Group Supervision for Supervisors' initiative

A pilot evaluation

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Executive Summary

Mā te huruhuru, ka rere te manu
Adorn the bird with feather so it can fly

Background

This report provides an overview of an evaluation for a pilot of Group Supervision for Supervisors (GSS) initiative.

Professional supervision represents one of the most important contributors to life-long learning and the development of social workers (Zorga, 2002). Supervisors play a key role in ensuring that quality, ethical and accountable practice occurs for tamariki, rangatahi and whānau. Ensuring supervisors have the necessary time, skills and supports, including access to their own quality reflective supervision, is essential for them performing this function well, and in alignment with the profession's commitment to social justice and human rights (ANZASW, 1999; SWRB, 2022). Supervision, coaching, mentoring, and professional development are therefore corner stones of not only quality practice, but staff retention, workplace satisfaction and wellbeing (Rankine, 2019; Tsui, 2017).

In line with the new Tangata Whenua and Bicultural Supervision model, the terms kaitiaki and kaiārahi are used with the intent of creating a supervisory relationship that is relational, inclusive and restorative.
- The term kaiārahi (supervisor) means to guide, mentor, lead.
- The term kaitiaki (supervisee) means to guard, protect, care for.

For the purposes of this report, the term kaitiaki refers to the participating supervisors. The term kaiārahi refers to the supervisors who co-facilitated the groups.

Group Supervision for Supervisors' (GSS) pilot

The social work supervisor role at Oranga Tamariki is challenging and there are supervisors in the role who feel ill-prepared and unsupported to undertake their critical practice function. The Supervision Survey 2021 revealed that many supervisors did not have a formal supervision qualification, had not received associated professional development opportunities within Oranga Tamariki, and were not receiving their own supervision. After publishing the Supervision Survey, the Ministerial Advisory Board (MAB) identified the need to urgently provide support to supervisors to lift supervision access and quality. The GSS initiative was developed in response to MAB's request.

On initiation of this project, Service Delivery identified four regions to participate in the pilot. These regions were Te Tai Tokerau, Bay of Plenty, East Coast and Lower South. The GSS initiative was designed to provide the following benefits:

- Provide kaitiaki with a group supervision experience in addition to their current internal line-management supervision.
- Provide kaitiaki with culturally appropriate professional supervision by configurating the groups by ethnicity.
- Provide kaitiaki with a learning and development opportunity through reflective supervision.
- Provide kaitiaki with early exposure to the Tangata Whenua and Bicultural Supervision model within group modality.
- Develop the competency of internal kaiārahi in being matched to an external professional kaiārahi in a co-delivery approach.

The pilot ran for 6 months with 16 groups. The start dates for the first sessions were staggered from February to June 2023, due to changes in kaiārahi (group facilitators). At the conclusion of the pilot, an interim evaluation was completed which demonstrated numerous benefits of group supervision. At the request of kaitiaki and kaiārahi, approval was given to extend group supervision through to December 2023, for those groups that had sustained sufficient group attendance through the year. The pilot ended for all groups in December 2023. This evaluation report includes survey findings from all sixteen groups involved in the pilot.

Key findings

An evaluation of the GSS pilot showed that there was an array of benefits for kaitiaki engaging in group supervision. These included:

- Group supervision promoted learning and development that can directly transfer into a supervisor's own supervision of kaitiaki (social workers).
- Kaitiaki felt valued and heard.
- Tuakana and teina roles were enabled, which have benefits for both experienced and newer kaitiaki.
- There are benefits from having a supervisory lens that is external to Oranga Tamariki.
- There are benefits of supervision provided in addition to line-management supervision.
- Biculturalism was promoted.
- Group supervision enabled kaitiaki to form relationships and connections with others, reducing organisational silos.

There were issues with attendance for the pilot. Primary factors that impacted on attendance included a lack of communication and understanding about the GSS pilot, unsuitable scheduling times of sessions, and workload pressures. These

findings can inform changes required to support a future delivery of group supervision. With regards to workload pressures preventing attendance, this issue highlights that supervision (whether individual or group), must be valued and prioritised, with protected time set aside for attendance. In valuing supervision in this way, Oranga Tamariki can realise the benefits of supervision being a central mechanism for promoting kaimahi ora (whole of person wellbeing), mahi ora (work environments that are relational, inclusive, and restorative) and whānau ora (tamariki and children in the context of whakapapa).

Recommendations

- Continue group supervision as a beneficial mode of supervision for kaitiaki.
- Maintain group configuration to promote learning and connections.
- Supervision must be prioritised by kaitiaki and supported by sites.
- MyLearn is a suitable platform to support logistical arrangements.
- Offer scheduled options for sessions, with kaitiaki being able to 'book' into a group schedule that suits them.
- Provide more information and resources to kaitiaki about group supervision and the Tangata Whenua and Bicultural Supervision model.
- Build an understanding of wider internal supervisory capability and capacity.

Background

Introduction

A national Social Work Supervision Survey was undertaken with social workers, senior practitioners, and supervisors in 2021. The survey response rate was high and identified numerous organisational and professional issues and risks. The Social Work Supervision Survey Report (Evans & Swanson, 2021) can be accessed here: Social Work Supervision Survey Summary Report 211129.pdf.

As a result of the survey findings, the 'practice shift programme' stood up a supervision project and developed a supervision approach and a Tangata Whenua and Bicultural Supervision model which is currently being trialled at four sites in Tamaki Makaurau. The supervision model will be rolled out nationally in 2024.

The Ministerial Advisory Board (MAB) indicated their support for the Tangata Whenua and Bicultural Supervision model and recommended accelerating its progress to deliver a step-change in supervision access and quality. As a result, it was agreed the GSS initiative would be piloted.

In addition to internal line-management supervision, group supervision is deemed to provide an effective modality of supervision and learning environment. Group supervision can have a variety of meanings but is generally understood as the "regular meeting of a group of supervisees with a designated supervisor or supervisors" (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009, cited in Beddoe & Davys, 2016, p 124). The literature talks to both the efficiency and cost efficacy of group supervision, whilst highlighting the numerous benefits which can include maintaining self-care, mitigating bias, and promoting critical reflection (Beddoe & Davys, 2016; Bradley & Hojer, 2009; Newcomb, 2021; Osvat et al., 2014).

Overview of the Pilot

Group configuration

Across the four regions there were 97 kaitiaki who were eligible to participate. Due to a number of role changes and secondments prior to the pilot starting the number of eligible participants changed to 89. This resulted in the need for 16 supervision groups, with a maximum of 6 kaitiaki in each group.

The groups were configured by ethnicity – Tangata Whenua, Pacific and Tauiwi. The ethnicity of each kaitiaki was provided to us by the region. For those kaitiaki who

identified as having more than one ethnicity, they could choose their preference for group placement.

Participating kaitiaki were intentionally mixed from across service lines and regions. The intended benefit of this was to provide a unique learning environment where kaitiaki could benefit from alternative views in discussing and reflecting on challenges and opportunities, and benefit from relationship building across the regions.

Figure 1: Group configurations

Tangata whenua

6 x groups

Pacific

1 x groups

Tauiwi

9 x groups

Co-facilitation approach

Each group was co-facilitated by two kaiārahi of the same ethnicity as the group. We attempted to match an external kaiārahi with an internal kaiārahi, but due to challenges with internal capacity, some of the groups were facilitated by two external kaiārahi. We worked with 11 external kaiārahi and 8 internal kaiārahi in total.

The group supervision sessions were delivered monthly online via Teams. Each session ranged from 1.5 to 2 hours long. Preparation and debriefing time was required from the kaiārahi for each session.

Figure 2: Co-facilitation of the groups

One external supervisor

One Kaitiakitanga graduate / internal supervisor **OR** external supervisor

Supervision group (max 6 participants)
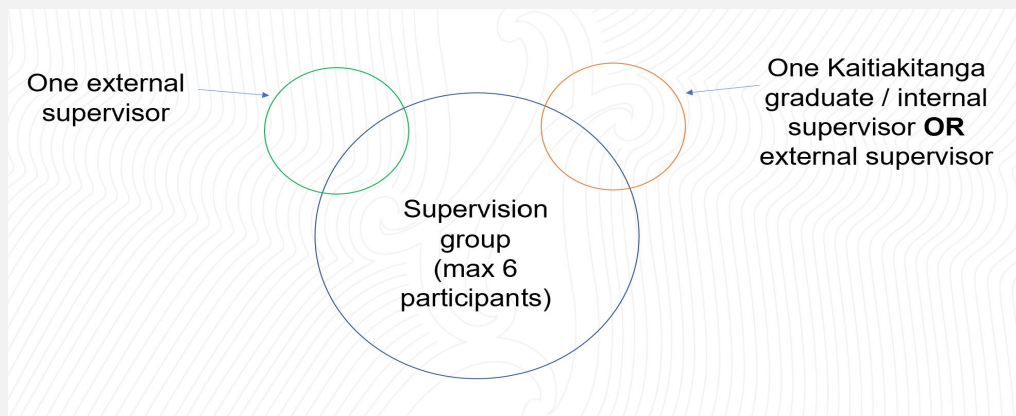
Methodology

Purpose of the evaluation

The evaluation sought to understand the following from participants:

- Whether group supervision is a helpful modality of supervision, in addition to line-management supervision.
- What the specific benefits of group supervision were for participants.
- How the Tangata Whenua and Bicultural Supervision model was experienced within a group modality.

Data collection and participants

A Qualtrics survey was administered to all participants which contained both quantitative and qualitative questions (see Appendix A). Due to staggered start dates for groups, the evaluation was conducted at two points in time.

Cohort one of the survey contained fifty-eight participants and was administered in July 2023. The response rate for cohort one was 41.4%.

Cohort two contained twenty-eight participants and was administered in November 2023. The response rate for cohort two was 28.6%.

