

INSIGHT REPORT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

4

ABOUT US

Discovering our story: Strengthening the social and community sector

5

INTRODUCTION

Beneath the surface

6

WORKFORCE NEEDS

Mapping workforce demands

8

FACTORS OF INFLUENCE

Exploring factors shaping the modern workforce.

10

ANALYSIS

Unveiling critical insights

16

RECOMMENDATIONS

Guiding Progress: Strategic recommendations arising from insights

18

CONCLUSION

Reflections shaping the path forward

19

REFERENCES

IT IS PEOPLE, IT IS PEOPLE, IT IS PEOPLE

**Hutia te rito o te harakeke,
Kei hea te komako e kō,
Kī mai koe ki a ahau,
“He aha te mea nui o te ao?”
Māku e kī atu
“He tangata, he tangata, he
tangata”**

If you pluck out the new shoot at the centre of the flax bush, where will the bellbird feed?
You ask me what is the greatest thing in the world?
My reply to you is “it is people, it is people, it is people”



ABOUT US



"Strengthening the social and community sector"



Bellbird: facilitating potential

At Bellbird, we are dedicated to facilitating potential. We provide comprehensive support to individual practitioners, staff groups, organisations, and communities, all with the aim of fostering well-being and collaboration in society.

Our mission is clear: to empower social service professionals and organisations in delivering effective health and social services that enrich the lives of whānau, hapū, and iwi. We strive to equip these professionals and organisations with the necessary tools and resources to make a tangible, positive impact in homes, and communities alike.

Our comprehensive approach enables us to support in the development of robust systems and processes that not only ensure effective service delivery but also prioritise the well-being of the workforce. From fostering a culture of continuous improvement to implementing strategies that promote staff resilience, Bellbird is committed to helping others navigate the challenges of delivering high-quality services while maintaining a healthy, empowered workforce.

Our focus areas include workforce well-being, optimising organisations and fostering connected communities

Workforce Wellbeing

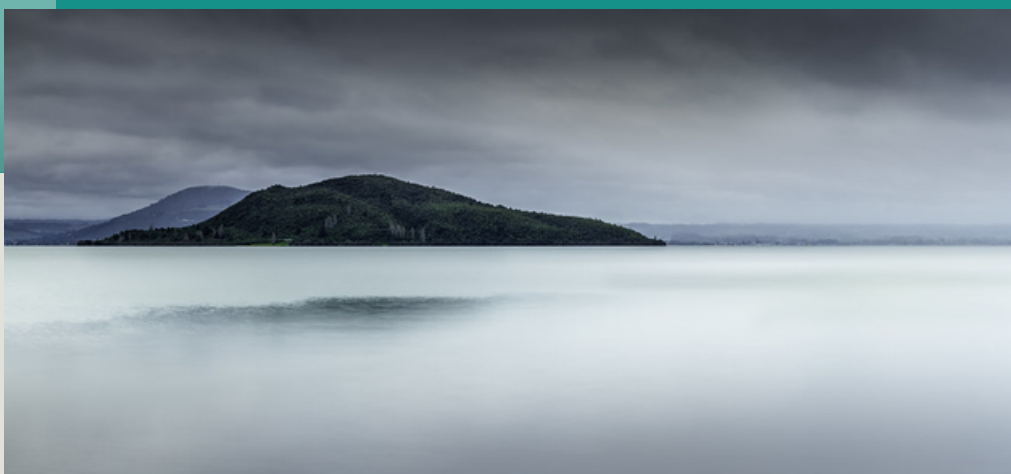
Optimising Organisations

Connected Communities



INTRODUCTION

“Beneath the surface”



The social sector in Rotorua, New Zealand, is essential for addressing the diverse needs of its population, including issues related to health, education, welfare, and community development. However like many regions, Rotorua faces challenges in recruiting and retaining a skilled workforce to meet these needs effectively. This insight report aims to analyse the current workforce needs within Rotorua’s social and community service sector, identify key challenges and propose strategies for addressing them.

