

# **Te Ihi Tū Community Residential Centre**

## ***Evaluation Report***

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***and based in part on evaluative field work conducted by***

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## **Executive Summary**

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Te Ihi Tu community residential centre operates in New Plymouth, receiving referrals of higher-risk Māori offenders from both prisons and the Community Probation Service. The programme has been operating since 1997. The 13 weeks-long programme is based on tikanga Māori principles, and is designed to change attitudes, teach positive skills, and generally motivate offenders towards leading a non-offending lifestyle. Up to ten offenders participate in the programme at any one time, although the number on each intake is usually lower.

An evaluation to measure the effectiveness of this programme was recently conducted. This involved a number of separate elements, including analysis of the file records of all offenders who participated in the programme up to the time of fieldwork commencement, in-depth interviews with the members of three recent programme cohorts, investigation of post-programme reintegrative outcomes for participants, and an analysis of reconviction and reimprisonment outcomes.

An external agency (Pam Oliver and Associates) conducted fieldwork which examined participants' responses to the programme, and their post-programme adjustment. Departmental personnel conducted the recidivism analysis.

Major findings of the study are as follows:

1. The programme is intensive, and incorporates a variety of tikanga Māori principles and values.
2. Approximately half of the participants interviewed by the evaluators reported positive experiences in the programme, and were able to identify personal gains. In these individuals' cases, positive gains were still evident six months after programme completion.
3. The remaining participants interviewed were largely negative in their views, or at best ambivalent about their programme experience. Most of these individuals had either left or been discharged prematurely from the programme. Several expressed thoughts of having suffered negative impacts as a result of the experience.
4. Analysis of reconviction and reimprisonment data did not reveal positive programme effects. Rates of reconviction and reimprisonment amongst participants in the years 1997 – 2006 were substantial, and slightly higher than might have been expected in light of their risk profile. Further, the Rehabilitation Quotient matched control methodology ("RQ") found no differences in rates of reconviction and reimprisonment between treated and untreated offenders.

A number of issues were identified in relation to programme effectiveness. Facilitator skill and competence is identified as a potential explanation for difficulties experienced by some offenders in the programme, as well as the overall lack of a positive treatment effect with respect to recidivism

## 1. Background to the evaluation

### *Te Ihi Tū*

The community facility currently occupied by Te Ihi Tū programme is a former hospital building in a residential area of New Plymouth. Initially developed as a halfway house providing reintegrative support to local Māori men released from prison, in 1997 the facility was re-named Te Ihi Tū Habilitation Centre, and a new trust was established to manage it.

The purpose of Te Ihi Tū is to rehabilitate higher-risk offenders, thereby reducing their risks of re-offending. The facility provides a normalised and structured living environment in which, using a kaupapa Māori framework, offenders are encouraged to address issues related to their offending behaviour, and adopt pro-social attitudes, values and goals.

### *The programme<sup>1</sup>*

The standard programme is of 13 weeks duration. Three programme intakes occur each year (January, May, September), each made up of up to 10 clients. Offenders participate during supervision sentences, while on home detention or on parole; however, the majority of participants are on temporary release from prison (prior to their Parole Board appearances).

Participants live on-site in the programme facility for the duration of the programme, and must be accompanied by Te Ihi Tū or Department staff during any absences from the programme facility.

The programme itself consists of a sequence of therapeutic, rehabilitative and reintegrative activities through which participants progress over the course of their 13-weeks placement. Commencing with a three-day induction period, the programme proper then entails daily activities commencing around 6.30 am and continuing until approximately 9.00 pm daily, including weekends. Programme components include:

- group facilitation and individual counselling
- personal goal-setting and release planning
- personal 'SWOT<sup>2</sup>' analysis
- healthy lifestyle and fitness
- independent living skills (e.g. cooking, cleaning, banking and budgeting, basic computer skills)
- creative expression (as a medium for personal development)
- supervised exposure to the community (e.g. Toastmasters; Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki; local library)

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<sup>1</sup> Information in this chapter was accurate at the end of April 2007 but may have changed in some aspects since that date.