The total evaluation response rate was 37%, which is consistent with attendance rates across the pilot. Given the response rate, the findings in this report may not represent the views of all participants who took part in the sessions. However, the findings provide a good indication of areas that worked well and what might need to be changed for a future offer.

Focus groups were held with nine kaiārahi (co-facilitators) utilising on-line sessions to complete their evaluation (see Appendix B).

Findings

Set up of the pilot

Project scope

A comprehensive project plan was developed, which included key tasks, deliverables, resource needs and costings. The identified project resource needs were never filled. This detrimentally impacted the experience for some participating in the pilot due to deficits in communication, coordination, and responsiveness which culminated in the pilot losing four experienced external kaiārahi. In turn, this resulted

in additional time and resource requirements to recruit, induct, and support more people into the pilot.

Communication and stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder and communications plans were developed. Communications were required across all levels, including leadership and management, practice leaders, and participating supervisors. On-line drop-in sessions were provided in addition to email communications, and attendance at Practice Leader forums. Despite best attempts to promote communications, the lack of a coordinator resource meant that some communications were missed or provided late.

Identifying kaiārahi (co-facilitators)

External
We pursued a targeted approach for recruiting external kaiārahi into the pilot. The process involved canvassing the ANZASW website for kaiārahi, and a shortlist was developed based on those who had experience in cultural and bicultural supervision, group supervision and online supervision. Additional external kaiārahi were also identified through word of mouth. In total, 11 external supervisors were contracted with some providing facilitation for more than one group.

Internal
We pursued a targeted approach for recruiting internal kaiārahi into the pilot, seeking to recruit those who had participated in the Kaitiakitanga post-graduate supervision qualification in 2021. Of that cohort, some kaimahi were unsuitable as they were not social workers. Several additional internal kaiārahi were later secured due to capacity issues with the initial cohort.

Beyond Recruitment

We contracted Beyond Recruitment for invoicing purposes. Some contractors found the platform challenging to use, but Beyond Recruitment was supportive when assistance was sought from them to submit or correct time sheets. Contractors generally generate their own invoices, and some reported that the process of additionally completing a timesheet with Beyond Recruitment was a duplication of effort.

Induction and support for kaiārahi

Most of the kaiārahi were inducted into the model through a 6-hour online Teams session. For some of the external kaiārahi who already had awareness of the new supervision model, we provided access to the learning material, which included videos for them to watch at their own convenience. For internal kaiārahi monthly drop-in sessions were planned and initially made available to bring the group

together so they could share learnings and ask questions. Due to limited project resources, these did not continue beyond two sessions.

Learning Management System 'MyLearn'

The Oranga Tamariki Learning Management System (LMS) MyLearn was used as the platform for learning and support material and to provide a record of the supervision sessions. The initial development on MyLearn included the development of two pages with different content being made available for kaiārahi and kaitiaki.

Supervision session events were set up in the LMS and the kaitiaki and the kaiārahi were provided with confirmation and a link to the supervision session. Sessions were run online using Teams.

Using the Learning Management System:
- A total of 16 groups with 6 sessions each required resource to create the events in the LMS, and to create the Teams meetings.
- Although the resource time requirements were low, developing the functional pages within the LMS was impeded by access to the required expertise. This meant the pages had limited functionality and development took additional resource time due to the limited expertise of the available developer.
- The kaiārahi pages required LMS specialist support as externally based kaiārahi need to be given access to the internal LMS system. For this initiative to be offered going forward the Professional Development LMS specialists would need to be made available. The indicated resource requirements are minimal.
- The Kaitiaki page was set up with access for individuals to a group environment. This was designed to ensure that group confidentiality was able to be maintained. Resource was limited to support this functionality.

Using Teams as the online meeting platform:
- There is a technology relationship between the LMS and Teams meetings and this was not well understood by kaitiaki. A default to Teams meetings was decided on to ensure that kaitiaki had the system in place they are most familiar with. Development of a resource to outline the relationship and what kaitiaki can expect to receive in terms of a calendar booking would be beneficial to minimise duplication within the set-up process.
    - Improved use of the LMS would allow the 'Manager notification' function to be realised. Due to defaulting to the Teams environment, kaitiaki managers are not notified of inclusion in the sessions.
- Not all external kaiārahi were familiar with the Teams platform. A process of testing for external contractors to ensure access would have been beneficial prior to the first supervision session.

- External kaiārahi cannot set and adapt Teams meetings as required. This requires an adaptation by the administrator and can cause delay for the group.
- As external contractors, kaiārahi are required to wait in the lobby (online) and have an Oranga Tamariki staff member allow them access to the meeting. This impacts the session as it is preferable that the kaiārahi are available prior to the hui and that they can open the session.

Barriers to engaging in group supervision

Attendance was a challenge across the pilot. There were barriers for kaitiaki attending group supervision, which impacted on the experience of kaitiaki who did attend.

Figure 3: Barriers to engaging in group supervision

What prevented you from attending sessions?	Count	Percent
Other (please specify)	11	32%
Workload prevented me from attending	9	28%
Proposed time/date did not work with my schedule	7	24%
I am carrying a caseload which prevented me from attending	3	9%
I don't feel comfortable with group supervision	2	6%
I didn't feel supported by team/site to attend	2	6%

'Other' reasons for not attending included the following:

- Sick leave and annual leave
- Changing roles during pilot
- Responding to critical work incidents

Kaiārahi shared reflections on the lack of attendance:

"I was aware of the wasted resources when there is such a need for it".

"It was really sad – supervision is so underrated and undervalued as an important part of kaimahi ora and good practice".

"I was surprised by their lack of understanding about why they need supervision or what they might get out of it".

"There is a real lack of responsibility as registered social workers".

"When kaimahi are busy supervision is the first thing to go out the window".

"Some said that they were not 'released' to attend".

The lack of attendance had a detrimental impact on the experience of those kaitiaki who did attend:

> *"Only one other supervisor came most of the time. My learning came from the facilitators who I really enjoyed speaking to, they were the perfect blend of internal and external" - Kaitiaki*

> *"There was only myself and one other supervisor in the group so having more supervisors in the group would have given a wider experience of their views" - Kaitiaki*

> *"It reduces what you get out of it and what you put in. It reduces the experience for all" – Kaiārahi*

> *"[It would have been helpful] to have some say in the timing of sessions, at a time appropriate to my time schedule" – Kaitiaki*

The logistical arrangements

Information about the pilot

Information about group supervision and kaitiaki awareness of it before the sessions began, was varied. For some kaitiaki this meant that key information about the group supervision was provided during the group supervision sessions by the kaiārahi. If kaitiaki were better prepared before engaging in group supervision this would enable them to engage more quickly and deeply in the process as opposed to needing to cover preparatory information.

> *"Sessions appeared on my calendar. When I joined online I had no idea what I was going into and went in thinking I would find out. I was not provided with information beforehand so poor communication around me being part of the pilot" – Kaitiaki*

> *"Perhaps a better introduction with the material sent to me. While MyLearn had some info it was not as extensive as it could have been. And it is not always easy to locate" – Kaitiaki*

> *"Assumption that it is 'clinical' – but it's not, it's about oranga. May have prevented some because they didn't know that it is safe" - Kaiārahi.*

Figure 4: Were you satisfied with the information about group supervision received before attending sessions?

I was satisfied with the information about group supervision received before attending sessions

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	7
Somewhat disagree	4
Neither agree nor disagree	4
Somewhat agree	7
Strongly agree	3
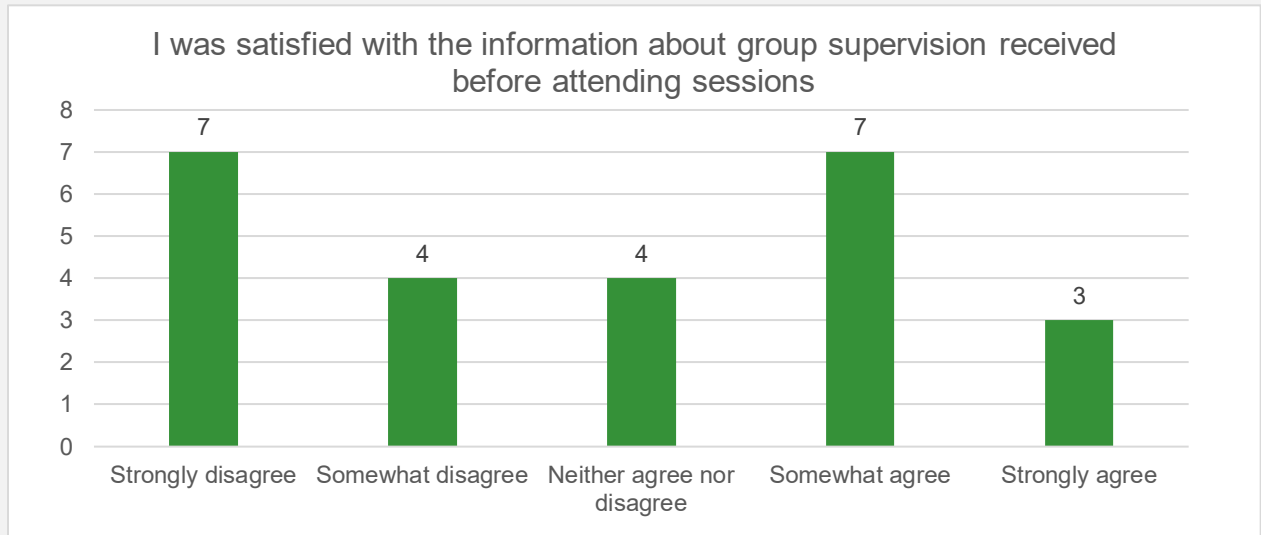
Mode of delivery

Online format

On the whole, kaitiaki found the online format met their needs, although some participants clearly identified their preferences for kanohi ki te kanohi (in-person) supervision.