Rotorua, has a population of 78,200 residents located in the Bay of Plenty region of New Zealand's North Island, and is renowned for its rich cultural heritage, geothermal wonders, and picturesque landscapes. However, beneath its surface beauty lies a community grappling with various social issues, including poverty, homelessness, substance abuse, mental health challenges, and domestic violence. The social sector in Rotorua encompasses a wide range of organisations, including Iwi, hapū, government agencies, non-profit organisations, community groups, and social enterprises, working to address these issues and support the well-being of the community. It holds 12.7% of the workforce and is the largest employment industry in Rotorua (Health care and social assistance).

While employment rates have risen to match community need, so too has the mounting evidence of adverse trends indicating a workforce in the sector is struggling.

WORKFORCE NEEDS



Skilled Professionals Shortage



One of the primary challenges facing the social sector in Rotorua is a shortage of skilled professionals across various disciplines. This shortage encompasses professions such as social work, counseling, psychology, community development, youth work, and healthcare. As a result, organisations struggle to recruit qualified individuals, leading to increased workloads, burnout among existing staff, and challenges in delivering timely and effective services to those in need. Another result of this has been the emergence of an unskilled workforce who have little training or experience in working with complex issues to meet the needs of the community. This has created risks for individuals, organisations and whānau accessing services.

Cultural Competency



Rotorua's population is diverse, comprising not only European but also significant Māori and Pasifika communities. To effectively serve these diverse populations, the social sector requires professionals who possess cultural competency and understanding. Indigenous Māori communities, in particular, have distinct cultural values, practices, and worldviews that must be respected and integrated into service delivery. However, there is a need for more professionals with cultural competence in Rotorua's social sector to ensure services are delivered in a culturally appropriate and sensitive manner.

WORKFORCE NEEDS



Retention Challenges



High turnover rates plague the social sector in Rotorua, resulting in disruptions in service delivery and increased recruitment costs. Several factors contribute to this issue, including low salaries, heavy workloads, limited opportunities for career advancement, inadequate support systems, and exposure to traumatic situations. Additionally, the challenging nature of the work and the emotional toll it can take on individuals contribute to burnout and staff turnover, further exacerbating workforce shortages.

Technological Challenges



The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of digital literacy and technology integration in the social sector. While technology offers opportunities to improve service delivery, enhance communication, and reach remote communities, there remains a large population of community who are disadvantaged due to having limited access, knowledge and lack of finances to engage in digital processes. According to Citizens Advice Bureau Rotorua (2022/2023 annual report) statistics gathered from 261 clients indicated ages 50-80 years (69.5%) fell into this category. 49.8% identified as Māori. Therefore the workforce is required to provide manual or conventional systems to meet the needs of the community who are disadvantaged by technology.

FACTORS INFLUENCING The Workforce

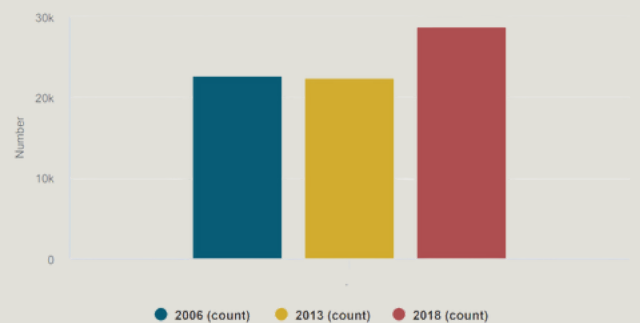
Demographic Trends:

Rotorua's population is characterised by demographic trends that influence workforce needs within the social sector. The region has a youthful population with a higher proportion of children and young people compared to the national average. This demographic profile underscores the need for professionals skilled in youth work, education, and family support services. Additionally, Rotorua's significant Māori population requires culturally competent professionals who can engage effectively with Māori communities and address their specific needs. Rotorua has also experienced a significant population growth as a result of the emergency housing issue and people relocating to Rotorua in significant quantities.

