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PRESERVATION

**Social Services  
Competencies  
Project**

**Client  
Consultation**

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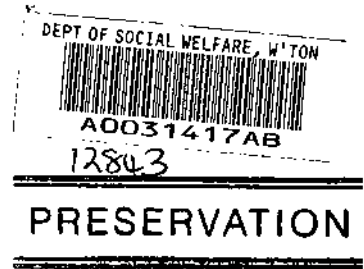
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Prepared by  
Principal Social Worker Unit  
Head Office  
Department of Social Welfare  
WELLINGTON

October 1990

Date Due

29 SEP 1994



He aha mea nui o te ao?

He tangata, he tangata, he tangata.

#### FOREWORD

For the Social Work service of the department, Task 1 of the Social Work Development Plan defines our commitment "to raise the standard of social work consistent with Puaote-Ata-tu".

The Competence/Certification Project of which this client consultation is a part is an important means of achieving this goal.

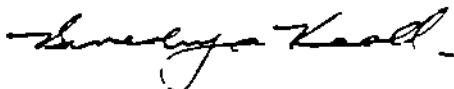
The focus of the Project is to provide the best possible service to clients within the resources available. We started the project by asking clients what were their expectations of social workers. At the same time we examined the new legislation to identify the tasks the department is now expecting social services staff to carry out, and to define the competencies required to perform them.

A key feature of the Project has been the parallel process used to develop the competencies for work with Maori, Pacific Island and Pakeha clients. The purpose of the parallel process was to promote culturally authentic ways of working and avoid the domination of practice by European models. The client consultation followed the same pattern, and the project team has included the findings from the three consultations in their work.

The reports are not intended to be read as authoritative research documents. They are simply a candid report of what Maori, Pacific Island and Pakeha clients want from their social workers. Together the reports are an important step towards making changes that will result in better service delivery.

The full report is made available within the department as part of our promise to the clients who contributed their time and ideas, that what they said would be listened to.

In these days of being swamped with paper and trying to keep up with change, I commend it to you as a refreshing document which lets the people speak.



Beverley Keall  
Principal Social Worker

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The co-operation of the District Offices who were asked to participate in this client consultation was pivotal for this entire exercise. Without their commitment to principles of accountability for their work, and the value of the clients voice for our work, this study could not have taken place. These offices are: Dunedin, Greymouth, Porirua, Whakatane, Mangere and Kaitaia.

To co-operate was to risk exposure of any deficiencies clients might perceive in their practice. We acknowledge their courage and their patience in assisting us with a sometimes difficult process. Kia ora koutou mo koutou kaha, koutou awhina.

We asked the two Hamilton Residences to provide our sample of young people and their whanau who had experience of our residential services, unaware that this would coincide with the winding down and closure of these two resources. Despite this stress, the staff gave us every assistance. Thank you all.

Three groups were contracted to undertake the client consultation and report their findings:

Waaka Consultants undertook the Maori process, Yonine Kereopa doing the major part of the work, with assistance from Louise Waaka.

Grey Matter undertook to co-ordinate the Pakeha consultation. Alison Grey employed Jeannie Cozens and Debbie Street to assist with the interviews.

The Pacific Islands Consultation was undertaken by Taiki Enterprises, and carried out by Apii Rongo-Raea with considerable help from Malia Ponifasio, To'aiga Su'a Huirua and Reverend Sione Ma'afu.

The process was by no means smooth, and we thank the researchers for bearing with the Principal Social Workers Unit as we worked through difficulties along the way.

The Client Consultation group provided valuable guidance. They were John Angus, Lysette Riley, Bryony Walker, To'aiga Su'a Huirua and Harry Walker.

Finally and most sincerely, we wish to thank all those clients and their whanau who generously gave their time for the project. For some of them/you this included recalling events and exchanges that stirred the emotions. We respect and are grateful for your courage in speaking up.

Lainey Cowan  
Client consultation co-ordinator

Beverley Keall  
Principal Social Worker

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## CLIENT CONSULTATION

Department of Social Welfare, Social Services  
Competency/Certification Project

### INTRODUCTION

This document contains the reports on the client consultations undertaken as part of the Social Services Competency/Certification project. It includes an overview, research notes and the three reports commissioned by the Principal Social Worker.

### THE PROJECT

The Social Services Competency/Certification project is being undertaken by the Principal Social Worker's Unit of Head Office as a means to set up national standards of competencies for Department of Social Welfare social services tasks.

The aims of the Competency/Certification project are:

To identify the knowledge, values and skills required to carry out departmental social work tasks;

To provide a structure to promote supervision and training to ensure people have the opportunity to develop their competence;

To provide a process to credit people for their prior learning achievements which relate to the competence criteria;

To provide training programmes and a process of certification which meet requirements of the NZ Council for Education and Training in the Social Services.

The project began in January 1990, with the first meeting of its Steering Committee and the contracting of Annette Dow and Lainey Cowan to identify competence criteria under the headings of skills, knowledge and values from departmental material, a search of the literature, and client consultation.

That work resulted in the first draft of the competencies and a piloting of client consultation.

### CLIENT CONSULTATION

It was important to seek consumer input to ensure that their ideas on good social work practice were included in the Competency Statements. The term consumer describes individuals, whanau/family members and community social services organisations who have had contact as clients with the social services section of a District Office of the Department, or with the Department's residential services.

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The aims for the client consultation in the terms of reference were stated as:-

To report on the knowledge, values and skills clients thought social service workers should have; and

to compare these with the competencies developed so far.

The consultation was to be an integrity check to validate the competencies generated within the Department through a process of researching manuals, handbooks and external material and staff consultations to see whether clients' views were substantially different from the values, skills and knowledge developed so far. It was not to be a large, authoritative study of client opinion of social workers, nor was it to be an evaluation of the outcomes of social work intervention.

#### A SUMMARY OF THE PROCESS

(Fuller notes on the research process are at the end of the report.)

1. The sample of clients was obtained from eight Department work sites, two of which were Residences. A minimum of ten individual clients and their whanau, and ten representatives of community groups were interviewed at each site.
2. Clients were interviewed by independent researchers contracted to the Department, who were ethnically congruent with the client. For each ethnic strand, Maori, Pacific Island and Pakeha, a minimum of ten community groups and twenty individual clients each were seen.
3. Interviewers all used similar questions for gathering information but were free to shape their interviews to be appropriate for each client.
4. Participation was voluntary. Initial contact was by letter from the Principal Social Worker
5. Anonymity was assured to participants, but they were asked if they could be quoted. Confidentiality for specifics was also assured.
6. Interviews were mostly in clients own homes although the Pacific interviews took place after public meetings to explain the project, and some Maori interviews were at marae.



7. Questions led into the area of social work competencies (ie knowledge, skills and values) as the clients perceived them, in the context of the clients experience of Department social service workers and after an explanation about the project as a whole.
8. A pilot consultation was carried out first in central Auckland. It indicated some areas clients would cover, and served to test a basic questionnaire, but it did not trial all the methodology for the main consultation process. Both processes are written up at the end of this report.

## SUMMARIES OF THE REPORTS

### Maori Clients and Whanau

Many Maori interviewed had experienced only Pakeha social workers. Some felt that many matters would have been better handled by a Maori social worker.

"You want a person who knows where you're coming from, not just someone who has handled a lot of cases."

They are concerned that social workers are honest, trustworthy and credible; that they understand Maori culture, including the whanau, hapu, iwi system, and can trust and believe in the client's whanau and its abilities to learn and change. They feel that social workers should be aware of tribal differences in kawa and culture, and willing to take guidance and be led in such matters by Tangata Whenua. Also, they should know, acknowledge and respect significant people in each whanau, hapu and Iwi structure and know their differing roles, e.g. Kuia, Kaumatua, Pakeke. Many clients and community group representatives felt fluency in Maori language is not so important as being able to communicate in clear non-jargon English.

"Family want to be heard, acknowledged and taken seriously".

Clients emphasize the importance of keeping families informed, supporting them and trusting their decision-making capabilities. They state it is important that social workers accept that others may have values, standards and priorities that work for them.

As well they believe that it is important for social workers to know the organisation they work for, their role in it and its resources thoroughly. They should know community resources of help to their clients.

Social workers need skills in clear communication, parenting and administration. Clients stress the need for social workers to be available, to be prompt in making practical arrangements and to have backup for after hours, leave, and other absences from the office.

### Maori Community Groups

Maori Community groups said that community services workers should be interested, committed and respectful of community groups. They should be informed on and respectful of local tribal kawa. Department workers" need to be well-trained for their role and clear about what their role is.

Maori women community workers feel that DSW workers must understand and deal with male violence in the whanau and the community, unemployment and its effects and stresses on the whanau and the community.

Community workers have an expectation of Maori social workers to acknowledge, value and support the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and Puao-Te-Ata-Tu by exercising their power to actively protect and promote Maori interests. They feel a working knowledge of these documents should provide social workers with a basis to promote self-sufficiency and eliminate attitudes of dependency.

"Allow us to determine our needs and support us by resourcing us to meet those needs".

### Pacific Island Peoples

The report bases social work competency for services to the Pacific Islands communities on an understanding of the Pacific Islands' concept of family. It is the family who uphold values, language, protocols, nuances and specialist knowledge that shape the lifestyle and form the culture of Pacific Islands peoples within Aotearoa.

The material in this report is presented in a format which relates to the situation of Pacific Islands peoples in Aotearoa:

(a) The indigenous cultures of the various Pacific Islands groups:

"Pacific Islands ways of practice should be acknowledged and actioned, everything done Pacific Islands ways".

"There are a lot of issues and adjustments our people need to make in New Zealand".

(b) The cultures of those Pacific Islands groups within Aotearoa:-

"She would have liked her to have spoken to her parents in their mother tongue".

"Ensuring dependency on the professionals is aided by taking away the parents' right to be key players in the decision-making for their children/young person's welfare ... a patronising approach".

(c) The emergence of a unique set of cultures developing from their experience in Aotearoa.

"A family, but not without a struggle".

#### Pakeha Report

"To be a social worker you don't have to have a degree or anything. It's more important that you can relate to people".

"A social worker needs listening skills, empathy and the ability to 'be with' another person even though they come from a completely different background".

Generally Pakeha clients stress factors so fundamental to social work that some of them had been overlooked in outlining basic competencies. Their concerns are that social workers have integrity, are able to show they understand the client and are willing to help. Clients do not expect social workers to have all the answers, but do expect them to know their organisation and its resources, to be open about what they do not know or cannot do, and to communicate in language the client can understand. They also stress the need for social workers to be available, to be prompt in making practical arrangements, and to have backup for after hours, leave and other absences from the office.

"It was hard to track the social worker down, especially at night".

"They should keep in touch. My parents never even got a phone call or a letter and they got angry".

#### Pakeka Community Groups

Pakeha community workers are very clear about their expectations of community services Department workers, both the tasks that should be done and the knowledge skills and values required.

"The social worker should have the ability to: network and pass on information from community groups; run a meeting; focus on issues rather than personalities; be assertive; admit when they are wrong; be human and not hide behind jargon, and have a sense of humour."

These match the draft community services statements very well. Also, they feel that Department workers should have knowledge of cultural issues and be culturally sensitive and culturally safe; however some Pakeha clients feel the emphasis on biculturalism needs to be moderated.

"Social workers need to be aware of their own values and why they have them, and aware of cultural differences".  
 "DSW has a bias towards Maori organisations and clients".

Pakeha clients and groups do not mention the Treaty of Waitangi, or Puaotekāheke.

## CONCLUSION

The aim of the client consultation is to ensure that social service workers' competencies being developed for Department workers, take account of and are congruent with a clients' perspective. This has been achieved in that the material has been used to preface competencies so far developed, and some of their suggestions have been incorporated into competency material. Clients' comments highlight a number of gaps and oversights in the draft competencies developed at that time. Their comments complement and supplement rather than disagree with the material available for comparison.

Also we obtained a wealth of information including a good number of direct client quotes which will be used with competency statements and in other ways to express the client point of view.

No attempt has been made to compare client comments across ethnic groups, since the focus of the project team is to develop material which reflects ways of working most appropriate to the different client groups.

While this consultation did not aim to produce a large authoritative document, it does represent an important step by the Department of Social Welfare in seeking a client perspective when making changes that will impact on their service delivery.

The feedback is heartening for social workers in several ways; first, that what they do is not too far from what clients want and expect, and second, that clients' expectations of social workers are not unrealistic or unobtainable. The Social Work Competency Project (of which this consultation is a part) will result in the availability of training for social workers to meet these client expectations.

**A CLIENT CONSULTATION PROCESS**

**PREPARED FOR  
THE PRINCIPAL SOCIAL WORK UNIT  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE  
WELLINGTON**

**BY  
THE WAAKA CONSULTANCY**

**ROTORUA  
31 MAY 1990**

**\*\*\*\*\* ACKNOWLEDGMENTS \*\*\*\*\***

The consultants wish to acknowledge the assistance of Department of Social Welfare personnel who gave of their time in order to assist us and especially to those staff whose offices were visited by the consultants.

We also wish to acknowledge the co-operation received from the children, young persons, their families and foster-parents and the community organisations who willingly co-operated in providing the information required for the research.

Finally we wish to extend our heartfelt thanks to those people who provided hospitality, accommodation and aroha to the consultants during their travels throughout the country.

"Na koutou i whatu te kakahu; he taniko taku"

The consultants were employed by the Principal Social Work Unit of the Department of Social Welfare, Wellington, to undertake a client consultation process.

The consultation was designed as an

"integrity check for validation of social work competencies which have been generated through a prior process of research, development by senior practitioners and wide staff consultation".