> *"Online is becoming more common, there are more options and it is more accessible. It is more practical as it is easier to fit in in-between" – Kaiārahi*

> *"Having it online meant it was far easier logistically to attend, no travel required or anything else to schedule around" - kaitiaki*

> *"Technology was not a barrier to communicating" – Kaitiaki*

> *"Given the diversity of participants and the locale, meeting face to face was not an option" – Kaitiaki*

Figure 5: Did on-line delivery meet your needs?

I found on-line delivery met my needs

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	4
Somewhat disagree	3
Neither agree nor disagree	4
Somewhat agree	7
Strongly agree	8
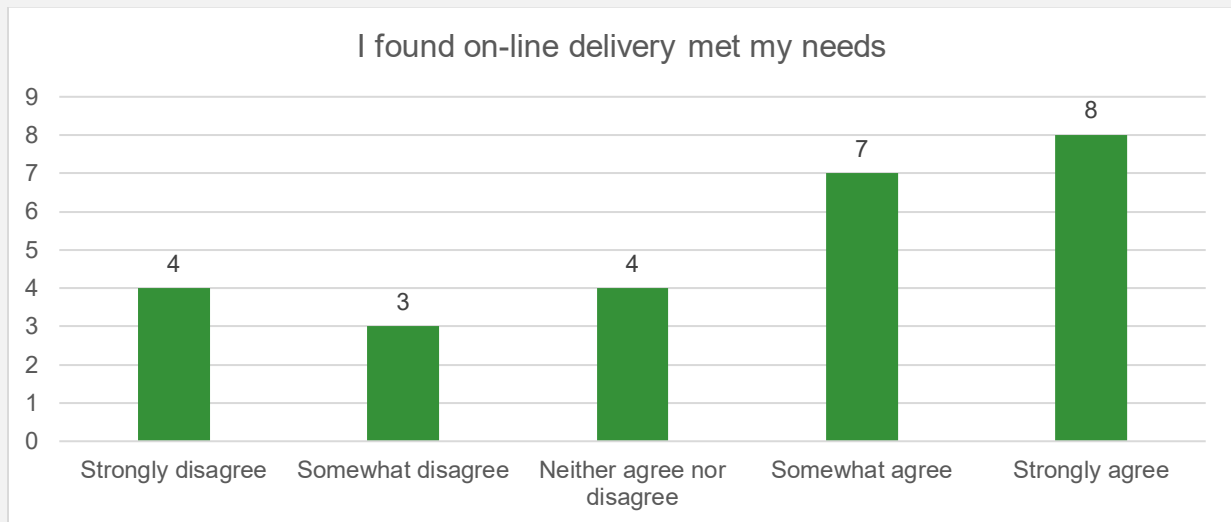
Preferences for kanohi ki te kanohi (in-person) format

Both kaiārahi and kaitiaki spoke to the obvious benefits of supervision kanohi ki te kanohi.

> *"Kanohi ki te kanohi is the best – more spiritual alliance" – Kaiārahi*

On balance, kaitiaki also spoke of the benefits of being able to meet and learn from people from other regions, which would not have been possible in a face-to-face format. This was further reinforced by survey feedback about group configuration.

> *"Face to face has its advantages however the privilege of professionals who have been in the Ministry for some time brings wealth of knowledge that is beneficial to us all, who are in other sites/regions" – Kaitiaki*

Figure 6: Would you have preferred face to face supervision if this had been offered?

I would have preferred face to face group supervision if this had been offered

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	4
Somewhat disagree	1
Neither agree nor disagree	7
Somewhat agree	4
Strongly agree	10
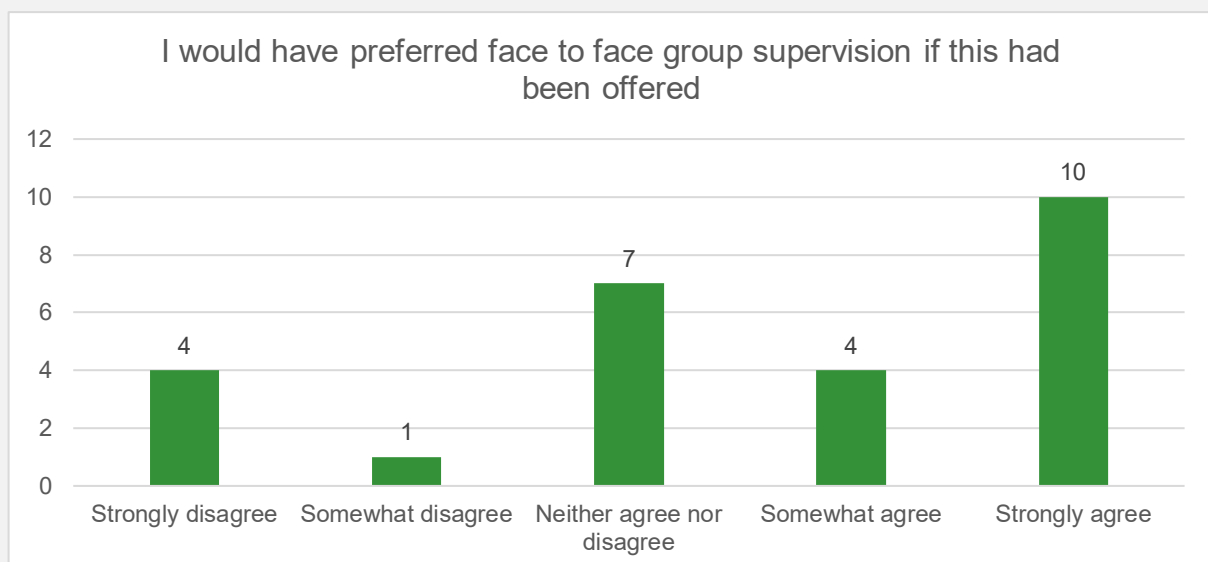
Frequency and duration of sessions

Kaitiaki largely reported that monthly sessions were sufficient. Kaiārahi all reported that monthly sessions were sufficient, but that fortnightly sessions in the first month of roll-out could have been helpful for whanaungatanga and building connections more quickly.

Kaitiaki largely reported that session duration (1.5 – 2 hours), was sufficient. Kaiārahi all reported that session duration was appropriate.

Figure 7: Were monthly sessions sufficient to meet your needs?

Monthly sessions were sufficient to meet my needs

Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
3	0	5	10	8
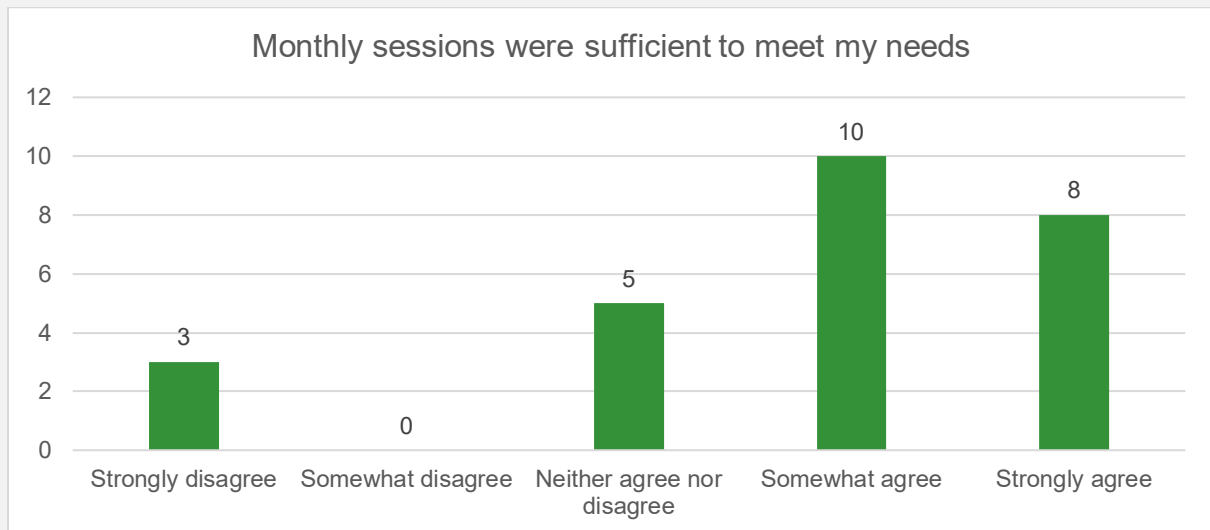
Figure 8: Was the time allowed for each session sufficient?

The time allowed for each session was sufficient

Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
2	0	2	12	10
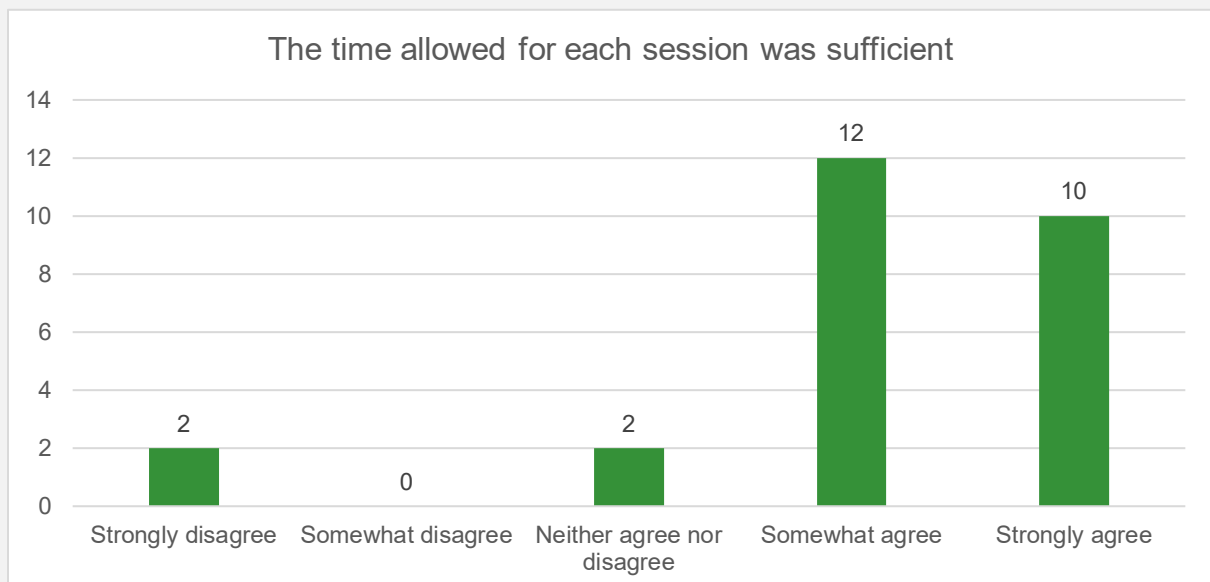
Session bookings

Initially calendar bookings were made utilising the MyLearn platform, however this was not supported for external supervisors, so a dual system was adopted using Outlook Calendar invites as the default position. This process was essentially a duplication, and it is recommended that only MyLearn is used for calendar bookings.