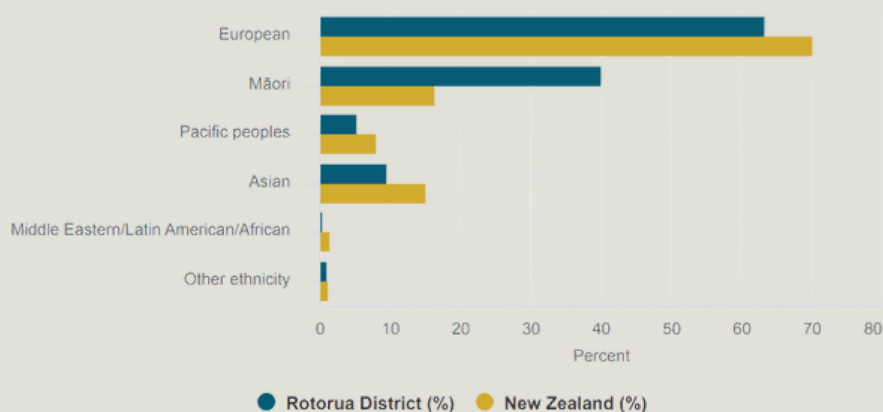
Age and sex of Māori in Rotorua District, 2018 Census



Māori population in Rotorua District, 2006–18 Censuses



Ethnic groups for people in Rotorua District and New Zealand, 2018 Census



FACTORS INFLUENCING

The Workforce

Socioeconomic Factors:

Socioeconomic factors such as poverty, unemployment, and housing instability contribute to the demand for social services in Rotorua. High levels of deprivation in certain areas of the region place additional strain on the social sector, increasing the need for interventions to address poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, and related issues. The level of deprivation has risen significantly due to a housing crisis where people have been relocated to the Rotorua region. This has also had a knock on effect with the number of beneficiaries increasing. The socio-economic context of Rotorua underscores the importance of a well-resourced and skilled social sector workforce to support vulnerable individuals and families facing multiple challenges.

Policy and Funding Environment:

Government policies and funding allocations significantly impact workforce needs within the social sector. Changes in government priorities, funding cuts, and shifting policy frameworks can affect the availability of resources, service delivery models, and workforce capacity. Moreover, funding constraints may limit the ability of organisations to recruit and retain skilled professionals, invest in training and development initiatives, and adopt innovative approaches to service delivery. As such, the policy and funding environment plays a crucial role in shaping workforce needs and capacity within the social sector.

ANALYSIS

“Unveiling critical insights”



WHAT WE KNOW

According to data from the Ministry of Business and Innovation, the largest workforce in Rotorua is in the healthcare and community support service sector (12.7% of the workforce population). This sector plays a crucial role in catering to the diverse healthcare needs and social services of the community. With a wide array of healthcare facilities and community service organisations, Rotorua's workforce in this sector contributes significantly to the overall well-being and quality of life of its residents. From hospitals and clinics to social service agencies and rehabilitation centers, the healthcare and community service workforce exemplifies dedication and compassion in serving the community's needs. As one of the leading sectors in Rotorua's economy, it underscores the importance of prioritising health and social welfare for the region's prosperity and development.

The healthcare and community service sector in Rotorua however, faces immense pressure due to various contributing factors. Factors such as an aging workforce population, increasing demand for health and social services, shortages of qualified staff, budget constraints, and the impacts of global health crisis all contributing to the strain on this workforce. This analysis aims to provide an in-depth insight into the environmental and working conditions of this sector, shedding light on the challenges faced by healthcare and social service professionals in Rotorua. By examining factors such as workload, stress levels, resource allocation, and job satisfaction within this sector, the analysis will offer a comprehensive understanding of the pressures the workforce is current facing.

ANALYSIS

“Unveiling critical insights”

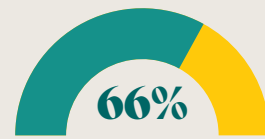
DATA INFOGRAPHIC

The following data has been taken from the annual New Zealand social worker workforce report 2022. Responses were received from 3544 social workers out of 7564. This gives a snap shot of the current situation of the social workers actively practicing in the sector at a national level.