<sup>2</sup> "strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats"

There is a strong focus on cultural principles, especially the promotion of Tikanga Māori, te ao Māori, and participants' identity as Māori. Other aspects of the programme's structure derived from Tikanga principles include:

- pōwhiri for incoming clients
- Kapa haka and te reo
- hikoi on Mt Taranaki, followed by a noho marae, in the eighth week (referred to as "refocus week")
- Whānau Day which includes whānau visits and counselling with men and their whānau as suggested by clients or Te Ihi Tū staff
- poroporoaki for clients completing the programme, to formally acknowledge and celebrate their achievements together with whānau and other support people.

At programme completion, those on temporary release are returned to prison, at which point most present themselves to the Parole Board for consideration of release on parole.

The programme is reviewed at the completion of each cohort through a staff/management hui, at which aspects of programme delivery are reviewed to identify what worked well and where improvements or adjustments might be made. A review of the programme was undertaken in 2003.

The programme operates under contract to the Department of Corrections (the Department). A departmental Programme Coordinator (based in Community Probation Service) oversees candidate referrals, recruitment assessments, liaison over clients' programme participation, and the contract with the Trust.

### *Entry process*

Referrals of potential clients are made by prison staff, probation officers and occasionally the Parole Board. Offenders can be referred to the programme from any prison or Probation office in New Zealand, although most originate from more proximal prisons and Probation offices.

Recruitment of potential clients occurs via direct publicizing of the programme by the programme coordinator, dissemination of flyers through the region's and other prisons, and by word of mouth. Programme promotion has at times also occurred at community events, conferences, by way of invitations to Department personnel to visit Te Ihi Tū, and a targeted "road show" of PPS and CPS personnel in the local and adjacent regions.

The programme coordinator pre-selects applicants based on eligibility criteria and then arranges an assessment meeting with Te Ihi Tū staff. Both the Department and the programme have input into selecting candidates. The assessment process includes face-to-face meetings with candidates, at which they are provided with an overview of the programme.

Departmental criteria for programme entry include the following:

- male aged 18 years or over
- currently serving sentence of imprisonment or supervision, or on a parole or

home detention order

- is rated a higher risk of future offending (i.e., prisoner categorised as “Motivation” or “Intervention”, or community offender “Direct Practice 2”);
- not a sex offender
- if a prisoner, security classification is “minimum” at time of scheduled entry to the programme
- has completed detoxification processes if required
- does not have an organic or psychiatric disorder that would prevent learning in a group situation
- gives written consent to comply with all programme requirements.

Te Ihi Tū personnel also assess candidates and apply additional criteria:

- wishes to learn about being Māori
- has one or more whānau members who can act as support during the programme
- is motivated to make a change in their life.

When demand exceeds places on the programme, priority is given to offenders with connections to the rohe and local iwi. The “prioritising” criteria, in descending order, are as follows:

- has genealogical links with Taranaki iwi and lived in Taranaki prior to being sentenced
- has genealogical links with Taranaki iwi but lived outside of Taranaki prior to being sentenced
- is Māori, does not have genealogical links with Taranaki but lived in Taranaki prior to being sentenced
- Māori men in general
- Non-Māori men.

Final advice of acceptance is generally given to candidates approximately one week before the programme commences.

### *Governance, management and staffing*

Te Ihi Tū is a registered charitable trust governed by a trust board of six people, four of whom reside locally and two in the Wellington region. Board members are not paid.

The full staff complement of seven includes a manager who works 30 hours per week. Currently all staff (excluding the manager) are male. Two staff work primarily in group facilitation and individual counselling, one focuses primarily on health, fitness and te reo, two work in a supervisory capacity on night shifts, including a client support role, and one focuses on kapa haka and undertakes administrative work. All staff are expected to incorporate a tikanga Māori focus within their roles. While roles are not interchangeable, it is the aim of the programme that all staff should ultimately acquire the skills to undertake the key functions.

At time of evaluation fieldwork, the staff had been with the programme for periods ranging from nine months to 12 years. Staff retention had been high up until early 2007, although two staff had left since the beginning of 2007, with one position vacant at the time of the evaluation.

Staff vary in their experience and qualifications. The Manager's work background prior to working at Te Ihi Tū was in business administration. Two staff members have accredited qualifications in social services delivery, although neither of these are degree-level. Some were themselves formerly offenders with criminal justice system experience; such experience appears to be considered of value by programme management to their role as "coaches" (the term used for all staff working directly with the clients).