Figure 9: Were session bookings made easy for you?

Session bookings were made easy for me

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	2
Somewhat disagree	1
Neither agree nor disagree	6
Somewhat agree	7
Strongly agree	10
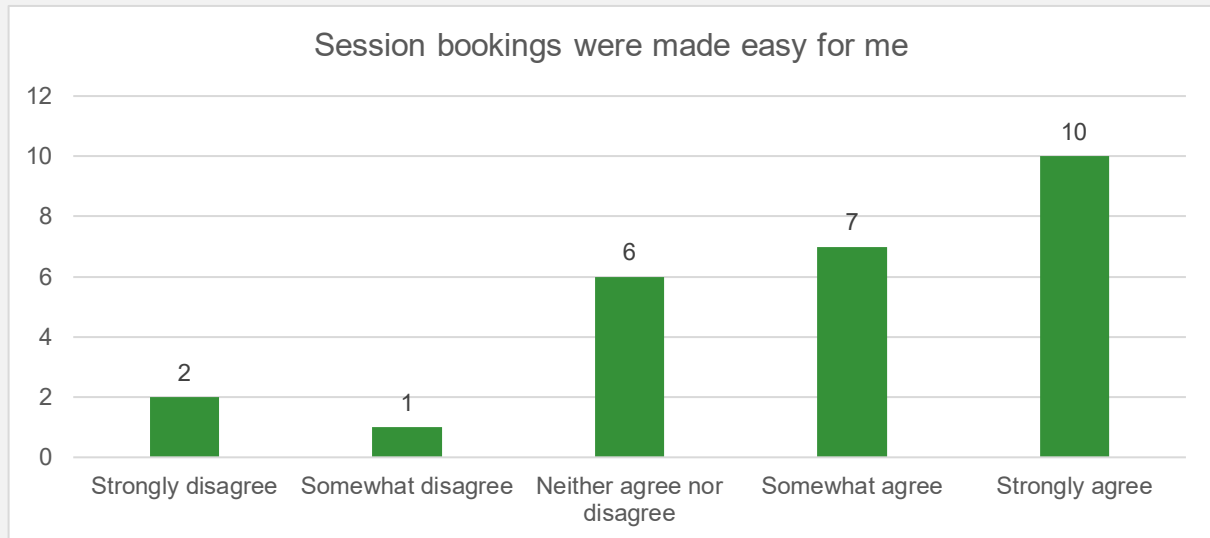
The group configurations

Being placed with other supervisors

Most kaitiaki said that it was a good experience being placed with other supervisors.

Figure 10: Was it a good experience being in a group with other supervisors?

It was a good experience being in a group with other supervisors

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	3
Somewhat disagree	0
Neither agree nor disagree	2
Somewhat agree	6
Strongly agree	15
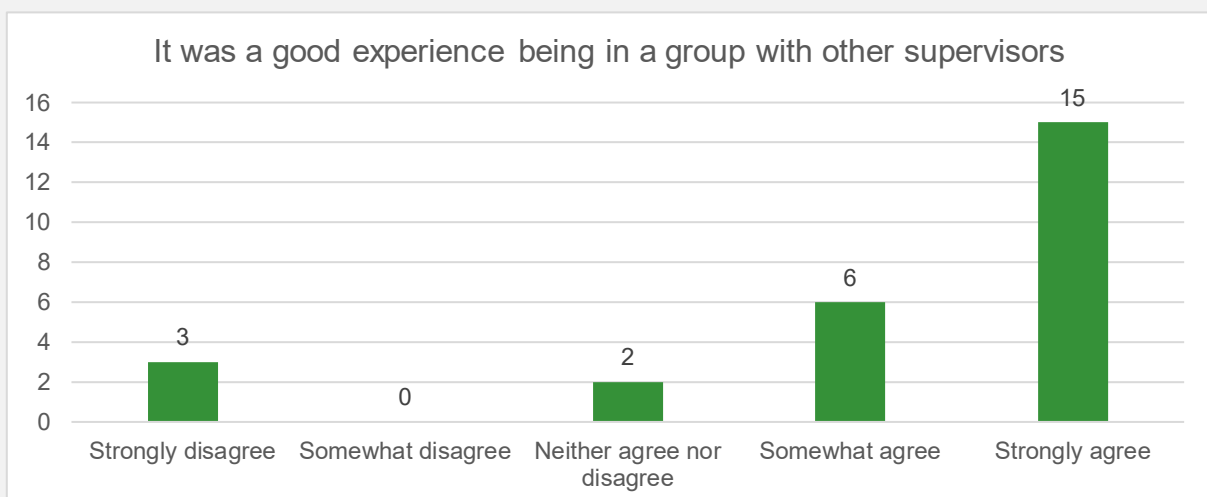
Being placed with supervisors from other regions

Both kaiārahi and kaitiaki responded that it was very beneficial having supervisors from across the motu come together. Themes from the evaluation included:
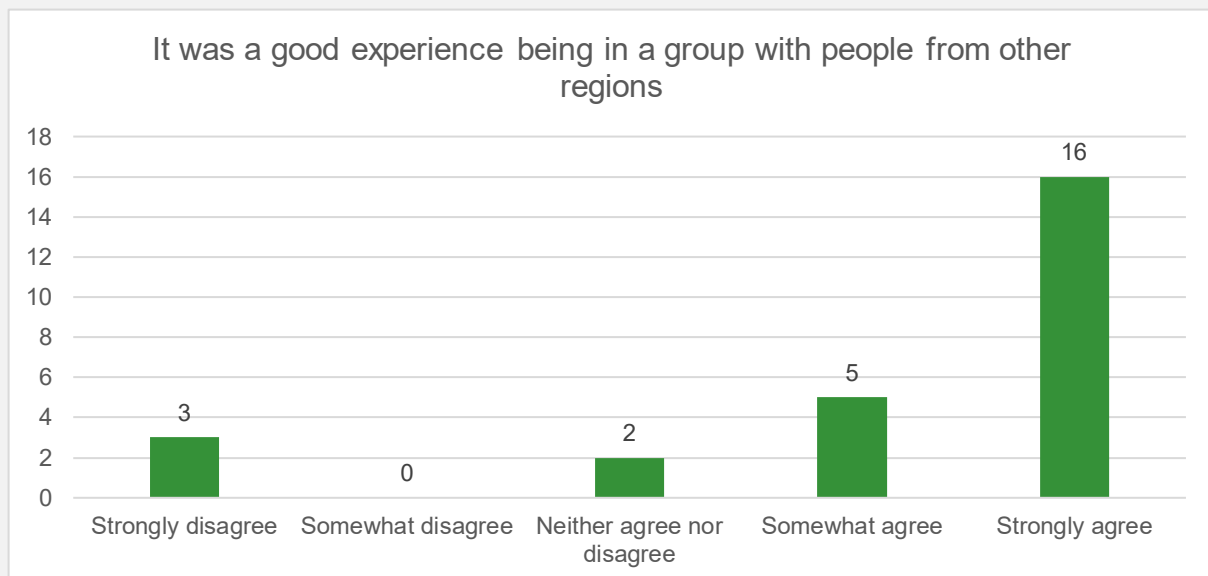
- Kaitiaki appreciated meeting supervisors from different sites.
- Kaitiaki were able to build relationships and develop a shared understanding.
- Kaitiaki could value different positions and recognised that the supervisor role varied across sites.
- Kaitiaki came from different cultural bases – urban/rural and they were at different places along the tikanga continuum.

Figure 11: Was it a good experience being in a group with people from other regions?

It was a good experience being in a group with people from other regions

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	3
Somewhat disagree	0
Neither agree nor disagree	2
Somewhat agree	5
Strongly agree	16

Being placed with supervisors across-service lines

Just as there were benefits from being placed with other supervisors from other regions, there were benefits of forming relationships across service lines.

"It released people from talking about dynamics in the team and site" – *Kaiārahi*

"I also learnt from the experience of others as we arrived at a very trusting place with the supervision. It meant that some difficulties that might not be shared within a region were shared. These were firmly focused with regard to the work we are doing within our supervises and other interactions that we have as supervisors. It was a very positive experience and while we were self-driven, allowed us to explore a range of issues that we were all facing with supervisees" – *Kaitiaki*

"[It was an] opportunity to strengthen regional site relationships" – *Kaiārahi*

Figure 12: Was it a good experience being in a group with people from other service lines?