REASONS FOR STARTING SOCIAL WORK

Making a positive difference to the lives of others



CHALLENGES THE SECTOR FACES

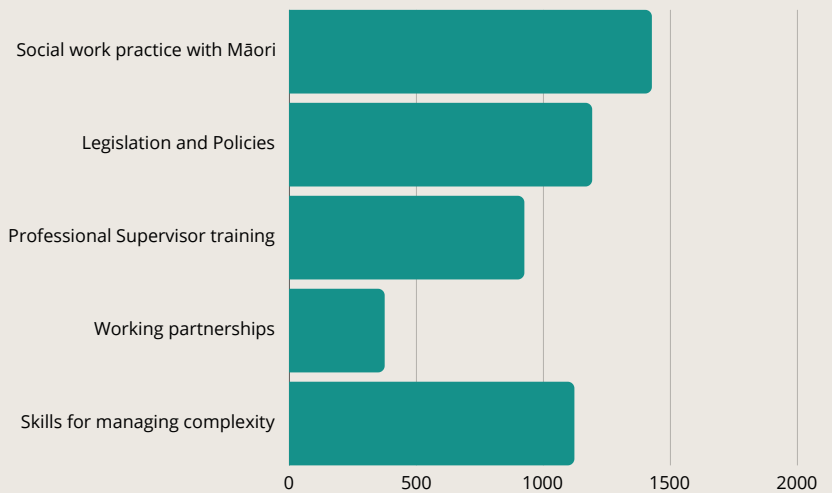
Recruitment and retention of social workers

High workload
20%



Reasons for planning to leave the profession

Social workers who stated they were planning to leave the sector over the next five years were asked to give their reasons for leaving.



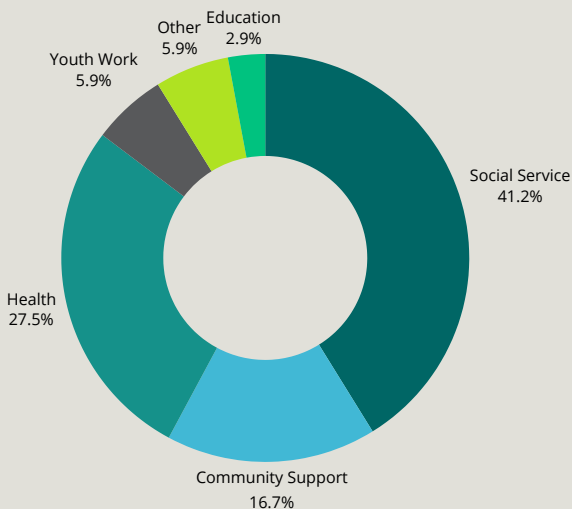
Areas for development identified

Participants provided an insight into where targeted training could be focused in order to match the needs of social workers

ANALYSIS

UNDERSTANDING OUR LOCAL WORKFORCE SURVEY

In February 2024 a survey was conducted to gather insights from the local Rotorua workforce community. The purpose was to understand their current attitudes and pinpoint needs to subsequently craft strategic opportunities aimed at strengthening organisations, staff and services. Effectively enhancing the quality of work which is produced from the workforce.



Participant demographic describing their line of work

YES



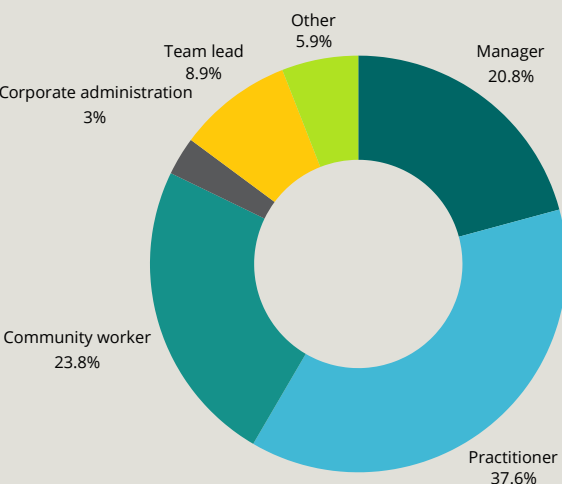
29%

NO



71%

Do you feel there is adequate resources (including training) which supports you to be effective in your work role?