Staff hours and pay appear to vary depending on staffing levels and, it seems, the state of the organisation's finances.

Staff training includes an "apprenticeship-type" induction into the programme, with staff learning from one another in terms of their specialist skills areas. More formal on-going training is at the discretion of each individual staff member. The annual budget for formal staff training is \$4,000. Training opportunities have been sought locally through seminars and workshops in relevant areas (e.g. family violence, alcohol and drug interventions, parenting). Training in tikanga Māori is provided to all staff on an on-going basis.

All staff have access to external supervision. Supervision is provided by the same person to all staff, including the Manager, apparently at their preference. Access to supervision is at the initiative of each staff member, rather than being scheduled regularly. Supervision may be suggested for any staff member by other staff, and is available for both work-related and personal matters, in recognition that those areas can affect each other. External supervision is typically accessed at least once in every four months by each staff member, though on an irregular basis. Peer supervision occurs both informally (e.g. during shift changeover) and formally (e.g. during programme debriefing meetings). A record of supervision is provided in reports to the Board.

In addition to internal staff, external personnel contribute some programme components (e.g. history and whakapapa of Taranaki; rongoa Māori; Te Tiriti o Waitangi; motivational speaker; literacy courses; sexual abuse counselling). Occasionally students from the social services courses at the Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki undertake placements at Te Ihi Tū.

#### *Contract and liaison with the Department*

The programme has been receiving funding in the vicinity of \$450,000 per annum from the Department. A few small additional grants have been obtained in previous years from both central government and other sources. The programme's current contract expires at the end of 2008.

Departmental liaison is provided primarily through a Programme Coordinator (0.7 FTE) position. This position has been undertaken by three different people within

the past year and at time of writing was being advertised again. The Programme Manager meets quarterly with regional management personnel from the Department, although can access the Service Manager and Area Manager on an as-needs basis.

## 2. The Evaluation

### *Background and purpose*

The main purpose of the current evaluation was to assess the impact of participation in Te Ihi Tū community residential centre on (1) short- and medium-term client functioning, and (2) longer-term change in rates of reconviction and imprisonment. The current project was the first comprehensive outcome-focused evaluation of Te Ihi Tu<sup>3</sup>. The evaluation had its origins in a review undertaken by a governmental Ministerial Review Unit (MRU). Following this review, Cabinet issued a directive to the Department of Corrections requiring that effectiveness evaluations of “targeted” services and programmes be conducted focusing on the outcome of reducing re-offending. Te Ihi Tū Community Residential Centre is one of a number of targeted interventions that the Department is in the process of evaluating.

The evaluation used a mixed method approach including quantitative and qualitative data. Much of the quantitative information was extracted from the Department’s Integrated Offender Management System (IOMS) and analysed to measure participants’ re-offending rates<sup>4</sup>.

The objective of the qualitative evaluation was to provide some indication of how participants and other stakeholders assessed the programme’s outcomes and impacts. The key objectives of this dimension of the evaluation were to:

- assess the extent to which clients who complete Te Ihi Tū display positive gains in terms of increased motivation, pro-social behaviour, improved cultural knowledge and identity
- analyse the extent to which clients lead positive and constructive lifestyles in the community, and are motivated to avoid further re-offending
- identify any unintended impacts of Te Ihi Tū participation.

In relation to programme design and context, the objectives were to:

- investigate the specific role of tikanga Māori elements of the programme in promoting positive gains for clients
- identify factors that contribute to or are barriers to successful recruitment into and retention on Te Ihi Tū programme
- identify ways in which the programme might be improved in relation to recruitment and retention.

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<sup>3</sup> A smaller-scale review undertaken in 1999-2000, with initial participants, provided some evidence that the programme was positively affecting re-offending rates. However, the small sample size, and brief follow-up period meant that this was a preliminary indication only.

<sup>4</sup> The data analysis for this component was undertaken by the Department.

### *Terminology used in the report*

The following terminology has been used:

- “the evaluators” refers to Pam Oliver and Associates who conducted the fieldwork
- “candidates” refers to men referred to the programme
- “client/s” refers to men in cohorts 28-305 who were accepted onto the programme
- “completers” refers to men in cohorts 28-30 who completed the programme
- “non-completers” refers to men in cohorts 28-30 who began but did not complete the programme
- “whānau” refers to people supporting clients, whether related by blood or not
- “case officers” refers to Probation Officers and Public Prisons personnel working with programme ‘completers’ following their completion of the programme
- “Te Ihi Tū staff” refers to staff other than the Programme Manager
- “Te Ihi Tū personnel” refers to the collective of programme personnel, including management, staff and trustees.