### 1.1

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE

- a) To design a process of client consultation including designing the interview questionnaire to be used, that is culturally appropriate to the client group sampled.
- b) To carry out face to face client interviews at the selected sites and with the selected clients provided by the steering committee.
- c) To advise the client group of the purpose of the project and how their responses are likely to be used.
- d) To collate and analyse data gathered.
- e) To compare the competencies generated by the client consultation with the competencies developed departmentally.
- f) To provide a written report on the knowledge, values and skills identified by clients in the consultation and also a comparison of these with the previously developed competencies.
- g) To provide a summary of the collated material to the clients interviewed.

### 1.2

#### METHOD OF EVALUATION

We visited seven districts, spoke with ten children, young persons and their families, six families, where the young person was temporarily out of the district, two foster-parents and eleven community groups.

An interview questionnaire was the guideline for gathering information; with clients and community groups being invited to make any additional comments.

COMMENTS ON CLIENT SAMPLE

Head Office sent letters to selected clients and community groups randomly selected from computer records. Very few replied and with pressures of time, staff phoned as many clients as possible to confirm their willingness to take part. The consultants also wrote to clients setting up firm appointments and giving the local District office as the contact point for clients.

The reasons for such a poor response from the client sample can be accredited to:

- i) Insufficient time to properly canvass the client sample.
- ii) School holidays.

The eleven community groups selected were all seen by the consultant; only one had had no contact with a social worker. Two community groups had contact with a community social worker and the remainder were visited by generic social workers.

During the course of an interview with one community group, the consultant was asked to address a hui of approximately 40 women representing 15 - 20 community organisations from a 200km radius who were meeting at the local marae to share ideas and to give support to each other.

The sample interviewed by the consultants were as follows:

Individual Clients	10
Parents	1
Solo Mothers	4
Solo Father	1
Foster Parents	2
Whanau	1

Two parents declined to be interviewed although they were agreeable to their children taking part. One father declined on behalf of his family. One grandmother declined to take part; her mokopuna was missing and being sought by the police. One uncle had had no social worker contact and was not aware that his nephew, who was holidaying with his parents, was under any form of social welfare oversight.



The remainder of individual clients were not seen for the following reasons:

No social welfare contact	6
Not known to local office	
Missing - whereabouts not known	1
Family declined	1
Children holidaying ou of district	
Whanau seen	2
Family holidaying out of district	2
No response to consultants letter	
Not home when consultant called	3
Pacific Island	1

## 2.0 INDIVIDUAL CLIENT/WHANAU CONSULTATIONS

### 2.1 VALUES

Honesty: "Tell us the truth - we can take the bad news".

Integrity: "Make up your mind who you are there to help, us or the Department".

"Take pride in doing your job well".

Credibility: "Do what you say you will".

Trust: "Trust us to do what we say we will.

Respect: Respect our feelings".

"Don't judge whole families by the mistake of one member. "They're a druggy family".

"Should investigate instead of judging people on past events".

"Was more interested in the state of my house than listening to me".

"They think we're dumb because we don't understand their language".

"She had a social welfare attitude".

Understanding: "Should try to put themselves in our position

Good attitude: - understand our problems and needs and have the skills to help".

"I was labelled as "bad" because I ran away from the institution 5 times to get back home".

"Take time to listen to our problems. We don't want to know how busy the Social Welfare is or about the 100 other more urgent cases they've got".

"He was good - he was hard case".

"I liked her; she was comical - but useless".

Courage: "If you believe in our rights, have the courage fight for us. Don't be scared into doing nothing because your senior doesn't agree - go to someone higher up".

"They worry more about losing their jobs than about helping us".

**THE COMPETENT SOCIAL WORKER SHOULD:**

- be totally honest and trustworthy thus establishing credibility in the relationship with the client;
- accept that whanau are capable of making good decisions;
- validate clients' feelings and be supportive, constructive and positive;
- accept that clients can change and acknowledge and give credit for improvements and
- accept that others have different standards, values and priorities which work for them.

**2.2 KNOWLEDGE**

Training: "Should know how to help us"

Resources: "Should know where we can get help with problems they can't handle or with job training schemes; including any financial assistance available".

**THE COMPETENT SOCIAL WORKER SHOULD KNOW:**

- departmental procedures;
- all information relating to the task in hand;
- likely outcomes based on experience and/or training and
- other resource people/agencies in their community.

**2.3 SKILLS**

Organisational: "Should plan their day to make time for us".

Communication: "Should check that we have understood what they have said. Don't assume that we understand official language".

"Give explanations for decisions. Why was I in foster homes for 10 years when my father wanted me?".

"Should not lay down the law without explanation".

"Should be consistent. The social worker kept changing his mind; he didn't know what he was trying to achieve".

Information sharing: "Should explain their role and what their involvement with us is going to be".  
"Tell us everything".

Power sharing: "Should explain our rights and not pretend they have the power to make decisions about us when they don't".

Cultural sensitivity: "I understand what she was saying but I didn't understanding her reasoning. She had no idea how I felt as a Maori".

Parenting: "Parents aren't always to blame; children can be very manipulative".

"What did she know about raising children? She wasn't married and had never been a parent".

"Should keep parents informed when children are removed from home. I never saw the social worker again after she took my child".

**THE COMPETENT SOCIAL WORKER SHOULD:**

- have good organisational skills;
- have appropriate communication skills to ensure that information is clear, concise and understood;
- ensure that all information is given to enable clients to make informed decisions;
- ensure that the client is aware of their rights, the social worker's tasks, and the tasks of any other people involved;
- be culturally sensitive and aware of how the whanau/hapu/iwi systems operate;
- be discerning and aware of family dynamics and allow families to function in a way that is harmonious and less stressful for them;
- be consistent and state objectives clearly;
- have child care/parenting skills and
- advocate and uphold the right of clients.

### 3.0 ANALYSIS OF CHILDREN/YOUNG PERSONS CONSULTATION

The clients were in the age range 8-18 years. They had difficulty focusing on one social worker where they had had involvement with several. They tended to talk about the best or worst social worker, which was not always the current nor the longest serving social worker.

Generally older children held similar views on desirable social work qualities. Honesty was important. Dishonesty and lack of integrity determined the future child/social worker relationship. They were less forgiving than their caregivers if trust was violated.

Young people valued social workers with a sense of humour; this making up for failings in other areas of social service delivery.

The younger children were often uninformed about the role of the social worker and one said she did not have a social worker, even though she had been in care for over 12 months.

Children and young persons (C&YP) and whanau who had been through a Family Group Conference (FGC) process, frequently identified the co-ordinator as the social worker. This confusion arose because neither the social worker nor the co-ordinator made their roles clear to the children. The co-ordinator was usually Maori; the social worker Pakeha and the C&YP and their whanau identified with, and related to, the person of the same ethnic origin.

Some young persons felt they would have received better service had the social workers' decisions been supported by their social work supervisors. One senior supervisor overruled numerous agreements made by the social worker and the young person creating anger about the supervisor's powers, and concern about the inability of the social worker to appeal to a higher authority.

### 3.1 PARENTS/RELATIVES

We visited two solo fathers, six solo mothers, two aunts, one uncle and two foster-mothers.

The caregivers/whanau identified similar weaknesses in social workers to those of their charges. However, they gave credit to social workers who were understanding and supportive in helping to relieve stress in the family. Solo mothers in particular appreciated social workers who supported them.

Often C&YPs were removed from home and women bore the blame and guilt for the violent actions of men.

Parents did not like being threatened with ultimatums. They often felt they had no choices, were never given a second chance and were powerless to overrule an unjust decision.

The relatives who cared for children seemed the least informed of the clients. One was surprised that the young person in his care had had social welfare contact. Another, who had cared for 4 siblings over 10 years, was never sure of the children's status with the department. However, she acknowledged receiving good support from the children's social workers.

### 3.2 FOSTER-PARENTS

This group were the most satisfied with their social workers and with the social service delivery. They praised social workers for their efforts in servicing foster-parent needs. In one case, the foster-mother continually invalidated the child's feelings and comments about her social worker and it was obvious that all social work contact was with the foster-mother and not the child.

#### 4.0 COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS CONSULTATIONS

##### 4.1 VALUES

Cultural sensitivity: "Don't show tribal bias".

Attitudes: "Should have a positive and supportive attitude towards our initiatives".

"Allow us to determine our needs and support us by resourcing us to meet those needs".

"Change management attitudes; they dictate how staff operate".

"Frontline staff cannot work in a different way unless management is supporting them".

"Take an active interest in what we are doing. We feel we are low priority on a social worker's list of things to do".

#### THE COMPETENT COMMUNITY SOCIAL WORKER SHOULD:

- be client focused;
- be committed to community development and have an interest in working with community organisations;
- be supportive of community organisations' initiatives and help them achieve their goals;
- recognise and accept that community organisations are capable of identifying and determining their own community needs and
- treat all clients with equal respect.

## 4.2 KNOWLEDGE

- Cultural: Should have local tribal knowledge.  
Be sensitive to our values and priorities.
- Training: Know your job well.
- Specialisation: "I asked the community social worker twenty questions and he made twenty phone calls to try and find the answers".
- Policy: "Don't use policy as a means of withholding assistance".
- "If we meet 9 out of 10 criteria, surely this is a pass in anyone's language. Instead, this one point is used to decline our application for assistance".
- "We are not the enemy".

## THE COMPETENT COMMUNITY SOCIAL WORKER SHOULD:

- have a sound knowledge of departmental policy and procedures;
- be culturally appropriate and have knowledge of the kawa of the people;
- be well trained to work with community organisations and
- know their objectives, priorities and limitations.



### 4.3 SKILLS

Training: "We need specialist community social workers who have an interest in and the skills to work with community organisations".

Communication: "Talk to us in language we understand. Too often we are swamped with bureaucratic jargon and legalise designed (we think) to keep us confused and to stop us getting our hands on their money".

Information and power sharing: "Tell us what we are entitled to and help us to meet the criteria".

Writing: "Keep written information simple and easy to understand".

Organisational: "Plan time constructively. Don't arrive saying you can't stay long because of other pressing engagements".

"Too many excuses like "not enough cars, not enough staff, not enough money to get cars or staff".

#### THE COMPETENT COMMUNITY SOCIAL WORKER SHOULD:

- have good organisational skills to ensure the best use of time, energy and resources;
- have good writing skills;
- be able to give information clearly, concisely and in an easily understood language;
- be trained to work in the area of community development;

- be committed to using their knowledge and skills in support of community initiatives;
- support community organisation participation in departmental training programmes;
- work in the most constructive way for clients in terms of the departments policy and
- work in partnership with community organisations.

#### 5.0 ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS CONSULTATION

We visited eleven community organisations. They were involved in:

- |                                                                       |   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| - running access schemes for the young unemployed;                    | 2 |
| - healing families;                                                   | 1 |
| - "awhi nga tangata";                                                 | 3 |
| - working with sexually abused young females;                         | 1 |
| - giving financial assistance for disabled children;                  | 1 |
| - assisting the unemployed and beneficiaries;                         | 1 |
| - providing funding for young people to attend a technical institute; | 1 |
| - providing funds to maccess/access groups;                           | 1 |

There were six urban and five rural based community organisations and both groups had needs and problems in common. The rural organisations had additional problems due to their isolation and the higher profile of other hapu.

Rural organisations, often found their resources were needed by beneficiaries in financial stress; a significant part of their funds were used for this purpose. People criticized the benefits section of the department and social workers for not assisting groups to deal with benefits issues.

In general, organisations focused on specific sections and/or staff of the department, rather than on social workers in particular. Five organisations were not aware that there was a community services section and/or community social workers. Two groups who dealt with the community social worker felt that that social worker was neither qualified nor trained to do his job.

Five organisations tended to make contact with the most helpful staff member. This sometimes meant several visits to the local office until they found an appropriate person; often it was not a social worker.

Three community groups plus four spokeswomen from the hui felt there was a deliberate conspiracy to withhold information and to stop them from getting financial assistance. To overcome this, two community groups contacted neighbouring district offices for information before approaching the local office.

Eight community groups plus six spokeswomen from the hui felt the department showed little commitment to community development and they based this on the continuing obstructive practice of staff, preventing organisations from obtaining funding.

#### 6.0 COMPARISONS OF COMPETENCIES - MAORI

Of the C&YPs interviewed, six had been in social welfare care through action taken under the C&YP Act 1974, two were dealt with through a diversionary process, 3 whanau had children in care by "voluntary" agreement and two children had been dealt with through the FGC process.

The clients were not universal in their expectations of social worker qualities, however, those competencies stated by clients validates those developed departmentally.

Importance was given to social workers being knowledgeable and well trained in specific areas and there was no expectation for social workers to be experts in all areas of social work.

## 6.1 VALUES

Individual clients and community groups agree with the values and competencies developed departmentally. As is typical of the Maori nature, they are understanding of and make allowances for the ignorance of other ethnic groups and in this sense, all they ask of these social workers is that they be treated with the dignity, respect and sensitivity accorded to any human being in need.

Clients have expectations of Maori social workers to acknowledge, value and support the principles of Te Tiriti and Pua-te-ata-tu in order to eliminate the gaps which exist in all areas of development between the Maori people and the general population.

## 6.2 KNOWLEDGE

### 1. Fluency in te reo

Clients felt this was not as important as communicating in simple language uncluttered by bureaucratic terms.

### 2. Marae protocol

### 3. Iwi tikanga - Protocol

### 4. Marae management process

Clients felt that it was important for social workers to be aware of the difference between tribal groups, their kawa and management processes. While they had no expectations of social workers to be all knowing in these matters, they expected social workers to be guided by and to take their lead from the tangata whenua in such matters.

### 5. Iwi based development with tangata whenua consultation

Clients agreed that development should be iwi based and iwi driven.

### 6. A working knowledge of Te Tiriti and Puaoteata-tu

Clients saw this as a basic philosophy for working in an appropriate way in providing opportunities for Maori people to develop educational, personal, social, economic and cultural well-being in order to promote self sufficiency and eliminate attitudes of dependency.