It was a good experience being in a group with people from other service lines

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	3
Somewhat disagree	0
Neither agree nor disagree	6
Somewhat agree	6
Strongly agree	11
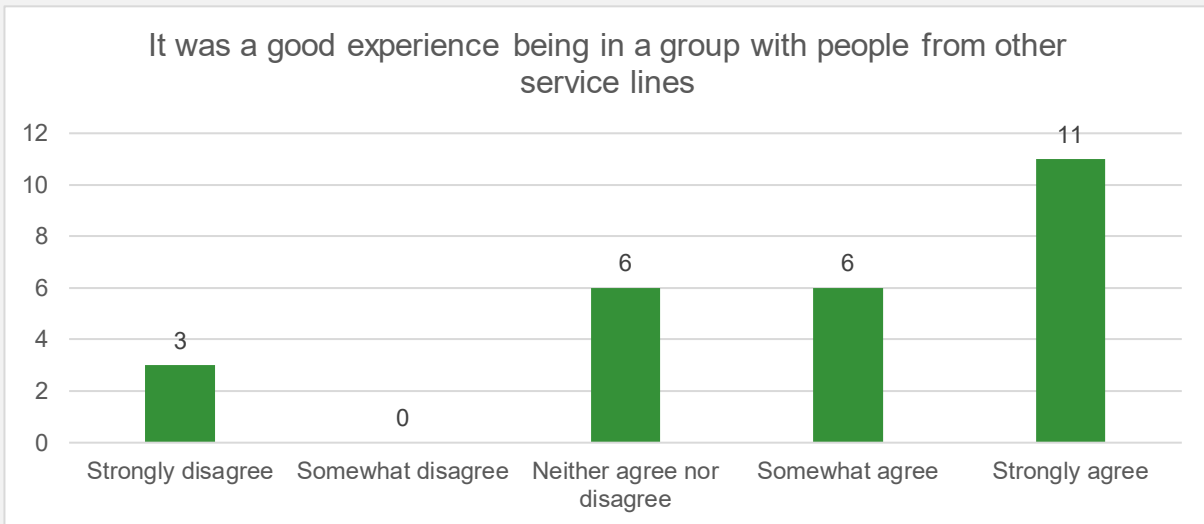
Being placed with supervisors of the same ethnicity

There was positive feedback with regards to configuring the groups by ethnicity, with most agreeing that this supported their cultural needs.

Responses from the tangata whenua groups included:

"Opportunity to just think about themselves and their development in practice" - Kaiārahi

"Focus on who they are as Māori in the OT space" - Kaiārahi

"A lot of them are whanaunga, so they got to catch up and share stories" - Kaiārahi.

"Kaimahi need spiritual safety" – Kaitiaki

For the tauiwi groups there was a common theme that they would have benefited from having Tangata Whenua and Pacific kaitiaki in their group and as kaiārahi (facilitators).

"My learning would have been enhanced by being teamed with Māori supervisors for cultural growth".

"Whilst the ethnic makeup was similar to me, I wonder if there had been a mix of ethnicity would have elicited a better response and understanding. But the experience of other supervisors was good as we were able to share our experiences".
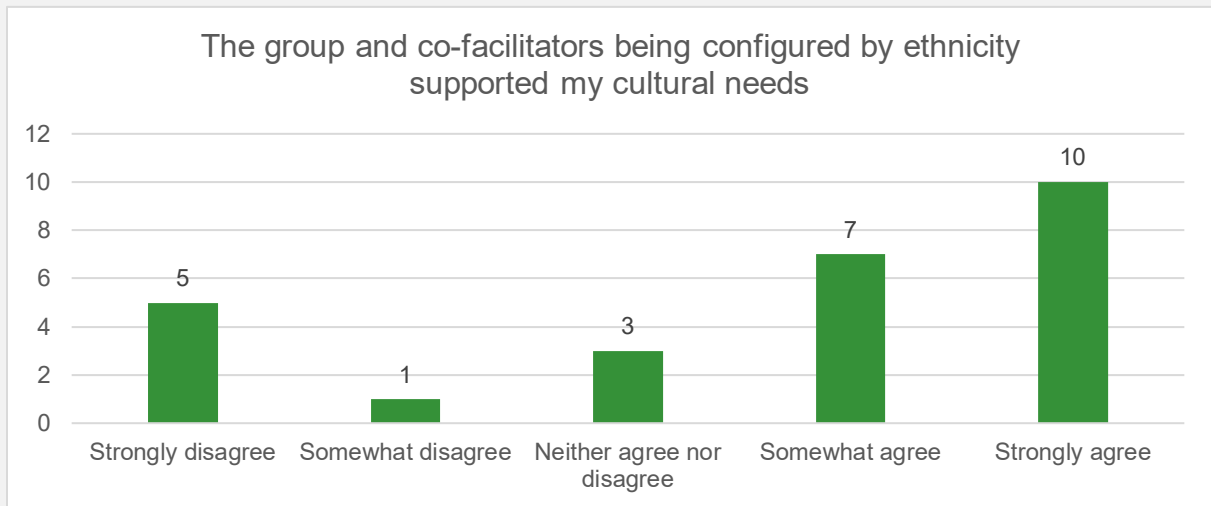
"I'm not sure anything could have been improved, short of having more ethnic diversity in the groups".

"I think having a range of ethnicities would have been positive".

"Have more cultural diversity within the group. We have no Māori or Pasifica representation in our group which would have improved cultural humility and awareness of tikanga, Mātauranga and kawa".

Given that one of the intended benefits was to provide kaitiaki with culturally appropriate professional supervision by configurating the groups by ethnicity, results show us that this configuration supported needs more than not.

Figure 13: Did having the group and co-facilitators configured by ethnicity support your cultural needs?

The group and co-facilitators being configured by ethnicity supported my cultural needs

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	5
Somewhat disagree	1
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Somewhat agree	7
Strongly agree	10

The Tangata Whenua and Bicultural Supervision Model

Agenda setting

Most kaitiaki felt that they could contribute to the agenda for each session.

Figure 14: Were you able to contribute to the agenda for each session?

I was able to contribute to the agenda for each session

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	2
Somewhat disagree	1
Neither agree nor disagree	4
Somewhat agree	9
Strongly agree	10
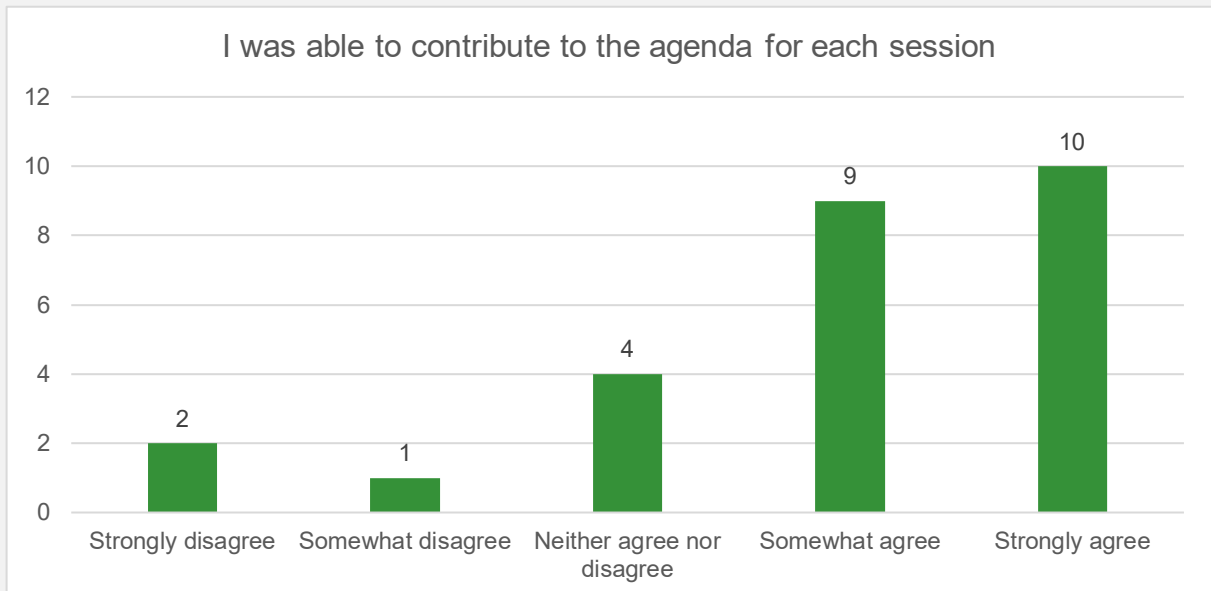
Ability to participate in sessions

Most kaitiaki felt that they could participate in sessions as much as they wanted to.

Figure 15: Were you able to participate as much as you wanted to in each session?

I was able to participate as much as I wanted to in each session

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	3
Somewhat disagree	0
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Somewhat agree	7
Strongly agree	13
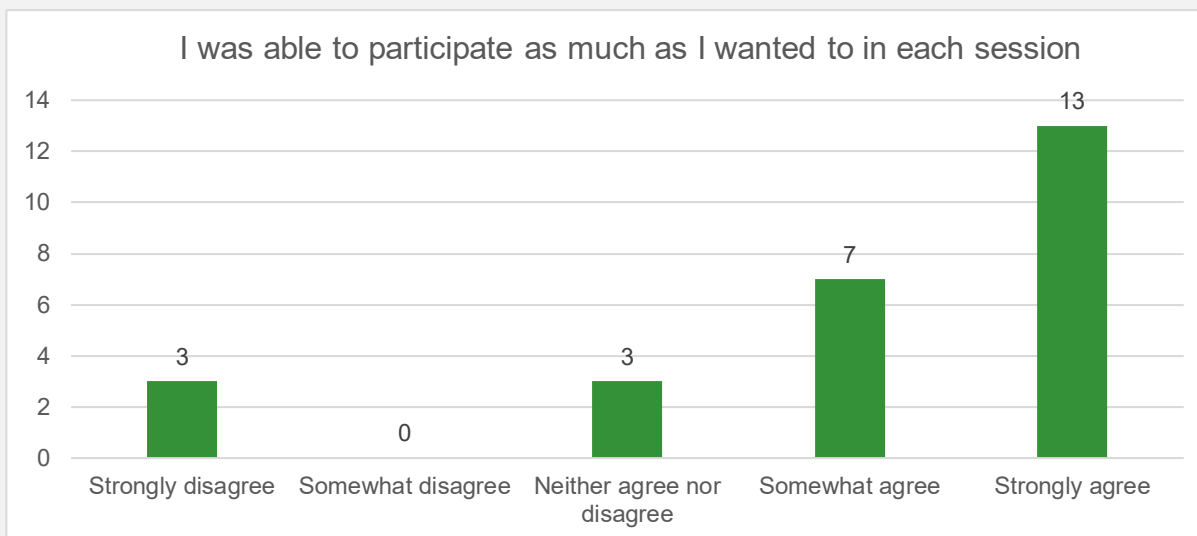
Understanding of the new Tangata Whenua and Bicultural Supervision model

The evaluation took place before the new Tangata Whenua and Bicultural Supervision model had been rolled out nationally. Kaiārahi were inducted into the model early with some foundational knowledge, however, they were not expected to induct kaitiaki into the model. Kaiārahi weaved or made explicit links to the supervision model in different ways. Learning about the supervision model will take time, and many of the kaiārahi said that they were learning at the same time as the kaitiaki.