Participant responsibility of work



What is most important to the workforce regarding their ability to perform well in their role

ANALYSIS

UNDERSTANDING OUR LOCAL WORKFORCE SURVEY



Where inspiration to work to the best of your ability comes from

YES



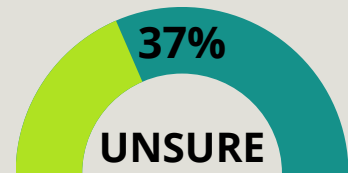
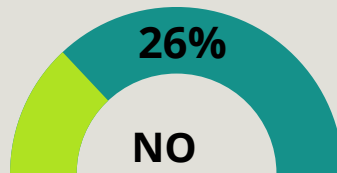
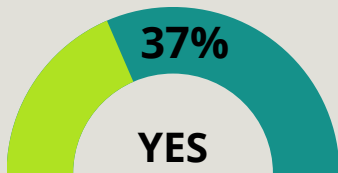
74%

NO

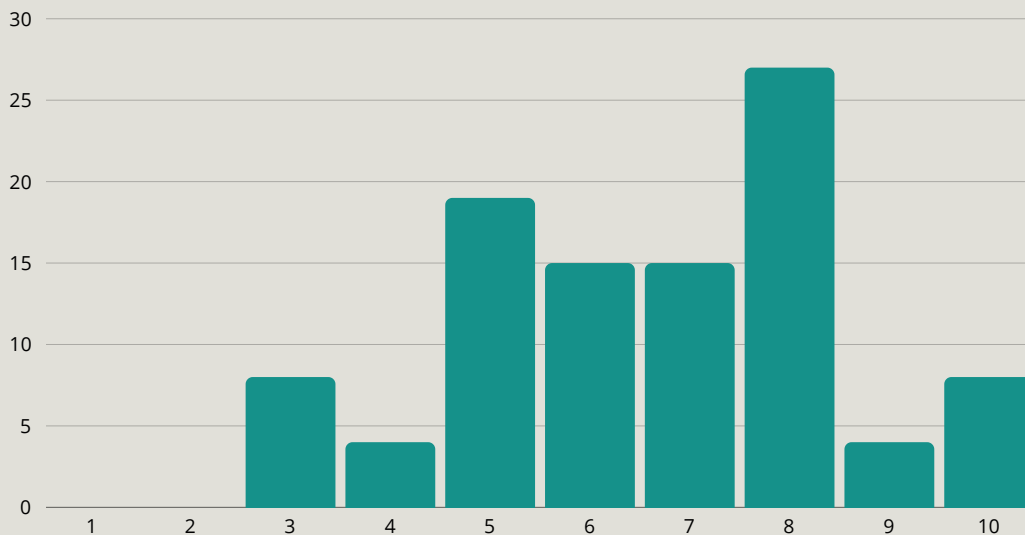


26%

Have you ever suffered or experienced stress, burnout or fatigue in the workplace



Does your organisation have a wellness plan or policy



How would you rate the level of your workload? 1 = extremely low, 10 = Unrealistically high

WORKFORCE VOICE

These narratives were taken from the “Understanding our local workforce” survey.

1. **What would make your workplace an even better place work?**

Extra staff to reduce the workload. Management to provide opportunities to upskill/train staff on a regular basis for current best practice

Acknowledgement and appreciation. Less focus on KPI's. More focus on quality of work and meaningful outcomes.

A shared understanding around accessing professional development. For the way we are paid to be reassessed and brought in line with the wider sector. More integration of te ao maori wellness approaches.

