

Nga Kete Matauranga Pounamu Charitable Trust

Positive Inclusion

Establishing a diversity working group has led to Nga Kete Matauranga Pounamu promoting a more inclusive workplace.

Nga Kete Matauranga Pounamu is a not-for-profit charitable trust that delivers a range of health and social services including addiction counselling, disability support and advocacy, restorative justice, Whanau Ora, and He Puna Waiora Wellness Centre (a low-cost access doctor service).

The trust offers stop smoking support, pregnancy and parenting support and more. Nga Kete employs more than 50 staff aged 15 to 70.

Nga Kete established its Diversity and Inclusion Working Group to ensure policies and procedures and ongoing training are implemented and sustained, to better understand staff, and to ensure it supports staff and consumers as best it can.

One of the initiatives the group supports is the LGBTQI Coffee and Peer Support Group. Launched in 2016, the group now has 20 regular members and meets fortnightly on site at Nga Kete.

The group was started by a former Nga Kete staff member together with transgender woman Shauna Scobie after they discovered the only LGBT groups in Invercargill were aimed at youth. Nga Kete got right behind the initiative and the group was immediately launched.

The group is inclusive, diverse, accepting and friendly, and was set up to provide peer support in a safe and supportive environment. It encourages discussion around gender questioning, bullying, coming out, safe sex, health and human rights, among other topics.

The group also enjoys hosting events such as a Halloween potluck dinner and pamper parties.

Feedback has been positive. One of the group's members said it was great to be in an environment where you can be yourself without judgement and she wished it had been around a long time ago.

Another member said it was good to be able to talk with like-minded, accepting people, especially when faced with discriminatory situations.

"There is a need everywhere for people to be comfortable and to have an opportunity to hang out with others like themselves. Even in the most accepting environments we want to hang with like-minded people."



Nga Kete also carried out a benchmarking survey to understand how employees experience diversity and inclusion at work. The aim of the survey was to understand staff experiences at work, and whether staff felt they were getting the support they needed.

Other initiatives include: Re-designing organisational templates to provide more options; supporting two members of the LGBT community to attend the Pride Festival in Wellington; staff training which included sending representatives to 2byyourselfNZ (a project to increase social inclusion and reduce stigma and discrimination faced by young people with diverse genders, sexes and sexualities who are experiencing mental illness); and Silver Rainbow, an educational workshop for care workers and managers aimed at ensuring there are Rainbow-friendly aged care services throughout New Zealand.

Nga Kete is also continuing to work towards earning a Rainbow Tick.

IF YOU WANT MORE INFORMATION,
TOOLS OR RESOURCES TO MAKE
YOUR WORKPLACE MORE INCLUSIVE

Visit diversityworks.nz
or call 0800 DIVERSITY (348 377)