"More supervisors who had an understanding of the model. I would love more sessions with the facilitators" - Kaitiaki

"I think just more discussion and practice of practical ways of implementing this is all that will improve my understanding. It would also be good to hear from Māori practitioners about how they implemented the model" - Kaitiaki

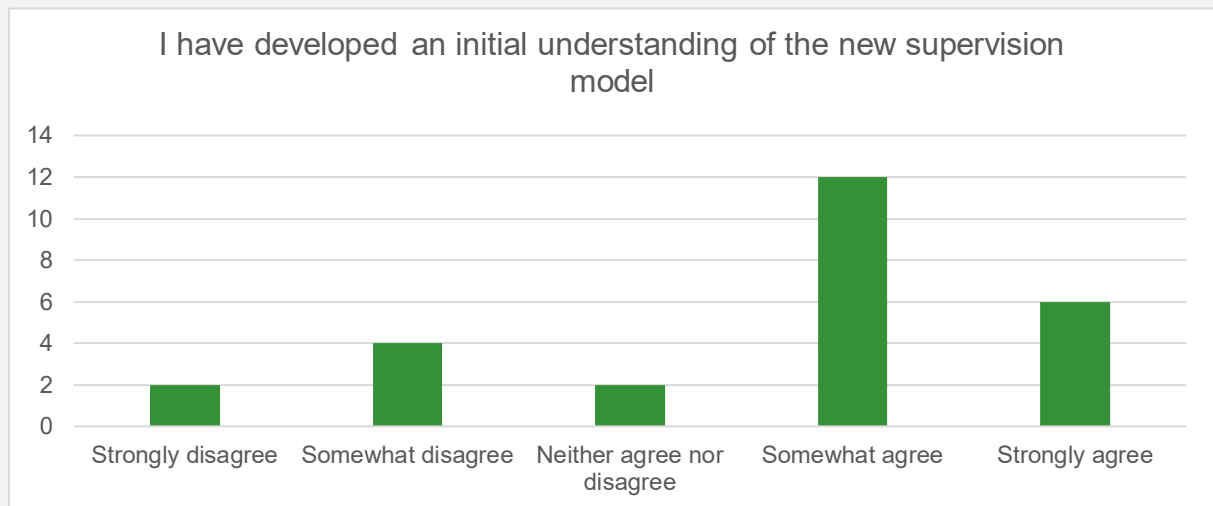*"Whilst we had some information on MyLearn, having a greeted explanation would have helped. We would discuss the elements of that weeks learning but given that it was all new learning, having a few more sessions after the 6 would have allowed us to use the time to practice the totality in one session and thus enable is to get more used to a full session of supervision we would have with our supervisees"* - Kaitiaki

"To be honest, I did not feel that I actually experienced anything different – in terms of the new supervision model" - Kaitiaki

"Everybody took something from the model to enhance their own supervision sessions such as Whakatau & Whakamutanga" – Kaiārahi

"There was reflection on how it has influenced providing supervision for kaimahi with whakatau and whakamutanga becoming the norm, experiencing Āta and recognising ako wairua by slowing the sessions down" – Kaiārahi

Figure 16: Did you develop an initial understanding of the new supervision model?

I have developed an initial understanding of the new supervision model

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	2
Somewhat disagree	4
Neither agree nor disagree	2
Somewhat agree	12
Strongly agree	6

How well the model works in a group modality

All kaiārahi, especially the external kaiārahi, said that the model works well in a group modality as it is flexible and non-linear. Given that kaiārahi would have worked with the model in different ways during the sessions, the response from kaitiaki below is varied.

"The model is very adaptive – it works just as well in group as it does individually" – Kaiārahi

Figure 17: How well did you think the supervision model worked in a group modality?

I thought the supervision model worked well in a group modality
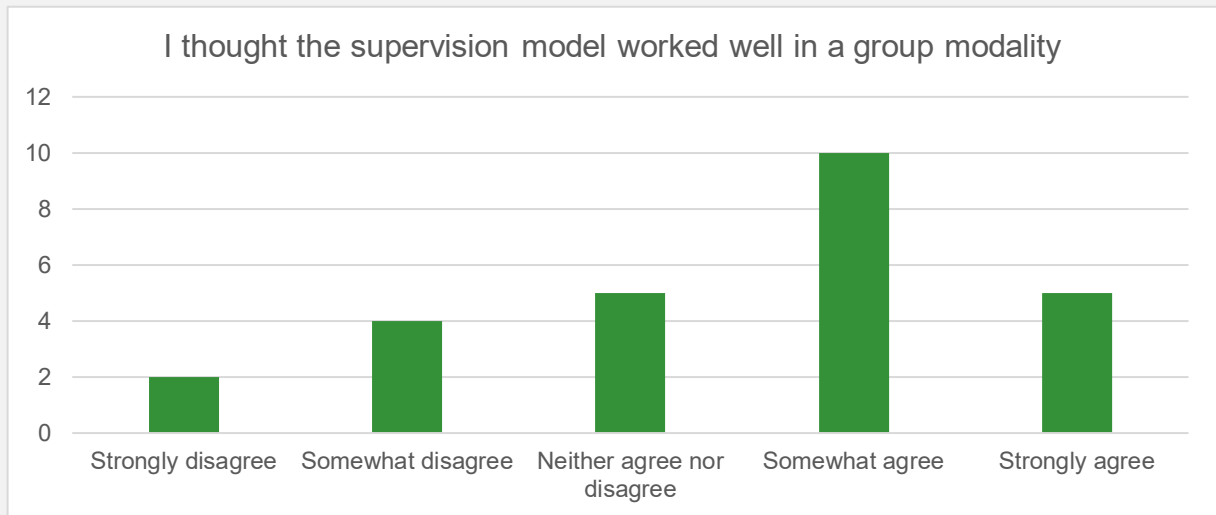
The promotion of learning and development

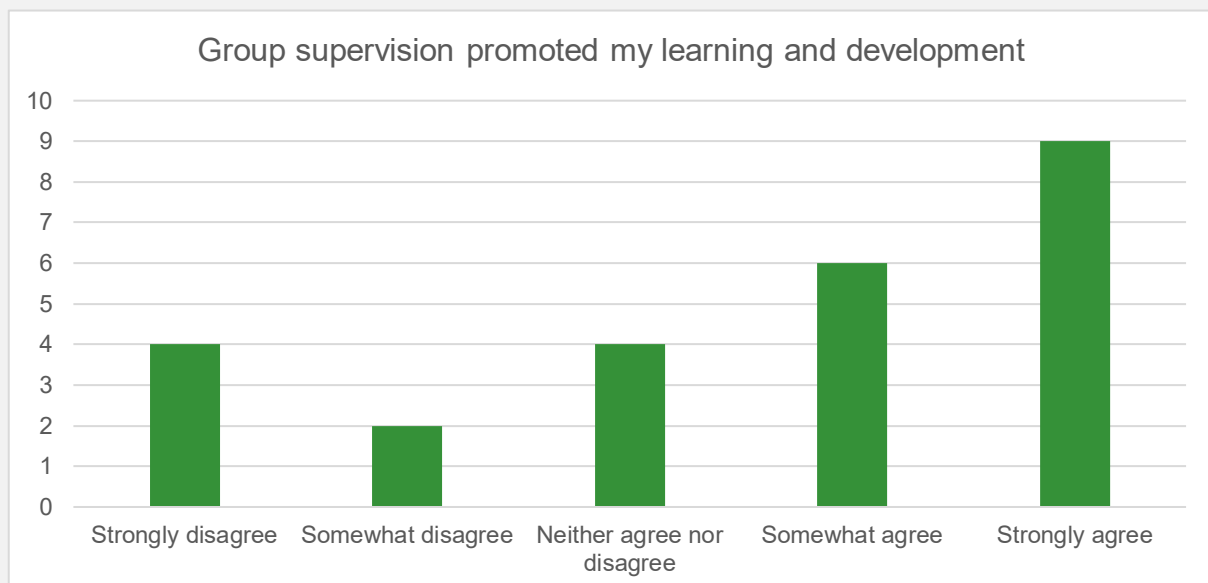There was a range of views from respondents about whether group supervision promoted learning and development, yet this was highlighted in the qualitative questions findings as a core benefit.

> *"It makes me sad that this will be coming to an end! These sessions have made me feel valued, increased my confidence and given me essential, creative and useful tools to use immediately during my supervision sessions"* - Kaitiaki.

> *"It has quickly become a safe place to share and to reflect. Those of us who have attended regularly have found value and a respect for our group that brings us closer to the true meaning of group supervision"* - Kaitiaki.

Figure 18: Did group supervision promote your learning and development?

