appointments in Auckland from 29/7/24 – 23/8/24 identified that 94 (18%) of child patients either missed their appointments or cancelled on the same day of their appointment. Follow up from this indicated that parents were either unavailable or their contact numbers were not working. Broken down by ethnicity, a large proportion of non-attendees were Māori; this group also had low responses to follow-up surveys and phone calls regarding reasons for non-attendance.

However, data has not yet been collated in a systematic fashion within and across regions, nor do we have robust research undertaken with Māori whānau that explores the barriers and facilitators of child attendance at eye clinics. With limited existing data on clinic non-attendance for whānau Māori, it highlights the urgent need for culturally relevant and appropriate engagement.



Establishing the first nation wide baseline of Māori child ophthalmology attendance and developing a community-led plan to address barriers and strengthening engagement.



This project brings together a diverse team from community organisations and paediatric services (ophthalmology, orthoptists) to build a stronger community and clinical understanding of the reasons behind non-attendance rates for Māori at ophthalmologic and related eye clinics across Aotearoa New Zealand.

Data will be gathered from 13 public hospitals and 3 public/private partnership clinics to establish the first baseline attendance rate for Māori children aged 0–14 years. Using this evidence, the research team will develop a community-based participatory action research proposal to identify and address barriers, while enhancing the factors that support whānau Māori engagement with ophthalmologic services nationwide.



Images used with parental consent

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