

Strong and safe communities – effective interventions for adult victims of sexual violence

Interview with David Hillman and Maqueenie Tait

Background

- 1 On 8 December 2007, Sonya Rimene, the Ministry of Women's Affairs' (MWA) Kaihautū, interviewed David Hillman and Maqueenie Tait. David is a practitioner who has worked with perpetrators of sexual violence: adult men who have sexually abused children (both boys and girls) and women. David also has a social work background working with victims of sexual abuse. David is currently working at Auckland Hospital as a Kaumatua in the mental health area. Maqueenie has worked closely with Māori. The purpose of the interview was to gain insight into particular issues that sexual violence raises for Māori. MWA's questions, and David and Maqueenie's answers, are set out below.

In terms of post-rape decision-making and help-seeking, what topics or issues might be specific to Māori?

- 2 Whānau may not believe the victim if the abuse occurred within the whānau, maybe because of:
 - the whakama (shame) aspect
 - denial
 - whānau close ranks
 - the victim might get beaten up again.
- 3 Other variables, such as the age and maturity of the victim, cause whānau to react in different ways. For instance, if the victim is young there might be a cover-up.
- 4 For rape that has occurred outside the whānau, the whānau could be more likely to support the victim.
- 5 Care should be taken so that the whānau do not re-victimise the victim.
- 6 Whānau will not disclose for a number of reasons:
 - whakama to the whānau
 - they feel they will not be believed
 - they are victims of society
 - their financial and social situation – they do not have the means to get a lawyer.

How could researchers make contact with victims? What is the most appropriate methodology? Where should interviews be conducted? What process should researchers follow?

- 7 Engaging victims will be a difficult task because of the trust that has been built with the providers. Confidentiality will be an issue. Researchers will need to go to organisations, such as SAFE.
- 8 Māori researchers or Māori practitioners are the best people to contact extended whānau and victims.
- 9 The research has to be done according to the terms that the victims stipulate. The victim should not be re-victimised by the research process. The victim can decide at any point of the research to opt out. This needs to be clear upfront.
- 10 There will be situations where Māori do not trust Māori or trust the kumara grapevine. In the main, however, Māori are best to work with Māori.

In terms of providing follow-up counselling or debriefing for victims who take part in interviews, who could do this? How could it be done?

- 11 The victim needs to be safe at all times. Her wairua (spiritual essence), hinengaro (mind), tinana (body), mauri (life force) has been violated; therefore this research needs to leave the victim in a stronger position than before the researcher came.
- 12 The research can potentially open up a can of worms because the violence was probably never dealt with properly, or the victim has never worked through the issues with the whānau or the perpetrator.
- 13 Counselling should happen straight after the interviews. One process should be offered during the interview:
 - karakia, mihimihi, whakatau, waiata, kai, poroporoaki, karakia.
- 14 This process needs consent from the victim. If the interview is on the marae, this process will happen automatically. If the interview is somewhere else, there needs to be a process that is agreed to and followed.
- 15 In order to identify the needs of the victim, such as counselling, all details of the victim will need to be provided to take the next steps. The interviewer has to have a full understanding of the victim.
- 16 The wairua of the person has been broken. The mana of the person has been trampled on. The whakapapa of the person has been violated. The offspring from this woman will be tainted as a result of the mother being violated.
- 17 To assist this person the researchers need to have someone who has a good understanding of Māori values, beliefs, tohunga, healers. The right people are needed to work with the victim and begin the healing process.

- 18 The victim's mauri and wairua is out of balance. The balance needs to be brought back: replace the wairua, move the mind forward, and heal the body.
- 19 In terms of the perpetrator, they may have died, so whoever deals with the victim may need to deal with those who have passed away.
- 20 Concepts to consider:
- wairua
 - mana
 - ihi
 - wana
 - wehi
 - tinana
 - hinengaro
 - whānau
 - atawhai.

We recognise that providers will incur costs (resources, time, etc) if they facilitate access to victims. How could researchers recompense for that?

- 21 The relationship between the researcher and the researched needs to be reciprocal. The researcher is getting paid a salary to conduct the research, the researched needs to be compensated for their time and knowledge. This can be done in a number of ways:
- pay the cost of each hui (for Māori there should be more than one hui)
 - pay the cost of the victims' data (cost of providing information)
 - pay costs for travel and kai
 - pay the cost of follow-up for the victim
 - consider long term actions for whānau.

How should researchers give back to victims who take part in interviews? There are some constraints around koha, but what else can we think about to show that we recognise that they have given time and part of themselves?

- 22 Make sure counselling and therapy is available to the victim within her rohe (place that the victim lives in).
- 23 Think about reciprocity: I take their stories, what do I give in return?
- 24 There is a risk involved to the victims, so researchers need to ensure that the victims are in a stronger position than before the researcher came.
- 25 Taha wairua, taha tinana, taha whānaungatanga (relationships) – strong whānau connections are essential, particularly if they are disconnected.

- 26 In terms of koha – the researchers will have made a koha to the victims by ensuring that the research makes a difference:
- the hurt has been recognised
 - mana wahine status is elevated
 - the court process is improved
 - attitudes might change.
- 27 Research is about changing people's attitudes.

What is the right tika (methodology) for the researchers to follow?

- 28 If researchers follow a Māori process it needs to be done properly or else it is preferable not to do it at all.
- 29 The diagram over the page provides a structure for each participant to be recognised in the research. Each participant has a role to play in the research process. MWA is the organisation that is the holder of the research itself (the kaupupuri te kaupapa). MWA facilitates and nurtures the research process (kaiatawhai). The kaiarahi and kaiāwhina is the organisation that is the service provider. This organisation works with victims. The kairangahau is the researcher that works through the kaiarahi as well as directly with some wahine/tane (victims). The diagram depicts the interconnected relationships.

