



Social Services National Industry Advisory Group Hui Minutes

28 October 2025

Minutes – Social Services National Industry Advisory Group Hui (hui topa)

Date, Time and Location:	17 06 2025 at 10:00-12:00, Microsoft Teams, Ahumairangi
Chair:	Sarah Williams, National Engagement Manager, Toitū te Waiora
Advisory Group Members:	Tanya Anaha, Chief Māori Health and Equity Officer /Pou Whakahaere, Te Whatu Ora Taranaki/ Why Ora Carole Tana- Tepania, Chief Executive/Kahui Member, ME Family Services/Tangata Whenua Social Workers Association Mary Beresford- Jones, The Centre of FV and SV Prevention Ivy Harper, Hurahia
Secretariat:	Tamar Anstice, National Engagement Project Coordinator, Toitū te Waiora
Attendees:	Mark Ormsby, Poumatua, Toitū te Waiora Hayley Semenoff, General Manager Qualifications and Quality Assurance, Toitū te Waiora
Apologies:	Megan Thomassen-Clarke, Reporting & Accountability Manager, National Collective of Independent Women’s Refuges Inc Susana Lepoamo, Workforce Manager, Te Puna Aonui Edna 'Ungatea Havea, Victoria University of Wellington, Programme Director Pasifika Pathways Liz Gourlay, Lead Advisor Social Worker Workforce Planning, Social Workers Registration Board Belinda Himiona, Chief Executive, Te Pai Ora SSP Karena Brown, Lead Strategic Researcher, E Tū Nathan Chong-Nee, Chief Executive, Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers Tuala Pesio Ah-Honi, Chief Executive, Mapu Maia Dominic Chilvers, Kaihautū, Council of Social Work Education Aotearoa New Zealand

***Actions for review on Page 5**

Summarised Minutes

Commentary:

Legislative and VET Reform Updates

(Update from Mark Ormsby, Poumatua)

- This hui marked the final gathering of the Social Services NIAG as WDCs prepare for disestablishment and transition to the Health and Community ISB.
- Members acknowledged that the move comes at a time when the mahi was gaining momentum and the group was becoming increasingly effective.
- Staff were advised that 99% of Toitū te Waiora kaimahi finish on 19 December 2025, with only a small group (including the CE and select operational staff) staying on temporarily to finalise handover.
- ISB establishment legislation is expected to receive Royal Assent shortly, with ISBs being formally stood up by 1 January 2026.
- Communication from TEC and EAG groups is still piecemeal, with many operational details yet to be clarified.
- Members were reminded that advisory groups like this NIAG have been acknowledged by TEC as important conduits to industry, and there is hope that ISBs will continue to draw on this workforce expertise.

Transfer of Stakeholder Information

- Members were reminded to check for two emails from the WDC Privacy Officer:
- First email – Notifies members that their contact details are being prepared for handover.
- Second email – Will request explicit consent for transferring details to the ISB CRM.
- This process is essential to ensure the ISB can engage meaningfully with industry in early 2026.
- A backup spreadsheet is being created to mitigate historic issues where CRMs failed to successfully migrate during previous sector restructures.

Qualifications and NZQA Submissions – Current Status

(Update from Hayley Semenoff, GM Qualifications)

- Hayley outlined the key qualifications currently sitting with NZQA for approval prior to transition:
Disability Support Certificates (Level 3 & 4)
- Emerged from the review of eight major Health & Wellbeing qualifications.
- Strong likelihood of approval before the end of the year.

Core Health and Wellbeing Skill Standards (Levels 2–4)

- 12 skill standards designed to be transferable across multiple sectors and contexts within the health & wellbeing sector.
- Aim to standardise foundational skills across the workforce.

Community Housing Certificate (Level 4)

- First-ever qualification of its kind to support kaimahi working with tenants and housing stability.
- Focused on tenancy management and wraparound support.

Family Violence / Sexual Violence (FVSV) Development Work

- Phase one submitted:
- One Level 4 skill standard + micro-credential
- Three Level 5 skill standards + micro-credential
- Designed to align with the national Risk and Safety Practice Framework.
- Phase two (Level 6 qualification) will become ISB responsibility.
- Hayley acknowledged that all this work was only made possible through consistent industry support and sector SME engagement from NIAG members and industry consultation groups.

Cultural Capability Skill Standards Development

(Update from Hera Williams, National Engagement Manager; Mark Ormsby, Poumatua; and Tamar Anstice, National Engagement Project Coordinator)

- Members provided extensive and deeply aligned feedback on the cultural capability skill standards currently in development.
- The QD team noted that NIAG feedback clearly reflected shared priorities across the sector, including:
- the need for culturally safe practice;
- improved support for migrant workers who may lack cultural knowledge;
- the need for capability standards that reflect real frontline contexts in the health & wellbeing sector.
- The team has now consolidated all feedback and is meeting with Principal Advisor Qualifications and other specialists within the next 1–2 weeks to finalise the next draft.
- A significant discussion took place regarding differentiating between Treaty units and the real needs of kaimahi in practice, including the need to focus on practical application of Te Tiriti principles rather than surface-level content.
- The term “Cultural Capability” has been adopted over “Competency,” reflecting an ongoing developmental journey rather than a fixed achievement.
- Although Toitū te Waioira is closing, the team confirmed that all NIAG members who contributed will still be invited to review the next version before national consultation.
- The group acknowledged the importance of ensuring that the ISB understands the urgency and value of completing this mahi, which has been under development for three years.

Reflections From Members

The hui concluded with warm and heartfelt reflections capturing the emotional weight of the transition:

- Members expressed sadness, disappointment, and deflation, feeling the mahi was “just getting started” before being disrupted.
- Tanya emphasised the urgent need to address cultural safety, especially with increasing numbers of migrant workers in frontline roles.
- Carol acknowledged how powerful the collective voice has been and queried how alternative representatives might continue contributing through the ISB.
- Ivy expressed gratitude for being part of the rōpū and for the collective skill and experience everyone brought. She reflected that each person’s contribution holds mana and will continue to carry forward into whichever spaces members move into next.
- Mary, representing Susanna, shared gratitude for progress on family violence pathways, an area long overdue for development.
- Members expressed hope that the ISB will retain the sector knowledge, passion, and integrity demonstrated within the NIAG.

Key sentiments included:

“We finally built momentum, and it’s heartbreaking to see it disrupted.”

“This mahi must continue. It is too important to lose.”

“Wherever the ISB goes, they will need us.”

Actions:

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Reference #	20251028/01
Presenters:	Mark Ormsby/Hera Williams/Tamar Anstice
Commentary:	Hera, Mark, and Tamar are finalising a new set of skill standards focused on Cultural Capability (previously “Competence”).
Actions:	Tamar to send out an email once the Cultural Capability Skill Standards go out for national consultation. Members were encouraged to read through the new skill standards and provide feedback if necessary. (December 2025)