In relation to the qualitative evaluation, the terminology referring to numbers of participants representing a particular view is as follows: “some” refers to 3-4 people; “several” refers to 5-7 people; smaller numbers of people are stated and larger numbers are described as a proportion of the whole stakeholder group (e.g., “more than half”; “all”).

### *Evaluation project outcomes and authorship of the report*

The evaluation consisted of two distinct elements. The more critical of these is an analysis of reconviction and reimprisonment data, which have been used to determine the extent to which the programme is having beneficial impacts in this area. The second element was the fieldwork, which was intended to provide contextual information that would help illuminate the recidivism analysis (i.e., if a positive effect was found, what aspects of the programme were working well to produce this effect? if a weak positive effect, what might be hindering a better outcome? and if no positive, or a negative effect, what might be the reasons for that?).

Pam Oliver and Associates prepared a separate report which comprehensively presents, and analyses, findings from the fieldwork, with respect to programme processes, and short and intermediate-term impacts (this report also includes an exhaustive list of suggestions and recommendations on how the programme might be enhanced)<sup>6</sup>. Information in the report on the fieldwork has been heavily drawn upon in the current report. However, the conclusions reached here are those of the Policy, Strategy and Research (PSR) personnel involved in this evaluation, and authorship of this report rests with the Department of Corrections.

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<sup>5</sup> Unless otherwise stated.

<sup>6</sup> Available on request

## Design

Evaluation of a small-scale programme such as Te Ihi Tū poses challenges, given a low volume of participants in any given year. To increase the validity of findings, data have been “triangulated” from three main sources. While each element is not without its limitations, the combined approach is considered robust. Main data sources were:

- *File information* was extracted from the Department’s files on all offenders who had attended the programme between 1998 and April 2006; this information is used to profile the population of offenders who have participated in the programme. An attempt was made also to assess post-programme adjustment in areas such as accommodation, employment, whānau and other relationships, involvement in other rehabilitation, and sense of Māori identity.
- *Qualitative analysis*: The evaluation contractors conducted a range of fieldwork data collection exercises over the course of three successive cohorts commencing after September 2006 (see below). Analysis of the interview data focused on clients’ and others’ experiences of the programme and what the (clients and others) considered the clients had gained, or had not, as a result of their participation.
  - *semi-structured interviews* were conducted with participants, with members of their whanau, and with their case officers
  - *semi-structured interviews* were also undertaken with all programme staff, and twelve Departmental staff who had dealings with either the programme generally or with individual participants; the purpose of these latter interviews was to gain additional information on observed programme impacts and processes
  - first-hand *observations of programme activity* occurred during scheduled visits to the programme at the 8-week and 12-week points for the first two of the three evaluation cohorts
  - available *programme documentation* was reviewed.
- *Reconviction and re-imprisonment* data were analysed for participants who had completed the programme up to April 2006<sup>7</sup>. These data have been analysed in three ways:
  - *counts of reconvictions and re-imprisonments*: Total frequencies of reconvictions and re-imprisonments amongst participants within 24 months of release are reported; these are given in the context of re-offence risk scores, which gives an indication of expected vs actual re-offending rates
  - *offender timeline data*: conviction and sentencing data is presented graphically in the form of individual offender timelines, to reveal the criminal histories of all programme participants both prior to entry, and subsequent to exiting the programme.
  - *Rehabilitation Quotient*: a matched control group-style study (RQ analysis) was undertaken with a sample of participants who attended the programme during the years 2001–06, allowing comparisons of reconviction and re-imprisonment rates between “treated” and matched “untreated” offenders.

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<sup>7</sup> No data on reoffending is presented for the three 2007 study cohorts, as the follow-up period is too brief to allow meaningful conclusions to be drawn.

Using these data, a simple cost-benefit analysis assesses costs of each programme in light of reconviction outcome data.

