

He aha te matepukupuku? A mātauranga Māori view of 'what is cancer'

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Ko taku nei whakapae:

Ko te tinana he pā

Ko te puku he hapū

Ka ora, ka mate

This presentation aims to discuss the findings in my thesis; he aha te matepukupuku e ai ki te tirohanga Māori?

Cancer is one of the leading causes of death in Aotearoa, and Māori have an overall higher incidence and mortality rate. Although cancer is disproportionately borne by Māori there is limited understanding of cancer from a mātauranga Māori view.

By its own virtue this masters' thesis written in Te Reo Māori, sheltered and protected by Te Wānanga o Raukawa and based on mātauranga Māori is both an interrogation of colonialism but also an unapologetic challenge to the medical academy that cancer research for Māori does not belong to biomedical science.

This thesis sought to explore the following urupounamu:

- a) He aha tēnei mea te matepukupuku?
- e) He aha te whakapapa o te mate pukupuku?

The hanganga (methodology) was founded on mātauranga Māori and included interpretation of tohu, a literature review of Māori health text and wānanga with Māori across the cancer continuum including Māori cancer survivors, rongoā practitioners, pātaka mātauranga (knowledge & lore keepers), kaumātua, a Māori oncologist, Māori doctor, Māori biomedical scientist and Kaupapa Māori hauora researchers.

As per a mātauranga Māori world view the thesis firstly analysed whakapapa and this included; the creation story of Hineahuone and therefore the creation of organs and the bodily functions; the intention and original instructions of the tangata, the whakapapa of kupu Māori associated with the tinana and then the relational positionality of tangata and te taiao.

The outcome is a conceptual model of the body being a pā, a system of relationships with tikanga and tukanga and an overall kawa of 'oranga'.

A cancer journey is also a wairua journey, a mauri journey and a collective journey. Therefore, this thesis not only provides an alternative concept to discuss cancer, but simultaneously posits mātauranga as a valid and needed cancer research methodology.

Biography of presenting author

Moahuia Goza (Ngāti Kauwhata, Ngāti Hauā, Ngāti Unu me Ngāti Raukawa)

Moahuia is an independent mātauranga Māori researcher, national cancer & equity advocate, equity advisor and an executive member of Hei Āhuru Mōwai Māori Cancer Leadership Aotearoa. Moahuia has also brought a claim against the government in the WAI2575 health inquiry for racism against Māori and the privileging of non-Māori, non-Pacific adults across the continuum.