### 7. Knowledge of the differing roles in Maori society e.g. Kuia, Kaumatua, Pakeke

Clients felt that the majority of Maori social workers would already know, acknowledge and have respect for these significant people in the whanau/hapu/iwi structure.

### 8. Their accountability to DSW, their client and to community groups.

### 9. DSW organisational structures.

10. The specific acts and policy statements of the Department and their effects on Maori people.

Clients saw this as part and parcel of the ongoing training and development of a social worker. They saw this as important in providing competent service and good information to clients. They also felt social workers should promote decision making in areas of importance to Maori communities.

11. The historical cause and effect of child abuse, care and protection and youth justice offending on whanau/hapu/iwi.

Women felt it was more important to understand and deal with

i) male violence in the whanau/community and the effects on the whanau and

ii) unemployment and the resultant stress for the family

Four families in one district independently commented that the best (ie. most helpful, competent and supportive) social worker had been a Pakeha woman of English descent. Without being knowledgeable or skilled in any of the above, she nevertheless dealt with families with respect to them as human beings and with sensitivity to their culture and values.

### 6.3 SKILLS

#### 1. Written, audio, visual communication

Clients see these skills being improved upon or developed through an ongoing process of training and experience.

#### 2. Assertiveness, confrontation skills

Important to have a positive attitude and good advocating skills.

#### 3. Written skills - relevant, concise, factual, discerning abilities

As for 1. above, clients see these skills as part of the necessary tools of the trade.

#### 4. Appropriately demonstrate knowledge of tikanga Maori eg. ability to: waiata, whaikorero, karanga and other roles.

An ability to perform their appropriate role within their tribal kawa.

As officers of DSW, clients do not see their social workers performing a dual role and so losing sight of the purpose for which they are dealing with clients. They expect social workers to show respect and to acknowledge marae protocol and procedures without feeling obliged to actively participate.

#### 5. Planning - priority goal setting - work load management - use of supervision and support.

Clients felt these skills were important in so far as making good use of time and resources. Good supervision and support was absolutely necessary for a front line social worker.

6. Ability to work actively with community to discuss resourcing needs. Negotiating skills.

Clients felt this to be an important aspect of a community social workers job and felt training/commitment to be sadly lacking in this area.

7. Conflict/stress management - for self and others.

8. Ability to work collectively to ensure accountability and support.

i) Women felt they needed a great deal of support in this area particularly when having to cope with violence and financial hardship in the home.

ii) Community groups felt this was important in order to encourage Maori participation towards self determination.

9. Sense of Humour.

Important to C&YP in particular - a good sense of humour tended to get the relationship off on a good footing.

10. Ability to share information and resources - with colleagues, clients and community.

Community groups saw this as important and necessary in order for them to appropriately resource and achieve their goals.

Clients felt this was important in order for them to make good decisions based on all the options available.

11. Ability to identify own boundaries - i.e. strengths and weaknesses.

Clients recognise the limitations of social workers and do not expect them to be all things to all people. They therefore expect to be dealt with honestly and to be referred to appropriate people where necessary.



12. Ability to identify own learning needs and identify resources to meet them.
13. An ability to work with whanau/hapu/iwi.

Clients felt it was important for social workers to be aware of the dynamics and value systems of Maori families. Families who had not had a social worker of the same ethnic origin often felt misunderstood and pre-judged from an entirely different set of values/standards.

14. Ability to activate principles of
  - (a) Treaty of Waitangi
  - (b) Puaoteata-tu
  - (c) policy change

Community groups in particular felt it was important for social workers to honour the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and Puaoteata-tu through exercising their powers reasonably and in good faith so as to actively protect and promote Maori interests.

## 7.0 SUMMARY

At present there is a mismatch in the ethnic make-up of the client group compared with that of the social workers. In the majority of cases, Maori families were visited by Pakeha social workers; one whanau had seven pakeha social workers over 10 years.

While there were some matters that any social worker could deal with, clients felt other matters would have been better handled by a social worker of the same ethnic background.

Community organisations are confused about the role, tasks and responsibilities of social workers and these organisations lack information about access to departmental resources.

This lack of clarity has led to anger, scepticism and confusion among community organisations. They have no faith in the department's commitment to community development.

Clients recognised the limitations of social workers. They felt one generic social worker was unlikely to have the knowledge, skills, resources or training to service the needs of all clients. Clients and community organisations felt they would receive better service by having specialist social workers.

Individuals, families and community organisations felt that if greater emphasis was given to helping them, the present style of planning and implementing social services needed to change.

Managers and senior supervisors would need to work differently supporting social service providers be they paid workers or volunteers. This could be achieved by appointing social workers who are interested, skilled and knowledgeable in a specific area of work.

They must be committed to working with whanau, hapu, iwi and the wider community and a commitment to Puaote-ata-tu is essential.

Some of the present social workers may wish to work in other areas. As one client stated;

"Puaote-ata-tu is a myth created by white people to ease their consciences. Puaote-ata-tu means employing more brown lackeys at basic grade level while the Pakeha retains the power positions".

APPENDIX A

\*\*\*\*\* CLIENTS INTERVIEWED \*\*\*\*\*

Interviews carried out with children/young persons & caretakers.

<u>M/F</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Child/YP</u>	<u>Parents</u>	<u>Mother</u>	<u>Father</u>	<u>Fosterparent</u>
F	18yrs	yes	-	-	-	-
F	17yrs	yes	yes	-	-	-
F	16yrs	yes	-	-	-	-
M	16yrs	yes	-	yes(solo)	-	-
M	15yrs	yes	-	-	-	yes
M	15yrs	yes	-	-	yes(solo)	-
F	15yrs	yes	-	yes(solo)	-	-
F	15yrs	yes	-	declined	-	-
F	12yrs	yes	-	yes(solo)	-	yes
F	8yrs	yes	-	yes(solo)	-	-

\*\*\*\*\*

Interviews carried out with parents/caretakers where child was not available for interview.

<u>M/F</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Child/YP</u>	<u>Parents</u>	<u>Mother</u>	<u>Father</u>	<u>Relative</u>
	9 chn	-	-	yes(solo)	-	-
	2 chn	-	-	yes	-	-
F	15yrs	(holiday)	-	-	-	Aunt
M	17yrs	(holiday)	-	-	-	Uncle

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\* COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS INTERVIEWED \*\*\*\*\*

Community groups - 11

6 Urban  
5 Rural

NAME OF GROUP: \_\_\_\_\_

PERSON INTERVIEWED: \_\_\_\_\_

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS

1. What was the purpose of your contact with the DSW community social workers?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. In what context did you first meet the social worker (e.g. community meeting, organisation meeting, one to one).

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What other kinds of meetings have you had?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What did you expect of the social worker in each context? (e.g. instant money, advice, information, meeting skills, bi-cultural skills).

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Were you satisfied with these contacts?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. What do you think a community social worker's key tasks are? (e.g. giving out money, negotiating contracts, providing information & advice, helping with funding/accounts/training monitoring and evaluation).

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. What do you expect community social workers to know to be effective in their work? (e.g. DSW policy, requirements for contracts, monitoring and evaluation methods, culturally appropriate behaviour).

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. What skills do you expect social workers to have?  
(e.g. communication, facilitation, negotiating, cultural,  
organisational, meeting, research).

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9. What values/attitudes should a social worker have in order  
to work effectively?

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10. What do you think is the most important quality a community  
social worker should have in order to do a good job?

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11. Any other comments?

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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ AGE: \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT/CARETAKER: \_\_\_\_\_

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR INDIVIDUALS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Purpose

To find out what type of social workers people want.

Communication

1. What was your first contact with the social worker?  
(i.e. through court, police referral, a call to DSW from the family for help, other).

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Did the social worker explain her/his function and what her/his involvement with you would be?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Did the social worker involve your parents/family in the first meeting?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Was the social worker easy to talk?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Did the social worker listen and understand you?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Did you understand the social worker?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you think the social worker understood what you were saying and how you were feeling?

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Did the social worker tell you what was going to happen to you?

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Did the social worker give you information about other people or places where you might get help.

\_\_\_\_\_

10. Did the social worker tell you everything you wanted to know?

\_\_\_\_\_

11. Were you happy with the way the interview went?

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12. What did you like best about the social worker?

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Tasks

13. Did the social worker support you when you had to deal with other people? (e.g. doctor, police, courts, school, institutions, FGC.)

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14. Was your social worker good at making arrangements for you? ( i.e. transport to/from appointments, arranging clothing orders, pocket money, outings).

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---

15. Was your social worker reliable? (keeping appointments, letting you know of any changes or making alternative arrangements).

---

16. Was your social worker easy to contact when you needed him/her?

---

17. Did your social worker always do what s/he said s/he would?

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---

Skills

18. What was the best thing the social worker did for you?

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19. What did the social worker do that you disliked the most or that really upset you?

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Values

20. Were you happy with the social worker's attitude towards you, your family or friends?

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21. What do you think is the most important quality a social worker should have in order to do a good job?

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# **Taiki Enterprises**

Consultants in:

Management Development: Social Services:

P.O. Box 28-065, Karburn, Wellington, NZ  
Telephone: (04) 767-380

## **SOCIAL SERVICE COMPETENCY PROJECT**

### **PACIFIC ISLANDS CLIENT CONSULTATION REPORT**

#### **Introduction**

This report is an aggregate of the team work of Pacific Islands workers in Mangere, Auckland, and Porirua, Wellington. This was managed by Malia Ponifasio, Apiti Rongo-Raea and Toaiga Su'a-Huirua.

#### **Acknowledgement**

We would like to thank all the people who assisted with the interviews and all the families who willingly gave of themselves and their stories.

It is the poignancy of the content given by the families that led us to conclude that in order to preserve their integrity, it was incumbent on the team to present the material in a way that would ensure a direct link to the education, training and certification.

#### **Sample**

The sample generated by the computer was inappropriate for our purposes. It was therefore necessary for us to obtain samples that were representative of the Pacific Island Communities. We therefore decided to confine our samples to people and organisations in Mangere and Porirua.

- in total we visited 29 individuals and families and
- 10 groups and organisations.

# **Taiki Enterprises**

Consultants In:

Management Development: Social Services:

P.O. Box 28-065, Kaitiaki, Wellington, N.Z.  
Telephone: (04) 767-360

## **Objectives of the Project**

- 1 - to ensure that every departmental social worker is trained and qualified to do their job, and
  - 2 - to ensure that the department has an ongoing system to train for, and recognise, practice competence through an externally accredited certificate of competence.
- In terms of (1) there are two important strands:
- (a) relates to the culture and activities of the department and
  - (b) relates to the culture and activities of external actors/actresses and organisations whose behaviour is predominantly based on lifestyles.

## **Assumptions**

- Consequently we believe that:
  - there will be a direct link with training, education and certification and therefore there are consequences in terms of how our material is presented, so that it is captured in a way that is consistent with the views of those people/organisations interviewed.
- Our inquiries led us to conclude that 'professionalism' in social work with Pacific Island people is based around the concept of 'FAMILY', whereas other material presented to date by other writers has been based around the prescriptions of the project.

# **Taiki Enterprises**

Consultants in:

Management, Development, Social Services:

P.O. Box 23-065, Kelburn, Wellington, N.Z.  
Telephone: (04) 767-380

## **Questions**

Our questions centred around ideas relating to:

what did the social worker do

what would have improved the way in which social work services were delivered to you and/or your family

how would you have improved the way in which the social worker dealt with you

what resources should the social worker offer young people and parents

case conferences - who made the decision

what was your part in the decision-making

what improvements would you like made

change of social workers - what was the process

what was your role in that process

any other matters you consider important

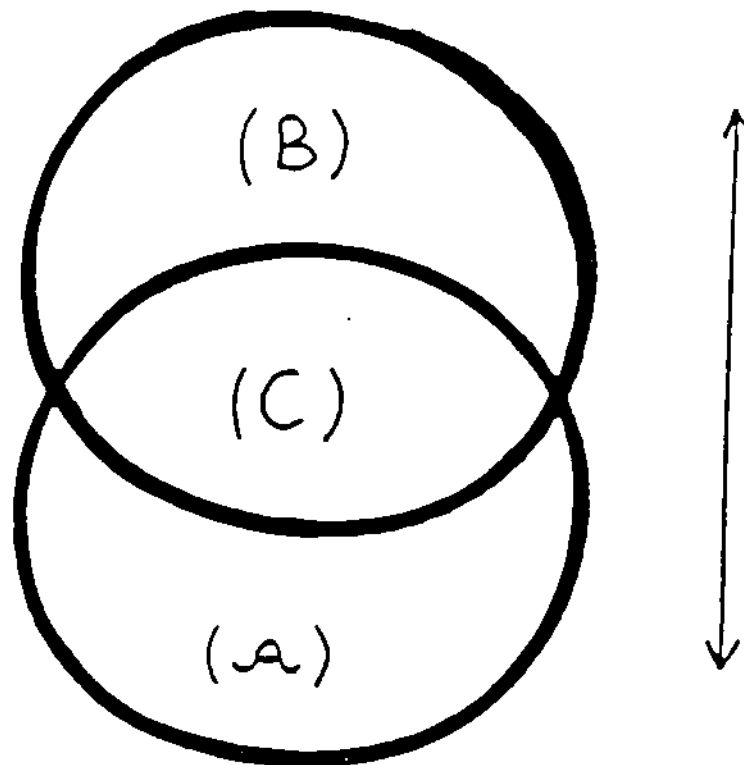
# Taiki Enterprises

Consultants in:

Management Development: Social Services:

P.O. Box 28-065, Kaitiaki, Wellington, N.Z.  
Telephone: (04) 767-360

## THE ECLIPSE MODEL



- 1 The Eclipse Model is an attempt to synthesize the feedback into a cohesive response that can be utilized to:
  - inform the practitioners workshop for Pacific Island Social Workers, and
  - as a starting point for strategies relating to the development of competencies.