2. **Do you feel supported in the workplace?**

Due to demand of our service and most times working individually in different locations can create some stress and pressure to cover the work at hand. Furthermore, a lack of training to up skill gain further knowledge is limited due to time constraints

I have regular line management supervision, which is helpful to be able to communicate difficulties with leading my own team. Although, at times the leadership and culture of the organisation can feel unstable, which is unsettling for everyone.

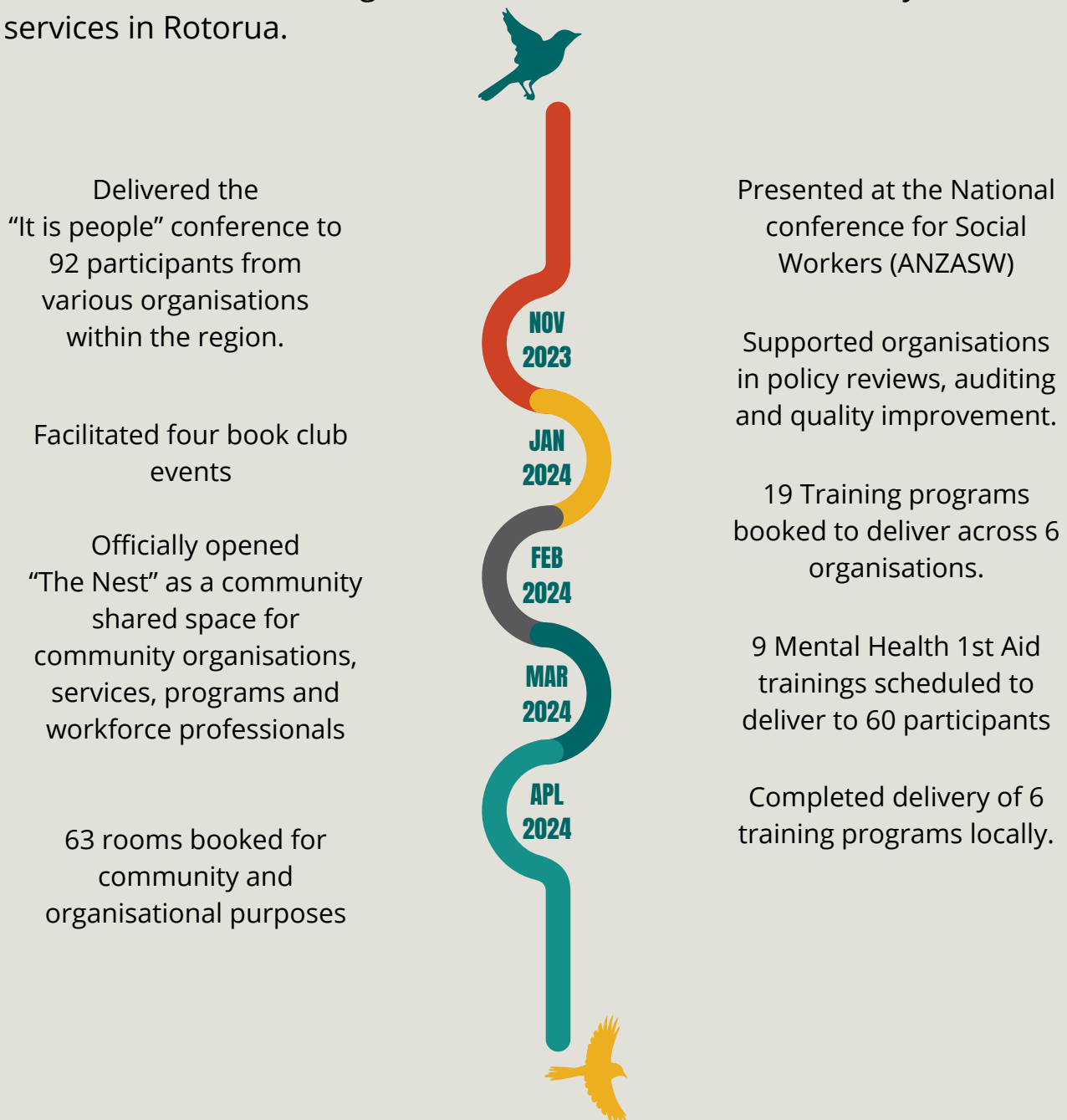
3. **Do you think health and wellbeing is a personal responsibility or collective?**

Both. I think I am responsible for myself, but my organisation also needs to look after me and make sure that I am not struggling. Managing caseloads and workloads etc.