Group supervision promoted my learning and development

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	4
Somewhat disagree	2
Neither agree nor disagree	4
Somewhat agree	6
Strongly agree	9

Group supervision as a modality promoted kaimahi ora, mahi ora and whānau ora

At the centre of the Tangata Whenua and Bicultural Supervision model is oranga (wellbeing), expressed as kaimahi ora, mahi ora and whānau ora. This is premised on supervision needing to have a primary focus on the individual kaimahi and their wellbeing and practice. When the work environment is an enabler of good practice, whānau ora – good outcomes for tamariki, rangatahi and whānau will be realised.
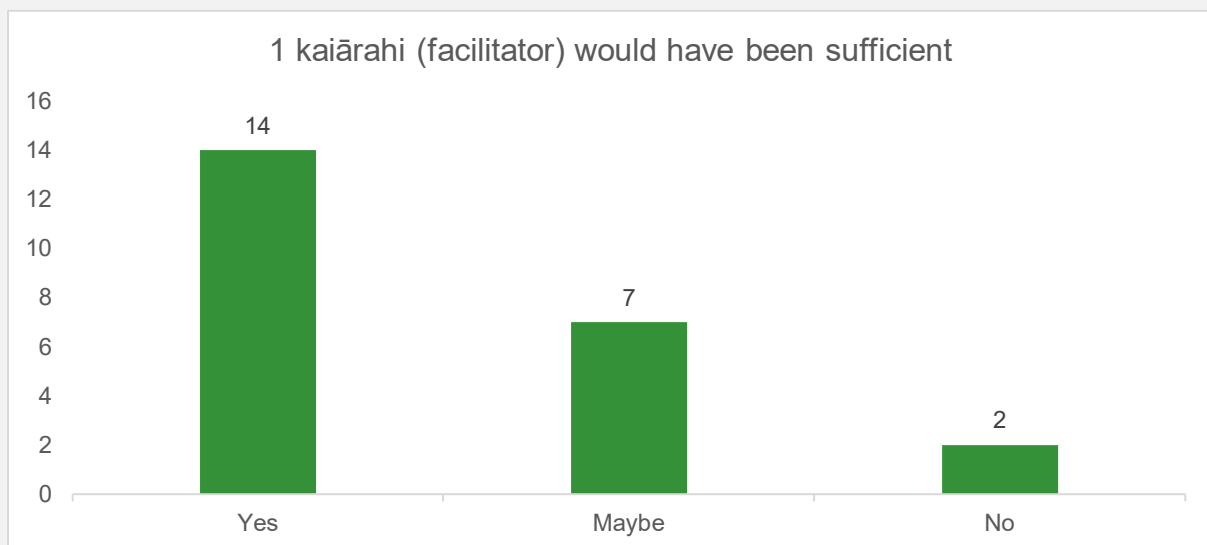
Survey respondents agreed that group supervision was in alignment with oranga, and it promoted kaimahi ora, mahi ora and whānau ora.

Number of kaiārahi (facilitators) required for sessions

All groups were co-facilitated by two kaiārahi (facilitators). Most groups had one external kaiārahi and one internal kaiārahi, whilst a few groups had two external kaiārahi. Overall, most kaitiaki thought that one kaiārahi would have been sufficient to facilitate their group.

The feedback from kaiārahi on the benefits of working as a pair was mixed. For the groups that had both an external and internal kaiārahi, the internal kaiārahi spoke of really enjoying the experience and learning from the other. In this type of pairing, the external kaiārahi also noted the benefits of having an internal co-facilitator whom they could draw on for 'inside-information'. Some external co-facilitators said that they developed cohesive ways of working with each other, agreeing to take turns in leading for example, whilst some pairs said that it felt disjointed at times, and they had to work hard to stay in alignment. One kaiārahi described facilitating a supervisory process as a 'dance', and with two kaiārahi, you both have your own thoughts on where to take a conversation. This can make the process challenging and can add a further dynamic to managing overall group dynamics.

Figure 19: Was it a good experience being in a group with people from other regions

Figure: Bar chart titled "1 kaiārahi (facilitator) would have been sufficient". Yes: 14, Maybe: 7, No: 2.

Key insights

Group supervision is valuable and should continue

Overall, group supervision has been beneficial for participating supervisors, and they wanted it to continue.

Figure 20: Would you want to participate in ongoing group supervision?

Benefits for kaitiaki

Figure 21: What were the benefits of participating in group supervision?

Group supervision promotes learning and development

Learning can directly transfer into one's own supervision with supervisees

"The sharing of experiences has been the best learning, that coupled to the model and it has challenged me and how I deliver supervision. I see it as a very useful mechanism with peer groupings outside the normal peer settings that we have. I have meetings with other supervisors that are very positive but there is still an element of one upmanship amongst even though we know each other well. I also have meetings with other supervisors and nothing has been at this level" - Kaitiaki.

"These reflections and skill building enabled benefits such as personal professional wellbeing, sharing resourcing, heightened insight for and of cultural awareness with an ongoing invitation to deepen in whakawhanaungatanga" - Kaiārahi

Group supervision promotes reflection

"I have no internal line management supervision and participating in group supervision gave me an opportunity to understand the impacts and risks associated with this. The support and reflection space that was provided was so beneficial to my kaimahi ora in understanding things that I could focus on, to change in the future and also in the present to ensure that I was in a space to be an effective practitioner and supervisor" - Kaitiaki.

"Generally, our group feedback identified appreciation for the pilot in opportunity to refresh skills and sense of oneself and how this shapes you as a skilled professional in the working world" – Kaiārahi

"Having access in allocated time to supervision through the pilot was greatly valuable reflective time, a time of gathering of theories and models, and this was enriched by group work" – Kaiārahi

"Supervision has become a priority as a tool for the kaimahi's wellbeing and opportunity for reflection" - Kaiārahi

Supervisors have much to offer each other

"Listening to other supervisors' experiences and what works for them when they are under pressure. Good open conversations shared. I was in a group with strong and supportive wāhine" - Kaitiaki.

"Felt heard and supported. It was about supervisors, and it felt good to see that we are relevant" - Kaitiaki.

"Sessions with anyone external to our site is positive because of the ability to learn and stretch your thinking" - Kaitiaki.

"I wasn't alone with the challenges faced as a frontline supervisor. I was being heard without judgement. I felt valued and my contributions are/were worthwhile" - Kaitiaki.

"The kaitiaki were able to draw on each other experiences to look creatively to manage challenging situations" - Kaiārahi

"Affirming to have others are experienced similar issues. Validation – it is not a 'me' problem" - Kaitiaki

"It was invaluable for sharing similar themes, learning from peers and not feeling alone" - Kaitiaki

Tuakana and teina roles were activated

"I feel like quite an inexperienced supervisor, having had no formal training and no continued professional development provided by OT. These sessions have made me feel valued, increased my confidence and given me absolutely essential, creative and useful tools to use immediately during my supervision sessions" - Kaitiaki.

"Understanding how supervisors from other sites do supervision and can get ideas, feedback and support. As a new supervisor it was good to hear how a supervisor with many years' experience has developed her supervisory skills" - Kaitiaki.

"The only benefit that I gained was that I could support a new supervisor who was struggling" - Kaitiaki.

"Only one other participant who was not experienced so I carried a lot of the conversation. But I love engaging with other sites as we can learn from each other" - Kaitiaki.

Benefits of having an external to Oranga Tamariki supervisory lens

The evaluation told us that participants greatly benefited from having an 'outside of Oranga Tamariki lens' in promoting their learning and development. Group participants commented on the professionalism, skills, and knowledge of external kaiārahi, who included academics in the field of social work and supervision.

"Having supervisors who were outside the organisation was refreshing and uplifting. It allowed me to focus on the topic at hand freely without pressure from the organisation" - Kaitiaki

"Initially I thought it would be challenging having you as a non-OT person, but it has been the greatest blessing and learning" - Kaitiaki

"I value your input [external kaiārahi] to the process as well as it provides that external view that sometimes we miss, caught up in the process" - Kaitiaki

"I particularly believe that learning from academics such as [external kaiārahi] is the best way to be reflective about my practice, that is where I get the most learning and also specialists such as [internal kaiārahi]" - Kaitiaki

"Independent external facilitator perspective in discussions that were all generated from situations within the mahi" – Kaitiaki

"These sessions provided critical analysis and opportunity to begin to powerfully counter the spread of uncritiqued managerialism and the way a large organisation shaped social work and social justice" - Kaiārahi

Benefits of supervision in addition to line-management supervision

"Given that there was no direct influence from the group on my practice/management, enabled me to explore options more freely" - Kaitiaki

"Good place to discuss issues without direct oversight lined in" – Kaitiaki

"The sessions were experienced as safe. That the supervisees were afforded the opportunity in the pilot, so being safe, supported, valued, enriches insight in the mahi with tamariki, whanau and community which the supervisors and social workers work for" – Kaiārahi

"For some it was the only supervision they were receiving" – Kaiārahi

Biculturalism was promoted

"In terms of the bicultural aspect, I think one of the most crucial parts of these sessions for me has been your calm energy and spiritual focus, I am not in touch with this side of myself but understand my Māori supervisees absolutely are and it has encouraged me to put more emphasis on this aspect of my supervision and in fact to look deeper into this for myself" - Kaitiaki

"Building confidence to open with Karakia and using Te Reo" - Kaiārahi

"Learn new framework with wholistic approach demystify Te Ao Māori" - Kaitiaki

"Identified support structures (whakapapa and whānau)" - Kaitiaki

Kaitiaki formed relationships and connections with others

"Whanaungatanga with other social workers from different sites breaks down silos and creates professional relationships. Grows respect for each other and appreciation of the diversity within the Ministry. More importantly whanaungatanga grows passion, knowledge sharing, to stay with the kaupapa (purpose) of our mahi" - Kaitiaki

"I have absolutely LOVED the laughs and personalities in our group and I have no doubt we will continue to catch up regularly, at least I hope so, but without your valued expertise, outside (OT) lens, and gentle guiding natures I'm not sure we will be getting the most from these sessions we can" - Kaitiaki

"Making new connections, hearing different perspectives, reflecting with other supervisors from other sites and regions" - Kaitiaki

"Making connections and networking were great – promoted future working relationships" - Kaitiaki

"Bureaucracy prevents working together with other services" – Kaitiaki

Challenges of group supervision

There must be protected time and space

Some kaitiaki booked meeting rooms or arranged to work from home on the days that they were attending group supervision. Other kaitiaki attempted to attend group supervision from their desks which often had a detrimental impact. Even when kaitiaki booked a room, some kaiārahi noted that kaitiaki were distracted as they would continue to have emails coming in. With regards to being distracted:

"It reduces what you get out of it and what you put in. It reduces the experience for all" - Kaiārahi.