# Taiki Enterprises

Consultants in:

Management Development: Social Services:

P.O. Box 28-065, Kaitiaki, Wellington, N.Z.  
Telephone: (04) 767-360

2 Basically the information provided can be divided into three particular areas:

(a) relates to the indigenous cultures of the various Pacific Island groups.

"There is a need to be fluent in the Pacific Island mother tongue and the cultural protocol and cultural practices of the particular Pacific Island group".

"Pacific Islands ways of practice should be acknowledged and actioned, everything done in Pacific Island ways"

"Pacific Island way is  
- Alofa

- Aroa

- 'Oha

- Fakalofa"

"Spiritual side of the Pacific Islands is sacred and deep"

"There are a lot of issues and adjustments our people need to make in New Zealand"

(b) relates to the cultures of those P I groups within the New Zealand Society.

"Palagi social workers have a different approach - they dictate"

"We've been sitting here doing nothing, while the police and social worker are doing all the work"

"Even though young person was New Zealand born, she would have preferred the social worker to use simple English than the long words that could not be understood."

"Would have liked her to have spoken to her parents in their mother tongue"

"Ensuring dependency on the professionals is aided by taking the parents' right to be key players in the decision-making for their children/young person's welfare.....patronising approach."

# **Taiki Enterprises**

Consultants in:

Management Development: Social Services:

P.O. Box 28-065, Kaitiaki, Wellington, N.Z.  
Telephone: (04) 767-360

(c) relates to the emergence of a unique set of cultures that have, and will continue to develop from the New Zealand experience.

**"Family wanted to be heard, acknowledged and taken seriously"**

**"A family, but not without a struggle"**

**"Empowering parents not by the social workers intervention but by the basic strength and belief and conviction of the effectiveness of the cultural processes, fa'a Samoa"**

**"They give us respect, they respect us"**

3 It is intended to demonstrate a dynamic movement over a time period.

The 'Eclipse' idea signifies a unity and a coming together of the indigenous culture within the New Zealand experience.

**"Without the different age groups, there can be no learning"**

# Pakeha Client Consultation

## Social Work Competencies Project

Gray Matter  
Research Ltd

## PAKEHA CLIENT CONSULTATION REPORT

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## 1. Background

The client consultation reported on in this paper is part of the Social Work Competencies Certification project being carried out by the Department of Social Welfare Head Office.

The aims of the project are:

- To identify the knowledge, value and skills competencies required to carry out departmental social work tasks;
- To provide a structure to promote supervision and training to ensure people have the opportunity to develop their competence;
- To provide a process to credit people for their prior learning experiences which relate to the competence criteria.

The terms of reference for the project include provision for client feedback, not as an evaluation of the outcomes of social work intervention, but as an integrity check for competencies generated by the Department.

## 2. Aim

The aim of the client consultation is (a) to report on the knowledge, values and skills identified by clients as important for social work and (b) to compare these with the competencies previously developed.

## 3. Methodology

Separate consultations were carried out for Maori, Pacific Island and Pakeha groups. This report covers Pakeha clients only. Two client groups were consulted: - individual clients and their families who have had social work contact over the last six months but whose cases are now closed, and community groups or organisations currently receiving funding from the Department.

Three District Offices and two residential centres were sampled for the Pakeha research. Individual clients in these areas were randomly selected by Head Office staff from computer records and District Offices were asked to check their addresses, telephone numbers and ethnicity. Ethnicity was the most difficult aspect to check and in the event, one client thought to be Pakeha was in fact Maori. It was also difficult to obtain up to date addresses and telephone numbers.

Head Office staff sent letters to those selected, advising them of the research and seeking their co-operation in taking part. Clients were asked to reply giving their consent. Very few did so and with pressures of time, staff rang as many as possible to confirm their willingness to take part. In some cases researchers made the initial approach on the basis of the Head Office letter.

Community groups were selected to give a representative sample. They were telephoned by Head Office and asked to take part. All but one of those initially selected commented on the role of community service social workers, while one person commented as a foster parent.

#### Comments on the Sample

As noted, the computer records did not yield very reliable information about clients. Apart from difficulties with addresses, telephone numbers and ethnicity, it was found that some of the clients selected had had only minimal contact with the Department and were therefore unable to comment on the basis of their own experience.

The following table describes the interviews completed:

Individual Clients*	9
Parents	12
Fosterparents	2
Whanau	2
	---
	25

\* Two clients were infants and could not therefore be contacted directly.

#### Community Groups:

Selected initially	13
Interviewed	12

Six clients initially selected could not be contacted or located; four declined to take part and no contact was made with either them or their families; three clients declined to take part or contact with them was declined by their parents but contact was made with other family members.

#### 4. Findings

##### (a) Community Groups' Comments

Community groups were asked briefly about the contacts they had had with community services social workers. They then had the opportunity to discuss the knowledge, skills and attitudes or values they thought community services social workers should have to carry out their tasks. They identified eight main tasks.

##### Tasks

###### (i) General Support

Several groups described the community services social work task in general terms before going on to detail more specific aspects of the work. General comments included:

'The task of the social worker is seen as facilitating, empowering and supporting the growth of the organisation to see that service needs are met etc. Money is not always the most important - support is more important where the group is isolated from other social service agencies.'

'The task of the social worker is to support groups and agencies working in the community.'

###### (ii) Clarification of Roles

Several groups thought it was important to clarify the roles of the social worker and agency respectively. One agency gave examples of role confusion between the agency and the Department and felt that 'Social workers need to familiarise themselves with the agency and give more information re their role.'

###### (iii) Funding

Provision of or help with access to funding was very important to community groups. Nearly every one mentioned this as a community services social work task. They wanted full, reliable information about DSW schemes and allocations as well as information about other funding sources. Some typical comments were:

'The role of the social worker is funding programmes, information sharing, consultation re DSW allocations to programmes. The social worker needs to know what funding is available and where to go if they can't get it.'

'Funding requires knowledge, information, explanation of government policy, to be up with the play about changes that have taken place, knowledge of DSW resources, communication ability and a matter of fact approach.'

(iv) Monitoring, Assessment and Accountability

These were seen as appropriate community services social work tasks.

'A social work task is to monitor and evaluate community service programmes so service delivery and accountability requirements are met. A huge task - they need experience/knowledge to carry it out.'

'The social worker needs lots of feedback, and to have a finger on what we're actually up to. The monthly one page report forms (for accountability) say little. We need discussion and feedback from the social worker, to talk over rather than just fill in the forms. The social worker needs to communicate freely, help community groups to formulate issues and tell us the questions we need to ask.'

(v) Giving Advice

Groups were divided over whether or not community services social workers should give advice.

'The social worker is there to listen - not so much as an advisor or to tell people what to do.'

'Social worker is needed to make helpful suggestions or to offer advice (e.g. library books, videos, other resources)'

(vi) Needs assessment

One group felt that it is a community services social work task to carry out needs assessments.

'The social worker is not doing needs assessment and they should be. DSW is trying to get community groups as a whole to decide priorities rather than through the legal process of contracting. The Department is offloading its responsibilities.'

(vii) Negotiating Contracts

Some groups wanted assistance in negotiating contracts and felt this was a community services social work task.

(vii) Other

One group thought it was a community services social work task to organise training and provide support, counselling and supervision for agencies such as theirs. Another felt the social worker should understand the purpose of training and facilitate requests for funding for it.

Knowledge

Community groups identified five main areas of knowledge community services social workers should have to carry out their tasks satisfactorily.

(i) General and specific community knowledge.

'Social worker needs fair background of other community groups in the community and should know how DSW can work in with community groups.'

'Knowledge of what the guiding principles are within the disabled community and those of DSW e.g. consumer focus, equity, accessibility, normalisation (and conflict between this and the need to develop in a supportive environment).'

(ii) Knowledge of policy, resources, legal matters and procedures.

'Knowledge of schemes, how they work, where funding comes from.'

'Knowledge of laws pertaining to the Department; social welfare policy; knowledge of resources and avenues for money; knowledge of resources to enable clients' needs to be met.'

(iii) Management, accounting and budgeting practices

Community groups wanted their social worker to know about management, budgeting and accounting practices and particularly about contracting out services.

'Knowledge of contracting out will be necessary with

the changing role of the Department, so accountancy knowledge will be important. They also need budgeting knowledge.'

'Knowledge of contracting out counselling services to community groups.'

'Need knowledge of management so groups that are struggling can be pointed in the right direction.'

(iv) Life Skills

Several groups thought their social worker should know about 'life' in order to be able to understand client groups including dysfunctional families, solo parents, people with disabilities and so on.

'A social worker is exactly what it says - 'social'-you're looking at the social aspects of people. Training is no substitute, it comes from experience, life and living skills of their own. Not just academic but living skills. Someone who's been through the mill and come through it.'

(v) Bicultural issues were raised by several groups. One thought community services social workers should have a 'working knowledge of bicultural issues - a real understanding and respect of the cultures the social worker is working with.'

Skills

Community groups were able to identify a wide variety of skills they thought community services social workers should have. These skills can be grouped into three categories:

(i) Communication Skills

This category includes listening, interviewing and negotiating skills as well as the ability to give good information and admit mistakes or lack of knowledge. Groups were emphatic that community services social workers should be able to communicate well both verbally and in writing, and do so in a non-judgemental and non-confrontational fashion.

They wanted them to have the ability to build rapport and trust and develop a positive relationship with organisations. The ability to speak to groups and facilitate meetings was also valued as was the ability to network and understand political matters.

## (ii) Analytical and Business Skills

Most groups felt that social workers should be able to discern needs and define problems. They should also have financial and budgeting skills and be able to monitor and evaluate programmes.

## (iii) Styles of Working

This category includes skills such as being able to work as part of a team, being flexible, reliable and well-organised and being able to 'switch off' and not become emotionally involved. Some groups also wanted social workers to be able to work in a culturally-appropriate manner, others thought that 'people should be treated as people regardless of their race.'

Some quotes illustrate these points:

'Social workers need to be co-operative team members, good communicators and good case managers; provide client feedback and information to other professionals; make joint decisions and be good managers of resources.'

'They need the ability to recognise where the community's frustration comes from and not ignore it and the ability to understand differences between national and regional levels.'

'The social worker should have the ability to: network and pass on information from community groups; run a meeting; focus on issues rather than personalities; be assertive; admit when they are wrong; be human and not hide behind jargon, and have a sense of humour.'

'Social worker needs to be non-judgemental, putting people first and have the ability to be objective, to analyse situations.'

'Social worker needs good communication skills and a thick skin. As resources become scarcer there are going to be more disappointed people.'

## Values and Attitudes

### (i) Openness and Honesty

When discussing attitudes and values, community groups focused on the need for openness, honesty, and sensitivity to individuals, organisations and cultures. Again there was a strong feeling that community

services social workers should not be judgemental, dictatorial or patronising.

'Social worker's attitude needs to be one of openness, friendliness, willingness to share information and ability to give good information - if the social worker doesn't have it, they will do something to get it.'

'They need an accepting and non-judgemental Department where they can be honest as to their feelings. DSW needs to create this atmosphere for honesty. Social workers need to be in touch with where they are as people - clients, in fact everybody, is astute as to where people are at, no matter how down and out they are. Do not have double standards as young people pick up on these straightaway.'

(ii) Awareness of Own Values

Several groups felt that community services social workers should be aware of their own values.

'Social workers need to be aware of their own values and why they have them, and aware of cultural differences. If there are things in the social worker's background that are not dealt with this can be a problem. It is difficult to be open.'

(iii) Focus on People

A number of groups felt that community services social workers should put people ahead of money or a rigid adherence to policy.

'A good social worker needs to be able to relate to the person regardless of age (or race etc). They need to be across the board people who can change their attitude according to the person they are with.'

'Need to put people ahead of money, must value people because that's who they are working with.'

'Social workers should not play God. They should know they are sitting in a position of power.'

(iv) Sensitivity to Other Cultures

Groups expressed a range of views about community services social workers and biculturalism. While several stressed the need for sensitivity to other cultures, others felt the emphasis on biculturalism needed to be moderated.



'In this office there seems to be a fixation with the Maori issue. The local DSW office attitude is "a Maori has a problem, a Maori should deal with it." Well, we have Maori clients here who don't want that and prefer a pakeha.'

'DSW has a clear policy on biculturalism. It would be better not to be so clear because of the complexities of issues in a particular community. They need to be sensitive to things beyond their own experience.'

'DSW has a bias towards Maori organisations and clients and as an articulate pakeha women, she and social worker could not get on.'

#### (b) Comparison of Community Group Comments With Draft Competencies

##### Tasks

The draft competencies for community services social workers identifies eleven tasks with associated knowledge and skills.

The eleven tasks can be summarised as:

1. Funding
2. Maintaining overview of community service needs
3. Negotiating contracts
4. Training
5. Disseminating information
6. Providing advice to departmental managers
7. Monitoring and evaluation
8. Needs assessment as provided for in CYP and F Act
9. Promote co-ordination and co-operation
10. Providing support and advice
11. Approving and assessing services.

(i) Agencies agreed with the priority given to funding in the draft competencies.

(ii) There was little specific discussion of needs assessments. The one group that did mention these felt they were a departmental responsibility that was not at present being carried out.

(iii) Groups agreed that negotiating contracts is a community services social work task.

