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Evaluating a community initiative with a focus on Indigenous health

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Porirua Healthlinks Trust, a community organization in the Greater Wellington area, has been mounting Creek Fest for the past five years. This is an annual one day event that focuses on health and culture. It has become increasingly successful particularly in attracting large numbers of Pacific and Maori peoples who live in the immediate locality as well as those from further away. The most recent Fest, held in March 2006, was evaluated to determine whether it was meeting its stated objectives and what else the organization might do to achieve its health related goals with regard to this initiative. Of the 500 questionnaires handed out on the day, 400 were completed for analysis. This paper draws on both the results of the survey and the process used to report on the evaluation of the fair. The self administered questionnaire with interviewer assisted delivery was seen to be the key to obtaining such a high response rate. Implications for undertaking evaluations in ethnically diverse communities are discussed.