Evaluation in pursuit of Indigenous health equity.

Weaving courage, evidence and evaluative insights in a funder-commissioned evaluation

Nan Wehipeihana

Keynote presentation at the Australian Evaluation Society Conference, 31 August 2022, Adelaide
Tihei mauri ora!
First, I acknowledge, the creator, the source of all things
Second, I acknowledge those who have passed through the veil and gone before us
Third, I acknowledge (the living), all who are here today

I acknowledge the Karuna people of the Adelaide Plains, traditional custodians of this land that we are meeting on today
My mountains greet your mountains
My rivers greet your rivers
My elders greet your elders
My people greet your people

On my mother’s side my tribes are Ngāti Porou and Te Whānau ā Apanui, from the East coast of the North Island. On my father’s side my tribes are Ngāti Tukorehe and Ngāti Raukawa, north of Wellington
I am Nan Wehipeihana.
Once again, I acknowledge all those who are present here today
Greetings, salutations, greetings.
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Evaluation in pursuit of equity requires a deliberate, intentional equity stance, every time and for every evaluation.
Towards evaluation as a ‘public craft’ and evaluators as stewards of the public good

Evaluation as a public craft rests on an ethical and professional commitment to a public purpose and common good

The commitment to public good extends beyond technical competence to moral and social issues of trust, equity and civic cooperation
Health equity

is an ethical principle, closely related to human rights and the right of all humans to experience good health.
Equity... recognises that people with different levels of advantage require different approaches and resources to get equitable health outcomes and enjoy full and healthy lives.
Equity is the scale that measures imbalance between one group getting less and one group being privileged.
Equity focused evaluation

...as a means of monitoring governments and our societies values and commitment to fairness and social justice
The Māori Influenza and Measles Vaccination Programme is a Ministry of Health equity initiative.

The programme supports Māori service providers and District Health Boards (DHBs) to improve equity for Māori by increasing their access to influenza (flu) vaccinations.
What set this programme up well for an equity-focused evaluation?

• *Equity was a newly stated priority of the Ministry of Health*
• *Equity was an explicit programme aim*
• *Equity was a priority for the evaluation sponsor and key stakeholders*
• *The evaluation sponsor and key stakeholders were decision-makers*
• *We had a long-standing relationship with the evaluation sponsor*
• *Our team members brought a diverse mix of skills and experience and were known to the evaluation sponsor*
So what did we do that specifically contributed to equity?

- We maintained an intentional focus on equity
- We designed a strong, mixed-method evaluation
- We unpacked equity
- We courageously and respectfully called out poor results
Where do we start when equity isn’t centred in the programme or evaluation?

- We need to start by reflecting on our personal values and being clear about the relational positioning of our works as evaluators.
- We need to hone our craft.
- We need to recognise the opportunities and limitations of our evaluator role.
- We need to bring equity to the fore in the absence of an intentional programme or evaluation stance on equity.
Evaluation including equity-focused evaluation is the art of weaving the personal and the professional – through the weft of values, principles and dispositions and the warp of our methods, engagement and deliberations.
Evaluation in pursuit of equity requires a deliberate, intentional equity stance, every time and for every evaluation.


