



TARANAKI HOSPITAL BOARD

Address reply to officer
whose title appears below
Signature.

Private Bag, New Plymouth, N.Z. Telephone 75-439

Your Ref.
Our Ref.
(Please quote in reply)

17 March 1987

MEMO TO: HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS

Recently the Taranaki Hospital Board received a delegation from the Awhina Programme asking that official recognition be given to Awhina visiting the hospitals of the Taranaki Hospital Board.

Newspaper cuttings dated 1938 and 1951 indicate that the New Plymouth Hospital Board gave official recognition to Tohungas visiting Barrett Street.

In 1984 at a national Maori health planning workshop Hui Whakaoranga, held at the Hoani Waititi Marae, Auckland, recommendations were made which reflect the importance of building and achieving a holistic perspective of health.

Two of these recommendations are of particular relevance, viz.

'That the primacy of Te Taha Wairua be recognised by institutions throughout New Zealand; and

That support and special status be given to the Tohunga and traditional health practices to facilitate their recognition and utilization in the health services.'

Today the move towards holistic health care has gathered momentum and I ask that members of the medical and nursing staff consider, as part of this movement, the proposal that the Awhina be officially recognised as legitimate visitors to individual patients, visiting at the patient's request.

An indication of your support or non support would be appreciated at your earliest convenience.

Janice Wenn

Janice Wenn,
Chief Nurse,
Taranaki Hospital Board.

This letter and the explanation attached has the approval of the North Taranaki Kaumatua Kaunihera.

Signed:

Chairman. *L. H. H. H.*
North Taranaki Kaumatua Kaunihera

Date: 17-3-87.

THE AWHINA PROGRAMME

Background -

The Awhina Programme can best be described as one which considers a holistic approach to health care, focusing more specifically upon the spiritual dimension or 'wairua'.

It is accepted that positive health is symptomatic of a correct relationship between people and their total environment. Health is associated with all that is positively valued in life; sharing, giving, trusting, caring and respecting.

From this has grown the purposes of the Awhina Programme which are:

- "1. To cater especially for patients, whether Maori or not, who desire spiritual assistance and who request that service to be provided.
2. To complement the health care given by health professionals and assist them in the total healing process of patients.
3. We believe that any patient, whether Maori or not, has the right to choose and to receive that spiritual service."

Who are Awhina -

Awhina are specially selected men and women, prepared to provide this 'spiritual assistance'. This training takes place at Okahukura, Manu Ariki Marae, Taumarunui.

Rationale -

Awhina are capable of providing this spiritual dimension if individuals request this. This being the dimension of care important to the Maori people and the dimension most likely to be overlooked in the present system.

Visit of Awhina Representatives to the Taranaki Hospital Board -

In late 1986 the Taranaki Hospital Board received a letter from Mr Alexander Phillips, who heads the Awhina Programme, asking if he could visit to explain the programme to members of the Board.

In February 1987 a group from Manu Ariki visited and explained the programme to members of the Taranaki Hospital Board. Members of the North Taranaki Kaumatua Kaunihera were invited to hear this address.

Basically the purpose of the Awhina Programme was explained. Awhina are available to visit hospitals at the request of