### *Interview data collection*

A total of 19 men entered the programme in the three intakes occurring during the evaluation period. Of these, 13 completed the programme and six did not. Sixteen agreed to participate in the evaluation – eleven completers and five non-completers. Thus, interview data were not able to be collected from two of the 13 men who completed the programme, and one of the six who did not complete.

Non-completers in the current study tended to be younger (average age 29 years, vs 38 years for completers) and had higher risk scores (0.68, vs 0.55 for completers)<sup>8</sup>.

Programme completers were interviewed on three occasions, where available<sup>9</sup> – approximately one week either before or after programme completion, and at three and six months following programme completion. Non-completers were interviewed within two weeks of leaving the programme and then again, where available, in January 2008. As a number of participants went back to prison after the programme, post-programme interviews were undertaken both in prison and in the community.

In addition, interviews were conducted with:

- ten case officers (Probation Officers and Corrections Officers) supporting Te Ihi Tū clients at three and six months following completers' departure from the programme
- regional Corrections staff involved with the implementation of the programme (the Department's Programme Coordinator/s and Regional Director)
- whānau members (mainly partners or parents) of the clients who participated in the study.

Interviews followed semi-structured interview guides developed for each stakeholder group (see Appendix 2). Comprehensive notes were taken during all interviews. Corrections personnel were interviewed individually by telephone. Interviews with completers and their whānau were undertaken face to face at all three points in time, although where completers or whānau members were living in more distant locations (e.g., Auckland, Bay of Plenty), interviews were by telephone. Interviews with completers included them completing a questionnaire (Appendix 1) designed to obtain data on personal responses to the programme, and its impacts. Open-ended questions were used where appropriate, to clarify or augment responses to interview prompts. Koha of \$40 in Warehouse vouchers

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<sup>8</sup> The Department measures risk using a methodology called "RoC\*RoI" (which stands for "Risk of Re-Conviction, Risk of Re-Imprisonment"). This statistically-based formula produces estimates of an individual offender's likelihood of being reconvicted and re-imprisoned. Scores are derived primarily from the conviction and sentencing history of the offender. Details on the methodology are available on the Department's website.

<sup>9</sup> Four completers and three non-completers were not able to be interviewed at the six months follow-up point. In each case at least three attempts were made, including messages left where possible, to locate and interview the client. Reasons were either declining to be interviewed (2), agreeing to be interviewed but not keeping repeat appointments (2), or not being able to be contacted at all (3). In four cases, some current information about the man was obtained from a case officer and/or whānau member.

were given to each client and each whānau who participated in the six-month follow-up interviews.

### *Document Review*

Data were also reviewed from the following documents:

- Te Ihi Tū Policies and Procedures Manual
- four quarterly reports provided by Te Ihi Tū to the Department between October 2006 and June 2007.

### *Ethical protections*

Informed consent was obtained from all participants for fieldwork activity. Consent from all Corrections personnel was negotiated by the Department, and confidentiality was reiterated by the evaluators. The Department provided a letter to each programme client to be interviewed requesting their voluntary participation in the evaluation and assuring the confidentiality of their contribution. Clients were also provided with written information describing the evaluation. Confidentiality was assured by the evaluators, and clients signed a written consent form prior to the commencement of the interviews (see Appendices for these forms). Consent was obtained separately from clients and their whānau in the event of three- and six-months follow-up interviews. Similar consent processes were followed for Corrections personnel who were interviewed. Participants interviewed solely by telephone (Department personnel and some whānau members) were read out their ethical protections and their consent was recorded.

### *Methodological limitations*

As noted above, each of the elements of the evaluation has its limitations. These are outlined below in relation to the individual data sources.

A quantitative data analysis produced a useful overview of participants in the first ten years of the programme's operation. However, the attempt to assess post-programme adjustment was not entirely successful: these kinds of factors can only be imperfectly abstracted from file records – inevitably, information originally recorded for the purposes of general offender management does not always contain the kind of details that an outcomes evaluation requires. Clear and comprehensive notes were sometimes found on reintegrative topics but, as often as not, case officers' recorded notes were brief and at times ambiguous. On many issues no information at all could be found. File data on offenders who participated in the early years of the programme (pre-2001) was particularly limited.