- (iv) Only two groups mentioned training as a community services social work task, one wanting help with its provision, the other with funding for training. Overall, the groups interviewed did not appear to see identification of training needs or help with provision of training as a high priority task for community services social workers.
- (v) Groups agreed that it is an important community services social work task to keep community groups informed on needs, provisions and gaps in available services.
- (vi) Community groups did not refer to the task of providing policy advice to departmental managers.
- (vii) Agencies agreed that monitoring and evaluation are an important community services social work task.
- (viii) Agencies did not specifically refer to the provision of needs assessments as provided for in the CYP&F Act.
- (ix) The general comments of agencies supported the promotion of co-ordination and co-operation among agencies as a community services social work task, although few referred to the task directly.
- (x) All agencies identified the provision of support, and resources to agencies as a community services social work task, but some agencies felt it was not a departmental task to give advice.
- (xi) Only one agency referred to the approval and assessment of services under the CYP&F Act. That group felt that community services social workers do not have the background to assess residential care. They argued that community services social workers are selected for their community networking abilities, not for making decisions of this kind.

Community agencies referred to one task not spelt out in the competencies paper - the clarification of the respective roles of the community services social worker and the agency. One group went so far as to suggest there should be contracts about goals and tasks to clarify role definition and boundaries.

## Knowledge

The draft competencies paper identifies a range of knowledge community services social workers should have to fulfil their tasks. These are discussed in the same order as above.

- (i) The groups interviewed placed great importance on community services social workers knowing about departmental schemes, allocations and criteria for accessing funds. They also wanted social workers to know about other sources of funds.
- (ii) No areas of knowledge were identified for task two in the competencies paper. However, community groups stressed the need for community services social workers to know their communities well and to maintain good personal networks.
- (iii) Groups agreed that departmental social workers should know about contracting procedures and requirements.
- (iv) One group agreed that the community services social worker should be able to assist community organisations in identifying training needs and resources. Another felt that the social worker should understand the training initiatives of groups and not withhold funding through lack of understanding.
- (v) All groups agreed that a community services social worker should be able to demonstrate knowledge of their community and know different methods of presenting information.
- (vi) Community groups did not comment specifically on the knowledge needed to develop departmental policy, although one group felt a community services social worker should be able to act as an advocate for groups.
- (vii) Groups agreed with the knowledge competencies outlined for monitoring and evaluating services.
- (viii) While not discussing needs assessments specifically, community agencies felt strongly that community services social workers should demonstrate knowledge of liaison and consultation processes.
- (ix) Community groups agreed with the knowledge competencies set out in the competencies paper for promoting co-ordination and co-operation among social service agencies.

- (x) The community agencies interviewed identified strongly with each of the knowledge competencies associated with providing support, advice and resources to social service organisations.
- (xi) Community groups did not comment on the knowledge required to undertake approval and assessment of community services and registration of Homes.

The groups interviewed felt that community services social workers should know about management practices and budgeting techniques in order to be able to help community organisations. These competencies are not specifically identified in the competencies paper.

Knowledge of bicultural issues is not included in the knowledge sections of the paper either (apart from the need to have a knowledge of cultural protocol), although it is covered in the general social work competencies paper.

Finally, groups put a strong emphasis on life experience and knowledge of different situations and circumstances. It may be difficult to cover these in a competencies paper but the views of the community should not be ignored.

#### Skills

Skills identified in the competencies paper were very similar to those identified by the community groups as appropriate and necessary for community services social workers.

- (i) With regard to funding, community groups agreed that community services social workers should be able to assess the need for allocating funds, access departmental funding and analyse financial accounts and reports.
- (ii) They agreed that community services social workers should be able to assess community service needs accurately.
- (iii) They agreed that community services social workers should be skilled in assessing the feasibility of contracts as well as in negotiating and preparing them. The ability to communicate across cultures was recognised as a general skill rather than specific to this task.
- (iv) The community groups did not specifically identify the skills associated with the training task. However, one group stressed the need for community services social workers to understand when groups organised their own training.

- (v) Community groups wanted clear, reliable information and felt that community services social workers should have good written and verbal skills in order to convey it. They agreed that a community services social worker should be able to identify 'community' and community groups.
- (vi) Community organisations did not identify policy-making skills as essential for community services social workers.
- (vii) Community agencies wanted community services social workers to be able to evaluate and monitor programmes and they wanted to be consulted during the process and given feedback on the results.
- (viii) The community agencies agreed that community services social workers should be able to liaise with groups in an appropriate manner, consult with them and share information. One group noted that they should also be able to assess needs - and actually do so.
- (ix) The community groups identified all the skills associated in the competencies paper with promoting co-ordination and co-operation among social service agencies.
- (x) Various community agencies discussed the three skills identified with providing support, advice and resources to social service organisations. They thought they were important but queried whether staff currently had these skills.
- (xi) There was little discussion by community groups of the skills required to assess services for approval under the CYP&F Act. However, experience was identified as important.

Community groups put considerable emphasis on styles of working. Most of the skills they identified are discussed in the competencies paper in relation to specific tasks e.g. demonstrating negotiation and communication skills, being objective and being able to work as a member of a team and share power by sharing knowledge and processes. It is important that these skills be recognised as basic to community services social workers' ability to carry out their tasks satisfactorily.

#### Attitudes and Values

Openness, honesty and a non-judgemental and non-patronising approach were what community groups wanted in a community services social worker. Most of these are covered in the basic

competencies paper, although nowhere is the word 'non-judgemental' actually used.

The importance of sharing information and power is recognised in the basic competencies paper and elsewhere, as is the need for community services social workers to be aware of their own values base.

Community groups' wish that community services social workers should think of people ahead of policy or financial considerations is difficult to encapsulate as a competency but significant nevertheless.

Some of the pakeha groups interviewed felt there needed to be more balance in cultural matters. Some thought that too much emphasis was being placed on meeting Maori needs or on working in a 'Maori style' - pakeha groups still need support.

(c) Residential Clients' Comments

Three residential clients and their families/whanau commented on their experiences of social work staff. This enabled them to describe what a good residential social worker should do and be. First they identified a number of social work tasks.

Tasks

- (i) Organise Family Group Conferences and prepare clients and their families for them by providing all the necessary information and ensuring that everyone attends. One family member commented:

'We had two impromptu meetings and a Family Group Conference. We were told we had to have it but we weren't informed we had to have all these people there. We had the preliminary meeting to fortify ourselves and our social worker was there. The next one was with someone else.'

'We had Family Group Conferences but my son didn't turn up to most of them. The social worker should have had an insight to go and pick him up and make sure he turned up. She let it go too long.'

- (ii) Keep clients and their families informed of processes and procedures. Give them enough information about what is happening, early enough.

'She used to ring up and say, "He's going to Court today. Are you coming?"'

'They should keep in touch. My parents never even got a phone call or a letter and they got angry. DSW said they'd be in contact before the court date, but for three court appearances nothing happened.'

'I would have liked to have been informed about what was happening. I had to ring the social worker. I would rather she had rung me.'

- (iii) Be prompt in making practical arrangements.

'Took them a long time to deal with the money. They need more money and quicker payments for board and pocket money and clothes.'

- (iv) Make home visits rather than expecting clients and their families to visit the social worker all the time.

'We always had to go in. I think social workers should make more home visits.'

'I thought she should come and see you more.'

(v) Support parents

'They should support parents a bit more. I felt blamed for what he did.'

'When you're a parent and you're really upset, you really need someone who's going to sit down and make you feel better. You need some reassurance.'

(vi) Collect appropriate information for Court appearances etc.

'There was so much mucking around when we went to Court, not having the right information for the Judge. He kept getting remanded for another week. It went on and on and drove me crazy. In the end I got fed up and stopped going.'

(vii) Be available

'It was hard to track the social worker down, especially at night. Hard to track down the alternative care team. Seven to eight times out of ten you got the answerphone.'

(viii) Look at alternative solutions and other resources.

'They only told me about Tough Love and he wouldn't go for counselling. They should have the resources to do something, like get a young fellow a job or allocate him money if he's paying board or pocket money.'

## Knowledge

(i) Know the Act

'The law changed and they didn't know much about it and they didn't know enough about the justice system.'

'We were one of the first families to come under the new law. They were always referring to the manual.'

(ii) Know about other resources

'They need to know every other available support service that is out there and list every agency with



after hours numbers, all on one piece of paper for by the phone.'

## Skills

Communication skills were what clients and families most wanted in a social worker.

- (i) Good listening and communication skills, easy to talk to and non-judgemental.

'He is very easy to talk to, on our level, knew where we were coming from. He made you feel good after you'd talked to him. Sometimes it was frustrating but that was usually the law or the red tape.'

'The first one was easier to talk to. Understood better because he had kids of his own. He listened to what you had to say. One of them didn't take me seriously enough.'

'A good social worker should chat for ages, not just about problems but about life, not just about "What's wrong with you today?"'

'Better if you had a social worker who dealt with younger people who knew what they were doing, who could talk to them, more on today's basis. Not older people. You really want a round table talk where people talk to find out what is happening and not judgemental and nagging. You need an even tone.'

- (ii) Be relaxed and at ease, not ingratiating.

'I didn't like sympathy. I wanted to be left alone and they kept trying to be comforting. I didn't like them saying that they knew what I was going through. Inside I was saying, "Bullshit". They should behave more "normal", not so "lovey", not always sitting there saying "Yes, dear, no, dear."'

'Sometimes I felt they were maybe a little "palavering", trying to get on her good side.'

- (iii) Be able to get along with the whole family.

'It's important that they get along with the family otherwise it mucks up what the kids are trying to do.'

- (iv) Have life experience

'To be a social worker you don't have to have a degree

or anything. It's more important that you can relate to people.'

#### Attitudes and Values

The attitudes and values clients wanted social workers to have reflected the skills they had identified. They wanted non-judgemental, non-patronising social workers who were considerate, caring, understanding and trustworthy.

'You need to be able to trust them. If you say you don't want them to tell anyone they won't. I hate it when someone betrays your trust. They need to be able to relate to things, be understanding.'

#### (d) Comparison of Residential Clients' Comments With Residential Services Draft Competency Paper

The Residential Services Draft Competency Paper identifies nine tasks for residential social workers (excluding the area of secure care). These are summarised as:

1. Negotiating with police and other agencies
2. Attend Family Group Conference
3. Admit and induct young people to residence
4. Record admission details
5. Develop and implement plan
6. Assess young person while in residence
7. Review plan and/or placement
8. Prepare report on plan and placement
9. Assess options on discharge.

- (i) One family member discussed a negotiating role for the residential social worker prior to the placement of her child. She felt the family's wishes were not always sufficiently taken into account. Another wanted more alternatives looked at, if not prior to placement in a home, then at least while the child was in care.
- (ii) Clients and their families agreed that the residential social worker should attend the Family Group Conference.
- (iii) None of those interviewed identified induction to the residence as a specific residential social work task.
- (iv) None referred to recording admission details as a separate task.
- (v) While clients and families did not refer specifically

to implementation of the plan developed at the Family Group Conference as a residential social work task, they did discuss ongoing contacts as important and wanted to be involved in and informed of future developments.

- (vi) Clients and families wanted ongoing contact with residential social workers during placement and would agree that assessment is a residential social work task.
- (vii) Clients and families agreed that plans and placements should be reviewed by residential social workers.
- (viii) Clients and family members did not identify the preparation of reports on placements as a social work task.
- (ix) Clients and families agreed that residential social workers should assess placement options on discharge. They wanted to be involved in this process.

Clients and their families identified some tasks not spelt out in the competency paper. These included: keeping families informed of what was happening to their children; being prompt in making practical arrangements; supporting parents; and being available.

#### Knowledge

Clients identified only two areas of knowledge - knowledge of the Act and knowledge of other resources. The competencies paper identifies further areas of knowledge including:

- (i) Negotiating, networking and liaison skills
- (ii) Knowledge of the residence and the the process of induction and separation from family
- (iii) Knowledge of the needs of the client, staff and other resources in developing plan
- (iv) Knowledge of evaluation, stress management, and organisational management techniques
- (v) Knowledge of the resources of the whanau, hapu and iwi.

#### Skills

The skills identified by clients and their families were less specific than those identified in the residential social work competencies paper. However, they implicitly recognised many of the skills identified in the paper.

- (i) Clients and families did not specifically identify negotiating skills as important although they implicitly recognised the need for them.
- (ii) Clients and families agreed that residential social workers should be able to work well in the Family Group Conference.
- (iii) While families and clients agreed that residential social workers needed skills in working and communicating with clients, they did not describe these skills in the detail set out in the paper.
- (iv) Clients did not discuss recording or computer skills.
- (v) Again, clients agreed that residential social workers should have a wide range of skills in developing and implementing plans and in assessing young people in residence.
- (vi) Clients agreed that good communication and assessment skills are needed to review plans and placements.
- (vii) Clients did not discuss report writing skills.
- (viii) Clients and their families agreed that options on discharge should be fully assessed.

Clients identified the ability to be impartial and to draw on life experience as useful skills for residential social workers.

#### Attitudes and Values

The non-judgemental, non-patronising attitudes clients wanted in their residential social workers are implicit rather than explicit in the residential competencies paper. Nor is there an explicit requirement that residential social workers be considerate, caring, understanding and trustworthy. There is relatively little in the residential competencies paper relating to ongoing contact with parents and families, although both parents and other relatives identified good quality contact, and regular non-judgemental support as very important.

(e) Youth Justice Clients

Six clients and their families commented on the role and skills required of a youth justice social worker. They identified a number of important tasks.

Tasks

(i) Arrange family meeting

The Youth Justice clients and their families were satisfied with the family meetings arranged by their social workers and had no suggestions for improvements.

(ii) Keep clients and families fully informed of what is happening.

'The social worker was helpful. However, there had been a "balls up" when the social worker told them they didn't have to be at Court when they did. The social worker also explained to the judge when she (mother) couldn't be at Court because of her job.'

(iii) Involve family in decision-making

Families appreciated being involved in decision-making although one family commented that the social worker suggested a suitable course of action at the family meeting and they agreed - they just wanted to get it over and done with.

(iv) Maintain some follow up contact with client and family.