A collective responsibility, personal responsibility is important but only where it aligns with a collective responsibility which is a long way from being recognised and / or actioned.

BELLBIRD TIMELINE

Rotorua’s Bellbird Charitable Trust is actively addressing the needs of a workforce under pressure in the healthcare and community service sector. Through initiatives such as providing professional development opportunities, advisory support, training programs and bookable communal spaces, the trust aims to support and alleviate the strain on professionals and community service providers. By prioritising the well-being and resilience of the workforce, Bellbird Charitable Trust plays a crucial role in enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of essential services in Rotorua.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this report, the following recommendations are proposed to address workforce needs in Rotorua's social sector:

Investment in training and education is fundamental to nurturing a skilled workforce capable of addressing the complex and evolving needs of Rotorua's population. By providing opportunities for professional development and upskilling, organisations can ensure that their staff are equipped with the latest tools, techniques, and best practices in their respective fields. This investment is crucial not only for attracting talent but also for retaining it, as employees are more likely to stay with organisations that prioritise their growth and development.

Cultural competency development is equally essential, particularly in a diverse and multicultural community like Rotorua. By promoting an understanding of and respect for different cultural perspectives, organisations can foster trust, engagement, and collaboration with the communities they serve. Cultural competency training should be embedded into the fabric of organisational culture, informing policies, practices, and decision-making processes at every level.

Support and well-being initiatives are vital for maintaining a healthy and resilient workforce in the face of the challenging and often emotionally demanding nature of community sector work. Workforce wellbeing needs to be weaved through the fabric of organisations to provide healthy environments, cultures and relationships. By prioritising staff well-being and providing access to resources such as counseling, supervision, peer support networks, and flexible work arrangements, organisations can mitigate the risk of burnout and turnover, ensuring continuity and stability in service delivery.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Technology adoption offers exciting opportunities to enhance service delivery, streamline processes, and meet the needs of the young population in Rotorua. However, it is essential to ensure that technology is not a stand alone process or system and that organisations and services need to continue to provide manual or practical options to meet the needs of a community that are disadvantaged by technology. Community support services need processes that are inclusive, accessible without cost, taking into account the diverse needs and preferences of the community. Organisations and services need to integrate technological processes alongside non technological to reduce barriers for community engagement.

Collaboration and networking are essential for maximising resources, sharing knowledge, and fostering innovation within the social sector ecosystem in Rotorua. By forging partnerships with other organisations, government agencies, educational institutions, and community groups, organisations can tap into complimentary expertise, pool resources, and deliver more coordinated and integrated services. Collaboration also provides opportunities for learning and capacity building, enabling organisations to adapt and respond effectively to emerging challenges and opportunities.

By implementing these recommendations, Rotorua's social sector can strengthen its workforce capacity and better support the well-being of the community.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, addressing workforce needs within the social sector in Rotorua demands a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach that acknowledges the unique challenges and opportunities present in the region. The strategies outlined in this report - investment in training and development, cultural competency, support and well-being initiatives, technology adoption, and collaboration and networking - collectively offer a roadmap for building a workforce that is not only equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge but is also attuned to the cultural nuances and socio-economic realities of the community it serves. It also helps to build a healthy culture in workplace environments and supports staff retention.

Bellbird Charitable Trust has been built on the precept to provide high quality support in the recommended areas. By implementing these strategies, the social sector can build a skilled, resilient, and culturally responsive workforce capable of meeting the diverse needs of the community and driving positive social change in Rotorua.



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