

Evaluation Report

Tahatū Rangi Symposium

20-21 October 2016



Te Pou
o Te Whakaaro Nui

Introduction

Platform and Te Pou o te Whakaaro Nui hosted a two day symposium in Wellington from 20-21 October 2016 named Tahatū Rangi. Tahatū Rangi is a poetic term for the horizon; it is the meeting place of sky and earth or sky and sea. It represents potentiality. What lies beyond? What could there be? Tahatū Rangi was an event that brought leaders from across the mental health, addiction and related sectors came together for the second time to collectively re-imagine the mental health and addiction landscape and how the future system might be co-created.

The programme had two main focuses, important to realising a collective vision - collaboration and co-design. They were designed to inspire, engage and activate people by inviting them to talk freely and share ideas, insights and experience to make change in creative ways.

There were approximately 90 attendees not including Te Pou o te Whakaaro Nui staff or Platform organisers. Fifty four people provided their feedback participated in the post-symposium survey monkey questionnaire providing their feedback on the event. The link to this questionnaire was emailed to participants in the middle of the second day of the symposium and attendees were asked during the event to complete it within two weeks. The response rate from attendees is considered high, at 60 per cent. Therefore this evaluation is likely to be a good overview of attendees' thoughts and experiences of Tahatū Rangi 2016.

Results

This section includes responses to four multi-choice questions and three open-ended questions. Themes from the open-ended questions are pulled out from the responses and discussed, and quotes from respondents are in italics.

Overall

Overall, respondents to the evaluation responded very favourably in terms of satisfaction of quality of the Tahatū Rangi symposium, its relevance to them, gaining new tools, and intent to implement new ideas (See Figure 1 on the next page).

A large majority of respondents (93 per cent) either moderately or strongly agreed they were satisfied overall with the quality of the symposium. Four respondents disagreed to some extent about their satisfaction with the symposium's quality. Eighty three per cent of respondents moderately or strongly agreed the symposium was relevant to their work.

Seventy six per cent of respondents either moderately or strongly agreed the symposium provided them with new ideas, tools and resources. Finally 68 per cent of respondents either moderately or strongly agreed they will implement ideas and learnings from the symposium in their work.

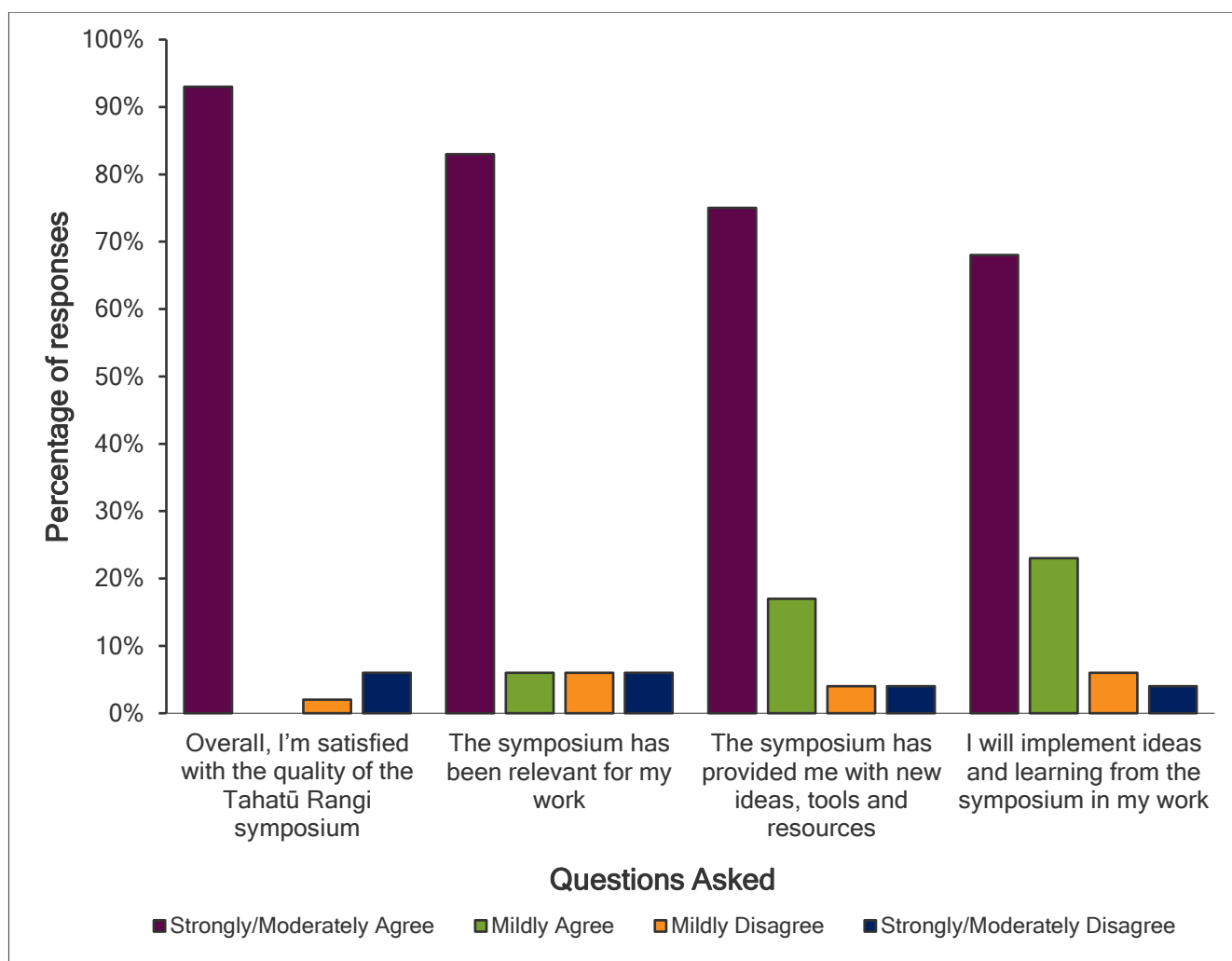


Figure 1. Overall satisfaction with Tahatū Rangi Symposium (n = 54, question 4, n = 53). “Don’t know/NA” was given in all four questions but no respondent chose the response, so this option was not included in the graph. Total percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Standout Learnings