'You need to have someone you can relate to afterwards as well. The social worker felt free to drop in for a cup of coffee. She offered support with school and anything we wanted.'

One mother was surprised that supervision did not involve more social work contact with her son.

(v) Be available for ongoing support.

One woman said that one time she rang the social worker because she couldn't cope and was asked if the child had done something wrong. The social worker did not offer any help - she 'just suggested the child stay with friends on a farm or something. They put the problem back on you.' In hindsight, she would have liked the social worker to put her in touch with someone who might have been a 'father-figure' to her son, a one-to-one relationship on a weekend or regular

basis of some kind.

(vi) Make appropriate practical arrangements.

One client's mother commented that practical arrangements such as clothing orders were generally satisfactory. However, she criticised the social worker's use of resources e.g. flying her to see her son. She felt the money might have been better sent on counselling for him. She also felt uncomfortable about her son's extensive wardrobe while in care - much better clothes than she could afford for her other children.

Some clients did not see 'being helpful' as a social work task. One said he did not feel helped but did not feel he should have been. He saw the social work task as deciding how he was to be punished and was prepared to go along with the outcome.

### Knowledge

(i) Know the facts of the case and options available.

'A good social worker needs to know all the facts, to really get in behind the problem.'

(ii) Knowledge of resources available.

'Good at "sussing people out" and finding people in organisations - resourceful. Never afraid to ask questions about things we need and want.'

### Skills

As in other areas, communication skills were seen as most important.

(i) Be a good listener, easy to talk to, non-patronising and non-judgemental.

'A social worker needs listening skills, empathy and the ability to "be with" another person even though they come from a completely different background.'

'Ability to express themselves in a way that is articulate but not above people's heads, and not condescending either.'

(ii) Be able to negotiate arrangements and solutions.

(iii) Involve clients in decision-making

One mother said she liked being involved in decision-making and able to make suggestions. Another said that a residential social worker:

'Needs to have the ability to stand back enough to let the client have ideas and suggestions of their own.'

(iv) Be able to deal with their own and others' anger

One client commented that a social worker needs to be able to confront, to be assertive not aggressive. They need training in coping with the anger of other people and in coping with their own anger.

### Attitudes and Values

Again clients and families wanted social workers who were non-judgemental and non-patronising.

'Social workers are ordinary people. They shouldn't make themselves out to be superior.'

### (f) Comparison of Clients' Comments with Youth Justice Competencies Paper

The paper identifies six tasks for youth justice social workers:

- (1) Accepting functions of youth justice co-ordinator when delegated
- (2) Diversion/pre Family Group Conference
- (3) Attend Family Group Conference
- (4) Post Family Group Conference
- (5) Attendance at Court following arrest
- (6) Administer Court Orders

(i) The clients and families interviewed made no reference to the first task.

(ii) Clients and their families agreed that youth justice social workers should arrange meetings with the family - one prior to the Family Group Conference, the Group Conference itself, and a follow-up meeting.

(iii) Clients did not comment on whether or not the social worker should be in Court, although several commented that their social worker had attended.

(iv) Clients made no comment about the administration of

court orders.

As in other areas of social work responsibility, clients and families wanted to be kept fully informed of what was happening. Some also felt follow-up contact is an appropriate task for youth justice social workers.

#### Knowledge

- (i) The competencies paper requires social workers to demonstrate knowledge of the Act and departmental resources. Clients and families did not specifically mention this as a requirement but it was implicit in their comments.
- (ii) Clients and their families agreed that youth justice social workers should demonstrate knowledge of alternatives.
- (iii) The clients did not comment on social workers' need to know about meeting plans and monitoring and evaluating outcomes.
- (iv) The comments of clients and their families made it clear that they expected their social workers to know about court processes and procedures and court orders.

#### Skills

Most of the skills identified in the competencies paper are the same as those identified by clients:

- (i) Clients agreed strongly that social worker should have good communication skills and be able to explain matters well.
- (ii) They agreed that social workers should be able to give information re options in an understandable, culturally appropriate manner. Clients and families wanted clearer information and post conference contact. Many wanted ongoing support.
- (iii) Clients did not comment on the skills needed to ensure that all tasks in the paper are completed.
- (iv) Clients and families again agreed that social workers should be able to explain processes and protocols.

Some of those interviewed felt that social workers should be able to deal with their own feelings as well as those of their clients. However, most were satisfied with the contacts they had had with social workers.



(g) Comments of Care and Protection Clients

Eleven interviews were carried out with Care and Protection clients and their families or fosterparents. This group identified a variety of tasks for social workers operating in the care and protection area.

Tasks

(i) Keep everyone informed of what is happening.

One young person felt she was kept in the dark at the beginning of her social work involvement. The social worker told her mother but not her what was happening.

Another commented:

'I was the last person to know I was going to become a State ward. I thought it was shit.'

One father said: 'I was told what would happen and assured that a social worker would see the child. My only complaint is that there was no follow up. I would have liked to have heard back - even just to say that someone had actually seen the child even if they couldn't tell me about the outcome.'

(ii) Maintain confidentiality.

Clients felt vulnerable, particularly when they changed social workers or were referred to other professionals. One young person had a number of changes of social worker in three years and felt as though he was 'passed around the office like a parcel.' He felt like a case, not a person.

Another said it felt 'like the whole world knew it at the time and I didn't want anybody to know because I couldn't even talk about it or anything.'

(iii) Make appropriate referrals

One mother felt that the social worker should 'not send clients off to parenting skills courses when they teach you nothing new, or refer you to unsympathetic counsellors.'

'Social worker should be able to see the limits of their role and help people get in touch with resources and make appropriate referrals.'

'Either plug into community resources or resource

people to do for themselves.'

(iv) Make good practical arrangements

'The social worker botched up some claims forms and I had to go in again and again. She had the wrong forms and referred me to the wrong section.'

(v) Keep appointments and promises, be on time and be available.

One young person said it was important for the social worker to be there when they were needed. She had to 'ring for days to get in touch, sometimes weeks.'

'Social workers could be less "official". This has increased in recent years - for example, jealously guarding off-duty time - "The social worker has to go home."'

'Social workers shouldn't promise goods they can't keep e.g. arrange a meeting and can't come. After a couple of letdowns kids don't give you another chance. A kid's trust is fragile. Say "I'll do my best" rather than make promises and let them down.'

(vi) Consider a range of options

'Social workers need to have a range of options open to them. However the bureaucratic structure doesn't leave room for freedom, or creativity in decisions.'

'Social workers need to be open to creative solutions and to consider assessment and opinions of those most closely involved.'

(vii) Maintain involvement

'A social worker needs to maintain involvement and not just 'dump' kids even where they feel the fosterparents can cope. One kid was dropped off a year ago and the social worker sorted out board payments but never came back.'

(viii) Arrange Family Conferences

Clients and families were concerned that family conferences be well-organised and well-run. One client said that her family meeting was 'One big disaster' with the social worker accusing her father in front of everyone. She suggested it might have been better if the social worker had talked to the individuals first.

(ix) Support parents

'You need someone who will encourage the parent to be an effective parent. Someone to mediate and counsel. Someone to help set limits/rules, support the parent and even show the parent where she is going wrong.'

Knowledge

(i) Know what resources are available

'If you need a counsellor the social worker should make sure it's the right one - a person who knows where you're coming from, not just someone whose handled a lot of cases.'

(ii) Know about sexual abuse and counselling

'The social worker tried to counsel me for molestation and she had no experience of it.'

(iii) Know about Departmental policy and the CYP&F Act.

One fosterparent said she would like more information re DSW policy and the new Act.

Skills

(i) Be a good communicator and good listener

'A good social worker is objective, listens, sees both sides, doesn't always presume they're right, can take a stand yet is open to reason and can be talked round, is not condescending - like giving you a pat on the head - will listen and be prepared to change direction, will support the Act but not be rigid about it, doesn't show if he/she is upset.'

(ii) Be culturally sensitive

One fosterparent felt there was too much emphasis on the cultural dimension. 'Pakehas can be more "Maori" than Maoris. What is needed is cultural sensitivity with all cases. Only in cases where it has become an issue is there a need to refer to someone who is especially appropriate.'

(iii) Have good report writing skills

'They need to put factual information into reports not subjective feelings. Maori social workers need to be

very careful with this too. Ethnicity shouldn't take precedence over this.'

(iv) Be trustworthy and sensitive

'A good social worker should be able to back off if necessary - not make things worse by putting too much pressure on you. They need to be very understanding also. Someone who is going to be a friend. Someone you can trust to keep personal information confidential.'

Values and Attitudes

Once again the main emphasis was on a social worker being non-judgemental, non-patronising and empathetic without being ingratiating.

'A social worker should not look down on people on benefits. Even if they try to understand, they have to be in the situation to realise what it's like.'

'The social worker kept saying "I know what you're going through" when she had no idea. If she had been there and done that it might have helped more.'

'A social worker needs maturity and the ability to take criticism without seeing it as a personal affront. Their own values shouldn't show through, or their moral positions if they're working in a helping capacity.'

(4) Comparison of Clients' Comments with Care and Protection Competency Paper

The draft competency paper has a number of sections, not all of which involve direct contact with the client, their families or fosterparents. This report deals only with those sections involving client and family contact. The paper identifies 15 tasks in these sections:

1. Gather information from person reporting abuse
2. Record information given
3. Sight the child
4. Arrange medical examination where appropriate
5. Interview the child
6. Interview the parents/caregivers and other significant people
7. Ensure all available information is gathered
8. Determine the safety needs of the child
9. Take emergency action when warranted
10. Assess the situation

11. Inform the person who made original report
12. Attend Family Group Conference
13. Provide clarification and advice to the family if requested
14. Negotiate with service providers
15. Respond to recommendations and plans of the Family Group Conference.

The tasks identified in the child protection draft competency paper focus very much on dealing with cases of reported sexual abuse and the immediate aftermath of those cases. Many of the tasks identified by clients, families and fosterparents related to ongoing care, supervision and support.

- (i) While those interviewed did not spell out the first four tasks listed above, their interviews suggest they would see them as appropriate.
- (ii) Clients and families agreed that all appropriate people should be interviewed and all available information gathered. They were particularly concerned with the way that was done, wanting interviews to be carried out sensitively, in an empathetic and non-judgemental fashion.
- (iii) Those interviewed agreed that child protection social workers should determine the safety needs of the child and take emergency action when warranted.
- (iv) Clients, families and fosterparents agreed that child protection social workers should assess the situation once action has been taken.
- (v) Those interviewed agreed that the person who made the original report should be kept informed of what happened.
- (vi) All agreed the child protection social worker should attend the Family Group Conference.
- (vii) They agreed that the child protection social worker should provide clarification and advice to families.
- (viii) They agreed that the social worker should negotiate with appropriate service providers.
- (ix) They agreed by implication that the child protection social worker should respond to recommendations and plans of the Family Group Conference.

Other tasks identified by clients included maintaining

involvement, making good practical arrangements and maintaining confidentiality.

### Knowledge

The competency paper identifies many areas of knowledge required by child protection social workers. These are spelt out in far more detail than the knowledge requirements identified by clients, families and fosterparents. This section looks briefly at some of the differences between the paper and clients' comments.

- (i) Although clients and families did not specifically mention knowledge of departmental procedures and definitions of abuse as knowledge child protection social workers should have, they did want accurate information and correct procedure to be followed. Similarly, they were keen that social workers should be well-informed about local resources and use them well.
- (ii) Clients and others interviewed did not discuss in detail the need to be able to identify indicators of abuse or the legal constraints on undertaking medical examinations.
- (iii) Clients were concerned that interviews be sensitively carried out and information fairly recorded. They wanted social workers to have a full understanding of cases and to ensure that all relevant information is gathered.
- (iv) Clients and families agreed strongly that social workers should utilise knowledge of local resources on identifying placements, and share power in taking action and making placements.
- (v) Clients also agreed that social workers should fully understand the family involved when making assessments.
- (vi) Those interviewed agreed that social workers should be clear about their role in Family Group Conferences.
- (vii) They also agreed that social workers should know about conflict resolution and negotiating techniques and planning procedures.

### Skills

- (i) The clients and associates interviewed strongly agreed that child protection social workers should have effective communication skills.

- (ii) They agreed that social workers should be able to discriminate between fact and opinion and record information accurately.
- (iii) They also agreed that child protection social workers should be able to work quickly and share information effectively.
- (iv) They agreed that social workers should be skilled in consultation and accessing local resources and in negotiating contacts or placements.
- (v) Clients and families did not specifically refer to the ability to identify signs of abuse but did expect appropriate referrals and the ability to establish a relationship with those involved.
- (vi) The clients did not refer to an ability to use audio-visual and other equipment.
- (vii) They did expect child protection social workers to be culturally sensitive.
- (viii) They expected social workers to be assertive and honest and able to act appropriately in a conflict or confrontational situation.
- (ix) Those interviewed did not discuss 'in house' skills i.e. consulting and reporting within the Department.
- (x) Clients expected social workers to be able to liaise with other services and to inform them about available options.