With respect to the qualitative evaluation, a number of methodological issues affect the validity and reliability of the data obtained. An interview questionnaire developed specifically for the current study, and used with programme completers, proved not to be as useful as was hoped for. When faced with rating scales on particular items, clients' scores tended to be either uniformly high or low, seemingly reflecting a "globally" positive or negative attitude towards the programme<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> This finding was considered to be quite significant and is discussed in more detail below.

Further, many anomalous responses were elicited (for example, a client reported having “always felt confident” in terms of his ability to find a job, but also rated highly the extent to which the programme had built his confidence in this area). As a result, the quantitative data sought from the questionnaire could not be meaningfully included in this report. The qualitative commentary obtained, however, has been fully utilised. In general, client self-report information was included in the findings only where it had been confirmed or validated separately from case officers or whānau members.

The limited timeframe for fieldwork, combined with the small scale of the programme, inevitably resulted in a very small sample. The maximum possible sample size of 30 (ten participants in three cohorts) did not eventuate, as the three studied evaluation cohorts commenced with a total of only 19 clients. Of these, three did not consent to participate in the evaluation; of the remaining 16, just nine completed the programme and were available for interview at all three stages. Assurances given to clients concerning confidentiality and non-identifiability meant that information such as age and offence type is not reported here for the clients interviewed. Further, difficulty in locating participants is a common problem when evaluations attempt to follow up offenders while in the community. By the six months follow-up point, only five completers could be found who agreed to be interviewed.

A number of case officers interviewed had worked with the client for just a few weeks only, and in some instances Probation Officers had met or seen their client only once or twice, and then for relatively short meetings. This meant that they were limited in what they could usefully say about any changes observed.

The evaluation was also impaired by an unfortunate breakdown in the relationship between the programme staff and the evaluators. This occurred part-way through the fieldwork involving the third programme cohort, and arose in response to an interim report on the evaluation, which Te Ihi Tū personnel were unwilling to accept. As a result, programme personnel declared that the evaluation team were not permitted to return to the programme premises. However, by this stage a sufficient amount of data had already been collected, and post-programme interviews were able to occur with members of the third cohort after their discharge from the programme.

With respect to the reconviction data, once again the small scale of the programme means that the number of individuals who have completed Te Ihi Tū over the last 10 – 12 years is relatively low. Earlier programme completion data could not be used for RQ purposes because the Department does not hold complete records on general offender programme participation, which means that “untreated matched control” offenders cannot be identified with any certainty. On the other hand, more recent participants had not been at large for durations that were sufficient to allow meaningful recidivism-based assessments. This meant that the RQ analysis was restricted to data relating to participants between 2001 and 2006 (a total of fewer than 60).

Nevertheless, while each element has limitations, the combined approach is considered adequate, and the conclusions reached are robust.

### 3. Findings

#### *File Review*

As outlined above, data was analysed on all clients who attended Te Ihi Tū from its inception in 1997 to April 2006 (26 treatment cohorts). This data included names, dates of birth, cohort number and year, referral sources, start and end dates for each client on the programme, and data on their completion status. This information was used to locate file information, which consisted primarily of CPS case notes in IOMS<sup>11</sup>, although where available information was also extracted from CPS pre-sentence or termination reports. Where gaps in the IOMS records were identified, paper files were requested from CPS offices around the country (a total of 43 paper files were requested, of which 38 were received.) These data were interpreted by a Department analyst and coded into data categories determined by the Department. The coded data were provided to the evaluators for quantitative analysis.

With respect to the participants who attended Te Ihi Tū during its first eleven years of operation, findings from the file review are as follows:

- a total of 153 men attended part or all of the programme up to 2006, giving an average intake of 6 clients per cohort; average annual intake was 17 from 1997-2004, increasing to 18 in 2005-2006
- the programme's overall completion rate is 66%; of 51 non-completers, most were dismissed (n=41) while the remainder either withdrew voluntarily or absconded
- most clients (58%) attended while on temporary release from prison. Smaller numbers attended while on parole (28%) or as part of a sentence of supervision (12%); over the 1997-2006 period, there appears to have been a reduction in the number of clients on parole or supervision and a corresponding increase in the proportion on temporary release
- approximately one-third of all clients were from a Taranaki iwi<sup>12</sup> (30%), with 42% from other iwi (28% recorded iwi as 'not known' or 'not applicable'); from 1999 to 2002, clients from Taranaki iwi significantly out-numbered those from other regions, although this pattern has reversed since 2003
- the majority of clients were serving sentences for either violent (39%) or dishonesty (35%) offences
- average prison sentence length of clients appears to be lengthening (since 2002, fewer men serving sentences of two years or less, and more serving sentences greater than two years)
- the average risk score of programme participants was 0.59 (i.e., medium to high risk of future offending), but appears to be reducing over time: 'completers' recruited since 2005 had an average RoCRoI score of 0.48, compared with completers in previous years who averaged 0.68
- the vast majority (92%) of clients were aged over 25 years at time of programme entry, although the age profile of participants seems to be lowering, with more men aged 25 and under (26% in 2005 and 2006 vs none before

