

Webinar: COVID-19 and family and whānau violence: What have we learnt and where to from here?

Panellist bios

Rihi Te Nana (Ngāti Haaua, Ngāpuhi, Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Raukawa) has been working in the kaupapa Māori research space for over a decade. Rihi commits her research ideas and knowledge to developing and empowering whānau and Māori communities to grow and maintain their agency by facilitating and building capability skills. As a therapist, Rihi has worked alongside whānau groups to develop and strengthen whānau oranga and (health and well-being) tikanga practices. Historically Rihi has had many years within the social services sector supporting Māori strategic development that has linked Iwi Hauora and Whānau Ora plans to government funding and resourcing.

Professor Denise Wilson (Tainui) is Professor of Māori Health, Co-Director of Taupua Waiora Centre for Māori Health Research, and Associate Dean Māori Advancement at Auckland University of Technology. Her research includes a focus on family violence, cultural responsiveness and Māori/indigenous health. Having previously chaired the Family Violence Prevention Investment Advisory Board (Ministry of Social Development), Denise is currently the Deputy Chair of the Family Violence Prevention Expert Advisory Group. She is also a member of the Health Quality & Safety Commission's Roopū Māori, and chaired the Mortality Review Committee's Māori Caucus. Denise served six years on the Family Violence Death Review Committee and has contributed to the development of the Ministry of Health's Violence Intervention Programme.

Denise Messiter is the General Manager for Te Whariki Manawahine O Hauraki. Denise has developed a kaupapa Māori approach for supporting whānau to recover and heal from domestic violence. She has a background in indigenous and community development and has worked with the Xhosa people from South Africa, and First Nations Australian communities in Kalumburu and Wadeye on traditional indigenous approaches to healing domestic violence. Denise has qualifications in Kaupapa Māori Counselling and Not for Profit Management.

Rachel Smith has worked in the family violence sector across government, health and the voluntary sector in the UK and Aotearoa New Zealand. She has a Masters of Science in Human Rights from the London School of Economics and Political Science. Rachel spent seven years working for the Family Violence Death Review Committee, which gave her a privileged insight into the limitations of New Zealand's systemic response to family violence. She is currently Senior Manager of Professional Practice at Shine.

Shila Nair is a counsellor and Senior Advisor with Shakti Community Council. Shakti supports Asian, African and Middle Eastern women and children and has specialist refuges and centres around New Zealand. Shila has a Masters Degree in Counselling. She has been a member of the Safe and Effective Justice Programme Advisory Group and the former Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families.