## 5. Summary and Conclusions

- \* The client consultation reported on in this paper is part of the Social Work Competencies Certification project being carried out by the Head Office of the Department of Social Welfare.
- \* Its aim is to report on the knowledge, skills and values identified by clients as important for social work and to compare these with the competencies developed by Head office in consultation with others.
- \* This report covers Pakeha clients only. Twenty-five interviews were carried out with individual clients and their families, while 12 interviews were carried out with community groups.
- \* The community groups identified eight main tasks: giving general support; being clear about their roles; providing funding; monitoring and assessing services; giving advice; carrying out needs assessments; negotiating contracts; and, in some cases; organise training and providing counselling, support and supervision.
- \* The groups identified five main areas of knowledge community services social workers should have: a wide knowledge of the community; knowledge of policy, resources, legal matters and procedures; knowledge of management, accounting and budgeting practices; life experience and knowledge of bicultural issues.
- \* The groups identified three kinds of skills community services social workers should have: communication skills; analytical and business skills; and 'working' skills such as being flexible, reliable, well-organised, being able to 'switch off' and being culturally sensitive.
- \* Community groups wanted their social workers to be open and honest, aware of their own values, to focus on people ahead of policy or money and to be sensitive to all cultures.
- \* The competency paper does not specifically identify the need to know about management, and budgeting practices as clearly as clients did.
- \* Community groups put more emphasis on styles of working than is evident in the competency paper.
- \* Client groups identified a range of tasks common to all



areas of social work. These included: keeping clients and families informed of processes and procedures; organising Family Group Conferences; making prompt, clear practical arrangements; supporting clients and families; being available; looking at alternative solutions and canvassing a wide range of options; involving families in decision-making; maintaining some ongoing contact; maintaining confidentiality; making appropriate referrals; keeping promises and appointments.

- \* Clients also identified the knowledge they wanted social workers to have: knowledge of relevant Acts and departmental policy; knowledge of resources available; knowledge of court procedures and the justice system; knowledge of sexual abuse and counselling practices; knowledge of the options available.
- \* The skills clients thought social workers should have included: good communication and listening skills; a non-judgemental and non-patronising approach; an ability to empathise without being ingratiating; an ability to establish relationships with everyone involved in the case; negotiating and counselling skills; report writing skills; an ability to deal with their own feelings; cultural sensitivity and trustworthiness.
- \* Clients put more emphasis on keeping families informed, supporting families, being available and being prompt in making practical arrangements than is evident in the competency papers.
- \* Clients specifically mentioned the ability to be impartial and to draw on life experiences as useful skills for social workers. These are not clearly spelt out in the competency papers.

## Conclusion

Both clients and community groups put a lot of emphasis on styles of working - on trustworthiness, sensitivity, flexibility, open-mindedness and reliability. While they were aware that many social workers are over-worked, they wanted them to be more available, and to maintain or initiate more contact. They stressed the value of social workers having wide life experience and being able to draw on that to establish empathy with clients and their families. Some people wanted more male social workers, others preferred females; some wanted more older social workers, others preferred younger people and some felt that there has been too much emphasis on bicultural issues in recent years. The needs of pakeha people should also be recognised.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE, SOCIAL SERVICES  
COMPETENCY/CERTIFICATION PROJECT

CLIENT CONSULTATION - RESEARCH NOTES

1. FIRST STAGE - RESEARCH AND PILOTING

A consultation with some community groups and individual clients was carried out as a pilot study within the Tamaki Makaurau area while the first draft of the competency statements was being prepared.

The contractors were to "develop and carry out a process of client consultation to establish a client perspective on what is required for social work competence". (Letter from Principal Social Worker to contractors, November, 1989). The project Steering Committee decided that a client consultation at this stage would be small and informal, to be followed by a larger consultation in the next stage of the Project. It was agreed that the client consultation should be, by and large, with individual clients, with a questionnaire. The options of advertising for clients wanting to give feedback, or of holding hui were ruled out. The consultation was planned to be small scale rather than as something which was potentially repetitive of the Puao-te-Ata-tu process.

A. Literature Search

Relevant material was sought to assist in deciding on the process for the consultation.

New Zealand material

The researchers expected to be able to consult reports of previous client consultations, but found there is a scarcity of published New Zealand material on social work client consultation. It was presumed that the full transcripts from Puao-te-Ata-tu hui would provide us with information. However this material is under embargo for five years, (to safeguard the confidentiality of the information given), and is therefore unavailable. The only report on a client consultation carried out within New Zealand found was a Department of Social Welfare document, EVALUATION OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION, Department of Social Welfare, Hamilton District Office, August 1988, by Richard Mathews and Don Horsefield.

They asked a sample of clients about their experience of, attitudes to and advice for improvements in the District Office. They were not seeking information on social work competencies, and used a written questionnaire which was posted to the clients.

#### Overseas material

Material was available on some research done in U.S.A. and in U.K. One book which provided useful background and is a classic in the area of seeking client opinion is THE CLIENT SPEAKS, WORKING CLASS IMPRESSIONS OF CASEWORK by John Mayer and Noel Timms, published in UK in 1970. Like the Hamilton study, this book reports a study commissioned by an office which wanted client feed back on its services. They approached clients by letter and interviewed them in person. Its findings on clients' perceptions of social workers are still relevant now and in Aotearoa.

From the literature search it would appear that social work agencies seldom seek consumer feedback either on social work delivery, or for their input into service development. Where studies have been done, it seems they are seldom published. All the overseas client consultation reviewed in the literature had the following general characteristics:-

- a. the agency was chosen by the client and their involvement was voluntary.
- b. the agency approached the client to participate in the research.
- c. the consultation was conducted by independent researchers who interviewed clients in their own homes, using a questionnaire as a basis.
- d. The questionnaire asked about the effectiveness of the social work service and the clients satisfaction with the social work intervention.
- e. The social workers tasks with most of the clients of these agencies were either counselling to problem solve, make a decision or bring about a better level of functioning for the client, or the provision of material resources, e.g. money, pram etc.

The aims of these studies was to assess the effectiveness of social work processes, not to ask clients to contribute to the process. In contrast, this project wanted to consult clients of a central government agency carrying out statutory tasks. Many of these clients would not have chosen their agency, but were compelled to Social Welfare because of its statutory power and its

resources. The researchers did not undertake to improve services directly as a result of consulting clients, but offered them an opportunity to contribute to the training and development of social workers. Thus, in drawing up questionnaires the published work reviewed was of little direct use because the different purpose.

## B. Questionnaires

Both in the pilot and in the larger consultation, the written questionnaires served only as a guideline for the interviewers. The first questions were designed as an introduction to warm up the clients prior to asking for the specific information we sought.

During the piloting process it became clear that community group workers could be asked very directly questions such as "what do you think are the key tasks of a DSW social service worker". A more individual approach was needed for individual clients and their whanau to draw on their experience such as "what were the most important things the social worker did?" and "how could she/he have done better?"

The interview guide questionnaire for Maori community groups (appended to the Waaka Consultants report) is the same as the finalised questionnaire used in the pilot, and the Pakeha guide very similar. However more diversity in guiding individual clients and their whanau was recommended as a result of piloting. (See notes for interviewers appended recommending using the client questionnaires as a guide only).

## C. The Informal Consultation/Pilot

The pilot was carried out in Tamaki Makaurau in January/February 1990. A total of twenty two people were interviewed. Four were community group administrators, five were foster parents, and thirteen were or had been clients of Department social workers.

Interviews with clients were arranged informally, that is, they were known to the researcher or accessed by her through her own networks. These were to be clients "who may or may not have been satisfied with social work intervention but who dont have an axe to grind or unfinished business in their case; and who are perceptive enough to focus on what the social worker did and said and how that helped or hindered progress". (Memo from Principal Social Worker to contractors).

This informal consultation provided a client view with which to compare the first draft of the competencies. Quotes from clients consulted then have been used in this report and in draft competency statements for use with Pakeha/other clients. What clients said in this informal consultation was not at variance with the feedback collected in the formal consultation. The testing of questionnaires/interview guidelines and the literature search served the whole consultation process.

## 2. SECOND STAGE - THE FORMAL CLIENT CONSULTATION

A subgroup of the Social Services Competency/Certification Project Steering Committee was formed to oversee the process of the main client consultation. Head Office personnel made up this group, representing the Research Unit, Children, Young Persons and their Families Unit (CYPFU), the Maori Development Unit, the Pacific Island Peoples Unit and the Project Team. Tenders were let in April 1990 for three distinct processes to interview Maori, Pacific Islands peoples, and Pakeha and other peoples. This was to enable the processes used in the consultation to be appropriate to each client group.

Interviews were carried out in May and June 1990 in eight department work site areas chosen by the Steering Committee to represent a diversity of geographic, demographic and bureaucratic elements, such as small town/rural/city, Maori/Pacific population, North/South Island, small/large Social Welfare Office.

For practical reasons not all ethnic groups were consulted at each site. Pacific clients were interviewed at two sites, and Maori and Pakeha clients were interviewed at five sites each.

### A. The Brief To Consultants

The consultation were carried out by independent, ethnically appropriate researchers, contracted by the Principal Social Worker to interview clients, family/whanau members and community groups and report their findings.

It was considered that choosing interviewers independent of the Department, and of the same ethnicity as the client, would reassure clients that they could speak freely about their experiences with social workers. Researchers were advised that the client material was to be presented in such a way as to ensure the confidentiality of the respondents, and they were asked to quote clients directly as well as collating and analysing their material. In every respect the researchers were free to present the material in whatever manner they deemed appropriate. There is variation in the reports because the competencies material available to the consultants for comparison with the client material, was an early draft which did not attempt to take account of culturally different approaches to the tasks.

While each consulting group was free to form their own culturally appropriate way of talking to individual clients, their families, and community groups, each groups' interviewers used similar 'base' questions to obtain clients views.

These questions were phrased along the following lines:

'What did the social worker do? (i.e. what was the contact with social worker about?).

'What did they do that most helped you/your family/your group?'

'How could they have done better?'

'What do you think social workers have to know?'

'What are the most important things about social workers for you, your family, your organisation?'

The Maori report appends questionnaire guides they used.

The Pakeha questionnaires which were also used as a guide by the Pacific Islands interviewers are appended to this section.

## B. The Sample

Two client groups were consulted:-

- individual clients and their families in the selected six District Office areas who had had social work contact between November 1989 and March 1990 whose cases were now closed, (closed was defined as cases where there was no planned social work intervention);

- community groups or organisations in the six District Office areas currently receiving funding from the Department, who have had some contact with their District Offices.

In taking 'cases' only from the previous six months, it was hoped to obtain information relevant to social service workers since the introduction of the Children, Young Persons and their Families Act, 1989.

Clients were selected in three different ways:-

- Names were selected by the research co-ordinator from various categories of client contact listed on the social work data base for each of the offices selected. These categories were children in care of the Department, those coming to notice of Social Workers through child protection matters, those coming to notice as juvenile offenders. These names were then grouped into the categories being used in developing competency statements: Youth Justice, Child Protection, Alternative care.

- Residential services clients were selected from the lists of discharged clients provided by the two residences selected for the survey. We approached those living in the six areas already being visited by interviewers.

- Community Groups were to be chosen from lists held at Head Office. However, it was found that groups known to Head Office and funded through national funding programmes were not necessarily in touch with their local District Office. District Offices provided names of groups who knew the work of the local office social services workers.

All clients thus selected were also grouped according to ethnicity: Maori, Pacific Island, Pakeha and others.

As all the consultants comment in their reports, there were several difficulties with the client sample:-

1. Having contracted the researchers, who had planned their time and were ready to start interviewing, industrial action by District Offices prevented communication from Head Office to them at the time when we required them to check the sample chosen from DPC, and to supply further details.

2. The information from the Date Processing Centre (DPC) was inaccurate and turned up:

- clients whose ethnicity was inaccurately or inadequately recorded.

- clients who were not aware they had been under investigation by DSW and who had no contact with a social worker.

- clients whose contact with a social worker had been fleeting.

3. It had been hoped to approach whanau/families who had been involved in Family Group Conferences. However several District Offices alerted us to the possibility (confirmed by legal advice) that this might impinge upon the promised confidentiality of these proceedings and participants.

4. We were unable to obtain a Pacific Islands sample from the two selected Residences. In order to have sufficient numbers of residential clients interviewed, we interviewed young people who had been in the two Residences, but lived outside the selected District office areas.

## C. The Process

### a. The first contact.

While a letter was not viewed as the best method of contacting clients it seemed the best way to ensure clients a right to decline to participate before giving their names to independent researchers.

Clients were first contacted by letter by the Principal Social Worker's Unit for their agreement to participate in the consultation. Samples of these letters are appended.

Letters to community groups were followed by a phone call from the research co-ordinator (Principal Social Worker's Unit, Head Office). All Maori and Pakeha community groups agreed to be interviewed.

The Maori and Pakeha individual clients letters, contained a stamped addressed envelope and a form (see appendices) to return. Those forms that were returned were mostly refusals or post office stamped 'not at this address'.

b. The second contact.

Pacific Islands people written to were invited to public meetings to hear about the client consultation prior to being interviewed. The interviewers visited some at home to encourage them to the meetings.

As very few Maori or Pakeha clients returned their forms giving consent, the research co-ordinator rang as many as possible to confirm their willingness to take part. Where clients could not be contacted by phone (and those were many) the interviewers made the initial approach on the basis of the Head Office letter.

In one rural area, a Social Worker from the District Office visited a couple of clients to check they would be available the day the interviewer would be calling, because of travel time involved.

c. The interviews

A total of sixty Maori and Pakeha clients and their whanau were interviewed, and twenty four community groups, twelve Maori, twelve Pakeha.

Approximately half the individual clients approached were interviewed. Many of them involved family members in their interview.


Koha was provided by the Principal Social Worker Unit to Maori interviewers for community groups where the interviewers felt the interview and the hospitality offered by the group(s) required it. Arrangements were made for catering for the Pacific Islands Meetings so their interviewers could fulfill cultural expectations.

### SUMMARY

If viewed from a Social Science research angle, this consultation could be seen as fitting the qualitative approach. It was not designed to meet any rigorous research criteria. However we have undertaken this work in a way which allowed each cultural group to work in the way they felt best suited their people, and to report in their own style.


We believe that in this way, the client voice is best heard.





# Department of Social Welfare

Head Office, Private Bag 21, Postal Centre, Wellington 1, New Zealand



Facsimile: (04) 726 873  
Telephone: (04) 727 666  
Extension:  
Reference:

27 April 1990

Kia Ora

We are doing a survey of people who have been clients of the social work section of this department and we have employed independent researchers to help us.