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<sup>11</sup> Integrated Offender Management System – the Department's computerized operational database of offender-specific information

<sup>12</sup> Taranaki iwi are a primary focus in client recruitment.

- 2001) and fewer clients over the age of 36 since 2005.
- most likely to complete the programme were offenders with the following characteristics:
    - aged over 25 years
    - prison sentences of less than two years
    - lower risk scores.

Clients on temporary release remained in prison for an average 1.25 years following completion of programme; apart from the small number of absconders, completers and non-completers spent approximately the same amount of time in prison after programme discharge.

#### *Reintegrative outcomes (clients pre-2007)*

As discussed above, only very limited conclusions can be drawn from the file review data with respect to post-programme adjustment. The following trends in reintegration were evident when the case notes of Probation Officers were examined for clients in the six month period in the community after programme completion.

Table 1: Reintegration indicators for all Te Ihi Tu participants 1997 – 2006 (n = 153)

Reintegration indicator	Yes	No	No info
In stable accommodation	70%	19%	11%
In employment	26%	24%	50%
In education or training	13%	42%	45%
Has positive whānau relationship(s)	80%	5%	15%
Has social support relationship(s)	56%	4%	40%
Taken part in further rehabilitative activity	51%	25%	24%
Has positive sense of Māori identity	46%	0%	54%

While not conclusive (in that pre-programme levels of functioning are unknown), the figures in the above table are suggestive of moderately positive reintegrative adjustments being achieved by Te Ihi Tū clients at six months post-release.

#### *Qualitative evaluation findings*

The following sections report on findings from fieldwork, involving interviews with 16 clients who participated in three cohorts during 2007, at various stages during programme participation and after exit.

This information has been tested against that emerging in interviews with key others (whānau and case officers). Although data from alternative sources was incomplete, clients' whānau and case officers commonly endorsed the gains that these participants had identified at their six-months follow-up interviews.

The primary purpose of the interviews was to identify specific impacts of the programme for the participants. Clients were invited to discuss programme experiences, the effects they felt the experience had made upon them (typically motivational and attitudinal changes), and their ability to lead a more pro-social

lifestyle.

A critical issue that emerged from the interviews with clients was an apparent disparity in programme experience and benefit; that is, interviewed clients were almost evenly divided between those who reported a very positive programme experience (to which they attributed highly positive outcomes), and those who did not find the experience at all satisfactory. Possible explanations for this, and its significance for overall programme integrity, are discussed in following sections.

### *Positive impacts*

Seven participants who completed the programme and one non-completer (who attended over eight weeks of the programme) expressed largely positive views about their programme experience. As discussed in the methodology section, interviews were conducted at multiple points both during and after exit from the programme. There was relative consistency in the kind of ideas expressed at the different stages by each of these individuals, with gains identified at the three-month point having been further consolidated at six-month interviews. Consequently, their responses have been amalgamated into a single set of findings.

In broad terms, the kinds of benefits which clients identified from their programme experience were the following:

- desire to avoid re-offending, and motivation to change
- determination (and ability) to limit or control alcohol and drug use
- heightened sense of responsibility for their behaviour
- improved communication, relationship and conflict resolution skills
- increased cultural knowledge and understanding, and enhanced Māori identity
- more positive focus on the future - a sense of optimism and direction
- greater self-awareness and self-understanding
- improved relationships with whānau, and heightened appreciation for the value of whānau
- improved self-esteem and self-respect
- improved health and fitness
- greater emotional maturity
- other life skills.