"Easily get disturbed for critical work matters that take precedence and hard to re-connect again" – Kaitiaki.

"Being in our spaces because it didn't allow us to fully concentrate without disturbances" – Kaitiaki.

"Availability due to case work monitoring. Social workers being absent and supervisor to fill in made my time and availability limited to attend" – Kaitiaki.

"Getting distracted by emails and calls coming in online" – Kaitiaki.

A full commitment from all creates benefits for all

"Mindful of how many supervisors are in a session, not just two but not too many that others don't get to speak. Ensuring the group has different levels of experience" – Kaitiaki.

"What was challenging as we went on was the decrease/lack of commitment by other supervisors in the group. It is understood that things crop up that stop attendance for 1 session, but some just seemed to stop – Kaitiaki.

"The initial challenge was getting to know people from other regions and trusting. But this comes down to individual responsibility as well" – Kaitiaki.

"Often group members didn't attend. There were only three of us who were consistent. But I also really enjoyed that aspect as we got to know each other much better and became comfortable as a small group" – Kaitiaki.

Group supervision can feel uncomfortable in the beginning

"I didn't want to participate at first and wasn't keen to speak in the group. However, the format and skill of the supervisors enabled me to fully participate and enjoy the sessions" – Kaitiaki.

Group supervision does not suit everyone

"It was not new learning for me" – Kaitiaki.

"I withdrew from the group supervision as I felt disconnected, vulnerable and uncomfortable" – Kaitiaki.

Face to face options would suit some

"Online always presents a challenge as the wairua flows better when sessions are in person" – Kaitiaki.

"Face to face would also be more ideal however I understand it is difficult" – Kaitiaki.

Online format and mixing regions takes time to form connections

"While there was some benefit in cross practice lines and areas, I think it takes time to develop trust with a group like this to truly be open and gain the benefits of peer supervision" – Kaitiaki.

Recommendations

1. **Continue group supervision for the remainder of 2023**
   - For those groups that sustained sufficient attendance through the pilot

2. **Offer 20 new groups for 2024**
   - Group supervision has shown to be a beneficial option for some supervisors. The online format does not suit everyone, so offering 20 new groups initially will enable the organisation to gauge interest and to incrementally offer further groups if the new offering is well subscribed to. 20 new groups would provide capacity for 120 supervisors.

3. **Group configuration**
   - It is recommended that groups continue to be configured across service lines, and regions, and by ethnicity, with the opportunity to 'subscribe' to a group being opened-up to all regions.
   - It is recommended that 6 people is an appropriate number for a group. Even when implementing more formalised opt-in processes to promote commitment in attendance, kaimahi will take leave and have other unforeseen events which will impact attendance.
   - It is recommended that the groups continue to be co-facilitated by one external kaiārahi and one internal kaiārahi. This has multiple benefits including developing the capabilities of internal kaiārahi and supporting external kaiārahi by being able to draw on someone with 'inside' knowledge.

4. **Supervision must be prioritised by kaitiaki and supported by site**
   - Some participants were joining group supervision from their office desks and were evidently distracted during sessions. Supervision time must be valued and protected.

5. **Communications**
   - Communications were challenging for the pilot with some kaitiaki reportedly having no awareness of why they were included in the pilot.
   - A revised communications plan is recommended which should include sharing the results from the pilot evaluation.
   - Whilst some kaitiaki in the pilot decided to 'opt-out', it is anticipated that an 'opt-in' approach for kaitiaki enrolment will promote engagement and attendance.

6. **MyLearn**
   - A MyLearn page has already been developed which contains information about the Tangata Whenua and Bicultural Supervision model, and the tripartite supervision agreement. Additional information on group supervision, and roles and expectations should be added to the page.
   - It is recommended that group supervision dates be agreed with the kaiārahi and loaded into MyLearn as a course booking.
   - Participants can book into a 12 month 'course' of group supervision with a sequence of dates. This promotes commitment of attendance in advance of signing up to a course.
   - The participant's manager should sign-off on the group booking, further confirming their commitment to the participant engaging in the course.
   - The participants should complete a brief online evaluation of the course at the conclusion of the sessions, to help promote continuous improvement.

7. **Building understanding of wider internal supervisory capability and capacity is required**
   - An organisational stocktake would be beneficial in creating visibility of internal kaimahi who have knowledge, skills, qualifications, and/or experience of providing professional and/or group and/or peer supervision. There may be kaimahi who are interested in progressing their own professional supervisory journey but are not in a supervisor role.
   - Providing kaimahi with this opportunity promotes their professional development opportunities, and the delivery of supervision sessions would assist them in SWRB / ANZASW Continued Professional Development requirements.

Appendices

Appendix A - Kaitiaki evaluation

Introduction
Mā te huruhuru, ke rere te manu. Adorn the bird with feather so it can fly

We hope you enjoyed and benefited from engaging in the group supervision pilot. Group supervision as a mode of delivery is one option that we wanted to explore to better understand it's benefits, as we look to implement a range of professional supervision options that meet your needs as a registered social worker.

We appreciate you taking the time to complete this short survey on group supervision. Even if you did not attend all or potentially any sessions, please complete the survey so we can understand the reasons why. This will enable us to make any changes we might need to for the future.

We will use your feedback in making recommendations for future supervision offers, but your responses will remain confidential and will not be linked to you.

Ngā mihi nui

Questions
1. How many sessions did you attend? *[Select from drop down 1-6]*

2. If you did not attend all 6 sessions, what prevented you from attending?
- Proposed time/date did not work with my schedule
- Workload prevented me from attending
- I am carrying a caseload which prevented me from attending
- I don't feel comfortable with group supervision
- I didn't feel supported by team/site to attend
- Other

3. If you did not attend any sessions, what would enable you do so?

4. We would like to understand how the logistical arrangements were for you:
    [Options: Strongly disagree, Somewhat disagree, Neither agree nor disagree, Somewhat agree, Strongly agree]
- I was satisfied with the information about group supervision I received before sessions started
- I found on-line delivery of group supervision met my needs
- Monthly sessions were sufficient to meet my needs
- The time allowed for each session was sufficient
- I would have preferred face to face supervision if this had been offered

5. What would have improved the logistical arrangements?

6. We would like to understand whether the group configuration met your needs:
   [Options: Strongly disagree, Somewhat disagree, Neither agree nor disagree, Somewhat agree, Strongly agree]
   - It was a good experience being in a group with other supervisors
   - It was a good experience being in a group with people from other regions
   - It was a good experience being in a group with people from other service-lines
   - The group and co-facilitators being configured by ethnicity supported my cultural needs?

7. What would have improved the configuration of your group?

8. We would like to understand how the Tangata Whenua and Bicultural Supervision Model worked in group supervision: *[Options: Strongly disagree, Somewhat disagree, Neither agree nor disagree, Somewhat agree, Strongly agree]*
   - I was able to contribute to the agenda for each session
   - I was able to participate as much as I wanted to in each session
   - I have developed an initial understanding of the new supervision model
   - I though the new supervision model worked well within a group setting
   - Group supervision promoted my learning and development

9. What would have improved your understanding of the supervision model within your group?

10. Group supervision as a modality promoted the following:
    - Kaimahi ora
    - Whānau ora
    - Mahi ora

11. Please describe the benefits you experienced from engaging in supervision offered in addition to internal line-management supervision

12. What were the challenged or limitations of group supervision, if any?

13. Would you want to participate in ongoing group supervision if this was available? *[Options: Yes, Maybe, No]*

14. Do you think one group facilitator (kaiārahi) would be sufficient for each group? *[Options: Yes, Maybe, No]*

Appendix B - Kaitiaki evaluation

The evaluation questions were used during in person (on-line) sessions with the kaiārahi for each group.

1. Induction
   - I felt the induction into the supervision model was sufficient
   - I made time to engage in whakawhanaungatanaga with my co-facilitator before the first session

2. The logistical arrangements
   - Supervision session bookings were made easy for me
   - Payments with Beyond Recruitment worked well for me
   - Monthly supervision sessions were sufficient
   - The time allowed for each session was sufficient
   - I found on-line delivery of group supervision met supervisor's needs
   - What would have improved the logistical arrangements?

3. The configuration of the groups
   - I found it a good experience that supervisors were placed in a group with other supervisors
   - I found it a good experience that supervisors were placed in a group with people from other regions
   - I found it a good experience that supervisors were placed in a group with people from other service-lines
   - I found that having the group configured by ethnicity supported the supervisors cultural needs
   - What would have improved the configuration of your group – free text

4. The Tangata Whenua and Bicultural Supervision Model
   - Attending supervisors were able to contribute to the agenda for each session
   - Attending supervisors were able to participate as much as I wanted to in each session
   - I was able to provide an overview of the new supervision model
   - I thought the new supervision model worked well within a group setting
   - What would have improved your ability to promote understanding of the supervision model within your group

5. Group supervision as a modality to promote kaimahi ora, mahi ora and whānau ora
   - Group supervision promoted kaimahi ora
   - Group supervision promoted mahi ora
   - Group supervision promoted whānau ora

6. The benefits of engaging in supervision provided in addition to internal line-management supervision.

- Please describe what benefits you felt supervisors experienced from engaging in supervision offered in addition to internal-line management supervision
- What were the challenges or limitations with group supervision

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