The aim of the survey is to find out what our clients feel a social worker needs in order to do the job well. We are particularly interested in talking with families, young people and individuals who have had recent contact with a social worker.

We obtained your name from our computer records and if you agree to help us by taking part in the survey, would you please complete the attached form and return it quickly. If we have a phone number for you, one of my staff will phone you to see if you consent.

No names or personal details will be recorded by the researchers and the interviews will be conducted in a manner most comfortable to you. You may include any other family members whom you want to take part in the discussions.

The information from you and other clients will be used by the Department to help employ and train social workers to do the best possible job.

The researchers will send you a summary of their findings at the conclusion of the survey.

Thank you for reading this. Return the next page in the enclosed envelope.

Heoi ano naku noa na,

Yours sincerely,



Beverley Keall,  
Principal Social Worker.

Please tick (✓) your choice of 1., 2., or 3. below

- 1. I agree to taking part in the survey.
- 2. I would like to talk to the researchers before I make up my mind.
- 3. I do not wish to be interviewed by the researchers.

Please check these details

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone:      Home:                      Work:

You can contact me at the above phone number Home/Work or address (please tick one).

All Day .....  
 Mornings Only .....  
 Afternoons Only .....  
 Evenings Only .....

Signed ..... Date .....



# Department of Social Welfare

Head Office, Private Bag 21, Postal Centre, Wellington 1, New Zealand



Facsimile: (04) 726 873  
Telephone: (04) 727 666  
Extension:  
Reference:

I am writing to ask if your group would assist in a project to find out what attitudes knowledge and skills social workers of this Department need to do a good job.

To do this we are employing independent researchers to consult individual clients and their whanau and community services groups. This consultation will be carried out in Porirua, Mangere, Whakatane, Kaitaia, Dunedin and Greymouth, in May.

Your group has been randomly selected from Community Groups who have contact with their office of the Department of Social Welfare. Although we have had to ask your local office for contact names, addresses and phone numbers, if you agree to talk to the researchers, anything that you talk about will be confidential, and anything the researcher writes down will not have your name on it. Social Welfare District Offices will be given a summary of what you, other groups and other people say about social workers' skills and knowledge but this will not contain any names or personal/organisational details.

When the researchers have finished interviewing, they will send you a summary of their findings.

One of my staff will ring you in the next week to ask if you consent to helping with this project. If you have further questions do ask at that point, or ring myself, Lysette Riley or Lainey Cowan collect phone (04) 727-666 ext 8486 between 10am and 4pm.

I hope you will be able to talk to the researcher to help us train people to provide a better service for our clients.

Yours sincerely

Beverley Keall  
Principal Social Worker



# Department of Social Welfare

Head Office, Private Bag 21, Postal Centre, Wellington 1, New Zealand

4



Facsimile: (04) 726 873  
 Telephone: (04) 727 666  
 Extension:  
 Reference:

25 May 1990

Kia Orana

Ka rave matou i tetahi uiui-anga (survey) i te au tangata tei tauturu ia ana ratou e te tua-tauturu (social work) o te Tipatimani Social Welfare. Kua tutaki oki matou i tetahi tangata ko tana tuanga angaanga te reira, e no vao ake aia i te Tipatimani, kia tauturu ia matou.

Te tumu oki i teia uiui-anga mari ra, kia kite matou e, eaa ta te au tangata kua tauturu ia ana ratou i kite no runga i te tu o te aronga angaanga (social workers) eaa tei tau no ratou, kia rave i te angaanga ma te tau tikai. Ka inangaro matou i te tuatua ki te kopu-tangata, te au mapu e te tangata tataki-tai tei aravei no te kimi tauturu ki te aronga-angaanga (social workers) i nga ra i topa.

Kua rave mai oki matou i toou ingoa no roto mai i ta matou komipiuta (computer record) mou rekoti, me kua ariki koe i teia uiui-anga, te pati ia atu nei kia akaki i te kapi tei kapiti ia ki teia pepa, e kia akaoki viviki mai ite reira. Me teia matou toou numero-tariponi, ka ringi ia atu koe e tetahi oku tangata-angaanga me ka ariki koe i teia pati-anga.

Kare oki toou ingoa e tetahi au mea muna e rekoti ia e te aronga na ratou e uiui ia koe, Kia mareka oki koe me tae te tuatau uiui. Ka tika ia koe kia apai mai i tetahi ua atu i toou kopu-tangata kia piri mai ki teia uiui-anga.

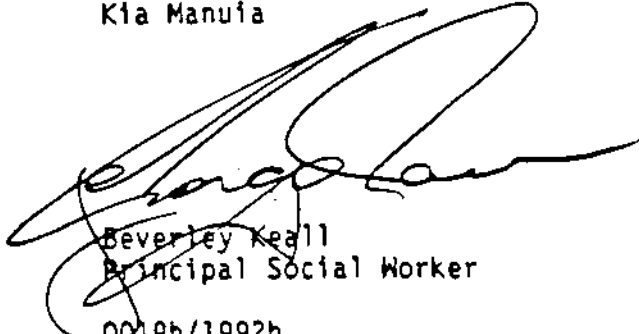
Ko te tauturu e te au manako taau e ta tetahi au taeake ke ka oronga mai, ka riro te reira ei tauturu i te Tipatimani ite kimi aronga angaanga ou, ma te tereni ite au tangata angaanga tauturu (social workers) kia mako e kia manea te rave anga i ta ratou angaanga.

Ka tuku atu te tangata-uiui (researcher) i tana ripoti kia koe me tae ki te openga i tana angaanga.

E tauru ite kapi ote au uianga ki roto ite tikiro i tukuna ia atu. Te oronga atu nei au i taku akameitaki anga, no tei tatau koe i teia leta.

Otira-ua

Kia Manuia

  
 Beverley Keall  
 Principal Social Worker

0019h/1992h



# Department of Social Welfare

5

Head Office, Private Bag 21, Postal Centre, Wellington 1, New Zealand



Facsimile: (04) 726 873  
Telephone: (04) 727 666  
Extension:  
Reference:

24 Me 1990

'Ala si'i .....

'Oku ou faka'apa'apa atu 'i he tohi ni pea mo fakahoko atu kiate koe 'a e ki'i fakatangi ko 'eni, pea mei he Potungaue "Department of Social Welfare", ke ke kataki mu'a o fakafaingamalie ange ki he 'aho 28 'o e mahina ni, 'e 'i ai e fakataha 'e fai ki Mangere, pea mo e kau ngaue mei he Potungaue ni. Ka 'e toki fakapapau'i atu 'a e taimi pea mo e potu 'e fai ai.

Ko e 'uhinga 'o e fakataha ni ko e FEKUMI pea mo e FAKATOTOLO 'a e Potungaue ni, ko 'enau fiema'u ha ngaahi fakamatala, pea mo ha ngaahi fakakaukau me he kakai ke tokoni ke he kau ngaue, ke nau lava 'o fai fakalelei ange 'enau ngaue he Potungaue ni. Ka 'e tautautefito ki he kau ngaue 'oku nau fetu'utaki vaofi ange mo e ngaahi matakali 'o e 'Otu Motu Pasifiki.

'Oku mau fiema'u ke tomu'a fakamatala'i atu 'a e me'a 'e fai, pea tau toki talanoa mo fai hao faka'eke'eke 'i he 'aho ko ia. 'E 'i ai pe ha taha te ne tokoni'i koe 'o fekau'aki mo e lea pea mo ha me'a te ke tokanga ki ai. Ko ia ai 'oua to ke manavasui'i ki ha me'a.

'Oku mau tauhi foki ha fakamatala 'i he Potungaue ne fekau'aki pea mo 'etau fetu'utaki.

'Oku ou 'amanaki pe 'e fakafiemalie kiate koe 'a e fakahoha'a ni.

Faka'apa'apa atu

*Mahia Pompaoro*  
.....  
MA'AE PULE LAHI

*Jo*  
Beverley Keall  
Principal Social Worker

Notes for Client Interviews

Attached are draft competency documents for Youth Justice Co-ordinators, Child Protection Social Workers and Residential Social Workers. These will give you an idea of what the Department expects of its social workers in each case.

The interviews with clients are intended to check out whether client expectations match those of the Department.

While they are based on clients' experiences, the interviews are not an evaluation of social workers - they are aimed at collecting information the Department can use to improve the selection and training of social workers. Keeping this outcome in mind will help you focus the interview on the tasks, skills, and knowledge social workers should have rather than being too distracted by any dreadful (or positive) things that have happened to individual clients. The clients' own experiences are used as a vehicle for them to focus on what we want.

This interview guide is just that - a guide. It is intended to remind interviewers that the main competency areas associated with client contact must be covered. We have identified these as:

- Communication
- Consultation
- Information Transmission
- Onward Referral
- Family Involvement and Support
- Knowledge of Resources and Processes
- Cultural, Gender and Class Sensitivity
- Practical Support

You will need to establish at the beginning of the interview which social worker you are talking about. Many clients will have had more than one social worker - we suggest you focus on the one they had the longest or most recently and say that you can come back to the others later if they want to. We can tell you a little bit about clients - e.g. whether they were Child Protection clients, Youth Justice clients or clients in residential homes. This will give you the chance to introduce yourself and establish the situation you're going to be talking about - for example: 'Hallo, I'm ...., all I know about you is that you were in the care of the Department for a while or that you had some dealings with DSW and the Courts or that you were in Hamilton Girls/Boys Home for a while and I'm interested in you and your social worker during that time.'

Residential clients - Focus on residential social worker they had while at the institution.

Youth Justice clients - role of social worker is to visit offender, explain process and possible outcomes. Process includes family meeting which co-ordinator chairs. Social worker may in

may not be there, but does a lot of practical and psychological preparation.

Child Protection clients - might have to visit doctor, police, have family meetings. Social worker will have a role in all this.

We suggest you use the following or similar questions to encourage clients and their families to talk freely about their experiences and preferences. Remember, we want to know what they think should happen and how social workers should be. They might want to talk about personal attributes e.g be married, old, young, Maori, female, whatever - note these, they could possibly be used in the selection process.

As well as the client, information from families and other relevant people will be useful. If possible, talk to mother/father/guardian/foster parents - whoever is available and willing to talk. This can be done with the client present or separately - whatever seems appropriate.

Please take as full notes as possible, and collect any particularly useful/pithy quotes verbatim. Feel free to sit next to a client or group of clients and show them what you've written - it's not a secret. At the end of the interviewing i.e. early June, all participants will be sent a summary of the report.

Any queries, contact Alison Gray (04) 759 406  
or Lainey Cowan (04) 727 666 ext 8486 collect.

### Interview Guide

First of all, how did your social worker help you (when you were in the care of the Dept or when you were in the Girls/Boys Home or when you had to go to Court)? What did s/he do/say that was useful/helpful for you?

Is there anything you specially liked about what your social worker did or said?

Is there anything you didn't like?

What do you think a DSW social worker should be doing to help people like you?

How do you think a DSW social worker should behave?

What should a DSW social worker know to be able to help you?

What should a DSW social worker be able to tell you about?

Was your social worker easy to talk to?

Do you think s/he listened to what you had to say?

Do you think s/he understood what you were saying?

What would have been better?

Did s/he tell you what was going to happen to you?

Did s/he tell you everything you wanted to know?

Did s/he give you enough information about other places you could get help?

Is there anything else s/he could have done?



Did s/he support you when you had to deal with other people? (e.g. doctor, Police, school, Courts, Family Group Conference, institutions etc). What about when you first went into the institution etc? How was your social worker then?

How was it when the social worker first met your Mum? And the rest of your family? Is there any way it could have been better?

Was there a family meeting? How was your social worker in that? Did s/he organise it well? Is there anything that could have been done differently?

Did s/he make good practical arrangements (e.g. getting places, telling you where meetings would be, fixing clothing orders, arranging pocket money)

Was s/he always there when you wanted her/him to be? (Keeping appointments, giving reasons why cannot attend etc)

Did s/he always do what s/he said s/he would?

Was it easy to get in touch with him/her? (Back up arrangements)

Did you ever have to change social workers? How was that?

Is there anything else you want to say about social workers?

### Notes for Community Group Interviews

Attached is a copy of the draft competencies for basic grade community service workers in DSW.

We want to find out briefly what experiences community groups have had with community services social workers, but more importantly, what skills, knowledge and values they think community service workers should have to do a competent job and what community groups perceive the social worker's main tasks to be.

Reading the draft document will familiarise you with what the Department expects. We want to see how well this matches up with community service groups' expectations.

(If contacts in the groups have the time and are willing, you could go through the competency document with them and get their reaction to the various points. However, this is likely to take some time - the interview guide should cover sufficient ground and you can use your knowledge of departmental expectations to check out any points you think haven't been addressed.)

Please take as full notes as you can with any particularly pithy or informative quotes recorded verbatim.

Thanks

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## Interview Guide for Community Groups

1. What was the purpose of your contact with DSW Community Services/ Social Work team?
2. In what context did you first meet the social worker? (e.g. community meeting, organisation meeting, one to one)
3. What other kinds of meetings have you had?
4. What did you expect of the social worker in each context? (e.g. instant money, advice, information, meeting skills, bi-cultural skills)
5. Were you satisfied with those contacts?
6. What do you think a community social worker's key tasks are? (e.g. giving out money, negotiating contracts, providing information and advice, helping with funding applications, helping with accounts, helping with training, monitoring and evaluation).
7. What do you expect them to know to be effective in their work? (e.g. DSW policy, requirements for contracts, other resources, monitoring and evaluation methods, culturally appropriate behaviour)
8. What skills do you expect them to have? ( e.g. communication and facilitation skills, negotiating skills, bicultural/multi-cultural meeting skills, research skills)
9. What attitudes/values ought they have to work effectively?