The strongest theme from comments about standout learnings was about the contribution of the young people in the symposium, hearing their voices and the learnings they brought. For example *“I loved the contribution of young people to the symposium. It is humbling and inspiring to hear from young people using their own experiences to build resiliency in other young people”*. A number of people commented specifically on Zeal’s presentation as a standout learning for them and were impressed with their presentation. *“I thought Zeal were excellent, really stretched my thinking and showed what the future of ‘MH&A’ services are and could continue to be”*.

A number of respondents commented on standout learnings of different aspects of a number of keynote speakers rather than specific keynote speakers. Some respondents appreciated the diversity at the symposium such as youth voices throughout and learning about Māori emphasis and Māori musical instruments and the waka analogy.

The overall themes of this year’s Tahatū Rangi, collaboration and co-design, were mentioned a number of times as standout learnings. Attendees commented favourably about the co-design and the co-design activity, though the majority of responses focused on collaboration. This included

ideas about collaboration; the sessions on this *“renewed [their] energy”* and inspired some, despite the difficulties involved. Also, that collaboration can be done; *“do the groundwork first, find the other interested parties, communicate, and align interests”* and *“just do it”*. People noted that others’ *“initiatives and stories of services developing from around the country”* and their experience of collaboration was useful to hear in terms of *“how to collaborate, what works and what didn’t”*.

Interactivity was highly valued; *“handing over the teaching to the participants for an open space session”* and *“the interactive style of presenting encouraged participants to share their thinking and experiences”*. A number of respondents commented positively on the creative interaction both in terms of the speakers, but also the activities such as the bus stop sessions, design sprint, marketplace, open space session and the co-design activity which although some found difficult at first but *“fulfilling as a process”*.

There were also a small number of repeated comments about liking some aspects of the symposium including the session summaries displayed on the wall and notes about the use of data.

Finally the networking opportunity with others was mentioned as always valuable at events such as this symposium. The chance to reconnect with people and the opportunity to share ideas with new people was beneficial.

Suggestions for improvement

Many responses had no suggestions for improvement or more positive comments being satisfied with the Tahatū Rangi symposium as it was and/or had very minor comments often to do with the venue rather than the symposium (this will be covered in the next section). Respondents felt: *“thought it was excellent - nice balance of thought provoking key notes - snippets of innovative practice - networking opportunities”* and *“I can’t think of any area [of improvement]”*. *The symposium topics varied, the sessions were a mixture of presentations and breakout groups”*.

A number of respondents felt there was insufficient peer/tangata whai ora/service user presentations specific to and led by them, their involvement, perspective, focus on and reference to them rather than focus on services.

Interestingly, some of the suggestions for improvement were on topics others commented as standout learnings. These include the level ‘collaboration’ was pitched at (this will be elaborated on in the next paragraph), youth involvement good but irrelevant to their job, insufficient networking opportunities, insufficient examples and people from outside the sector and Māori input.

Some felt that the presentation on collaboration was at too low a level and *“felt like ‘preaching to the converted’ [and needed] perhaps more structure to the last ‘what next/action’ session”*. For instance one person suggested more of a focus on collaboration with a purpose rather than on just motivating to do more of it.

Some respondents commented that networking could have been improved with name badges that include organisation, and a number of people asked for a list of participants and their email addresses to encourage further potential collaborations.

Finally, there were a few comments about how the event was/could be promoted such as promotion to all DHBs, across the sector and not just within the mental health sector.

Other Comments

Comments offered by respondents were largely positive about Tahatū Rangi and often added to and reflected comments made under the open-ended question about standout learnings and a small number similar to suggestions for improvement.

Again, the speakers were mentioned as “*engaging and informative*”, although some respondents still wanted more collaboration examples from initiatives outside health, or speakers leading ‘what next’ for services.

One respondent expressed an important point to take into account. This person felt disrespected as they had “*a general sense of what is past is/was not useful [and] no sense of the amazing work that ‘oldies’ such as myself have been doing for years to make it possible for young people to have their say now*”. They felt ideas that were considered revolutionary, had already been said and done, and the past wasn’t honoured and respected not in keeping with the Māori and cultural element of the symposium.

A number of comments discussed the facilities including venue and catering. Comments about the venue were very positive, including stating how conducive the venue was for the event. Some found it difficult to hear, particularly in break-out sessions and others were frustrated the air conditioning was patchy. Those that mentioned the catering enjoyed the food.

There was a few comments about the size of the event (i.e. participant numbers) which attendees felt encouraged collegiality. The size of the event was purposeful from the organisers’ promotion strategy in order to create a particular type of symposium as opposed to a conference. There were a couple of comments about the dwindling number of people towards the end of day one, and particularly day two, and wondered if the timing of the symposium, right before a long weekend, may have contributed to that.

Overall, people expressed appreciation and gratitude for how well the event was organised.

“This was the best symposium that I have attended this year. The size was just right. A great range of people and lots of opportunities to be stretched and inspired and energised. Well-done to all the organisers!”

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