Positive changes for clients in these areas were endorsed variously by clients' whānau and case officers in the six month follow-up interviews. The extent to which clients demonstrated impacts in each area varied across individuals, but a majority of completers reported at least one change in each of the above areas. In more general terms, the strongest gains reported related to a sense of personal responsibility, emotional maturity, acquiring effective communication skills, and improved whānau relationships. All of this group of clients said they had gained motivation to stop offending by participating in the programme.

Several stated that they were now better able to identify factors that triggered re-offending. As a consequence, they considered that they were better able to avoid those high-risk situations. Several commented that a new-found motivation and

ability to rebuild relationships with whānau was helping sustain their motivation to avoid re-offending.

Several of these individuals attributed their positive progress in part to programme staff demonstrating how it was possible to operate effectively as Māori men. They felt that the respect shown towards them, belief in their capacity to change, and staff sharing aspects of their own personal experiences, contributed to these clients believing in the possibility of change.

Most also reported that sources additional to Te Ihi Tū programme (from other professionals, service providers, counsellors, and from whanau) had motivated, complemented, or reinforced the work they had done in the programme. Some considered that this support and input was crucial. Some spoke very positively of the Prisons and Probation staff who had supported them after leaving Te Ihi Tū. Interestingly, some Probation staff interviewed commented that they found Te Ihi Tū completers “easy to support” after release from prison, in that they tended to display stronger motivation to remain crime-free.

In general, most of the completers were very positive about their experience with Te Ihi Tū programme and described the experience as having turned their lives around. Further, at the time of exit from the programme, these clients displayed a realistic attitude towards the challenges to be faced - that being back in the community was the real test of their capacity to maintain change over time, and that changes need to be consolidated.

Table 2 lists the main domains of positive change, and summarises the types of change reported in each

Table 2: Attitude and behavioural changes and their significance

Area of change	Examples
Motivation to avoid re-offending	Awareness of criminogenic factors and patterns Ability to manage factors resulting in offending Value of stronger relationships with whānau as protective against offending Active avoidance of criminal associates (sometimes referring to whanau members) Awareness of importance of breaking negative cycles of behaviour Strong focus on future plans & thinking optimistically
Management of drugs & alcohol	Not using; avoiding drug users; not using drugs to make money Awareness of impact of drugs on whānau relationships Joining drug & alcohol cessation programmes Recognise relationship between use of stimulants and impulsiveness
Gaining cultural knowledge; building Māori identity	Richer appreciation of te ao Māori and relationship between tikanga, being Māori & personal responsibility Gains in skills in te reo, tikanga Stronger sense Māori identity and moral responsibilities Understanding how tikanga, especially tika & pono, are associated with self-responsibility and with ceasing further offending
Appreciation of value of whānau (most completers)	Appreciate value of whānau as support system Understanding importance of whānau support crucial to remain crime-free Better understanding of the relationship between poor whānau

	relationships & offending Understanding how old whānau resentments contribute to offending - review and letting go of old grudges Stronger appreciation of role as Māori fathers, especially around well-being of tamariki
Gains in self awareness and understanding	Recognise how taking responsibility for one's own behaviour is critical to avoiding the triggers to offending Gains in ability to self-reflect; awareness of own motives Better able see one's strengths, but also to recognise and accept one's shortcomings
Gains in communication skills (most completers)	Better able to discuss feelings non-aggressively; not bottle things up Better able to avoid communication difficulties & relationship breakdowns Able to listen to others, acknowledge views, apologise More confident in social groups; more approachable
Gains in emotional maturity	Calmer; less impulsive Less self-focused; better able address fears Better communications & reduced anger in whānau relations contribute to reduction in drug use and in reactive decision-making
Future orientation, sense of optimism and direction	See the value of goal-setting; more future-oriented Greater determination to remain crime free; make a better life for themselves, partners & children Letting go of old grudges & resentments contributing to destructive relationships & offending Build a release plan with a crime-free focus
Gains in self-esteem and self-respect	Better appreciation for one's own strengths & potential Better understanding of what it means being Māori, and taking pride in that Greater confidence in relationships; motivation to be better fathers Motivation to remain crime-free
Health and fitness	Improved health & fitness Gains in self-presentation and posture Greater appreciation of how to maintain health Awareness of links between physical and mental well-being More motivation to avoid drug and alcohol abuse
Other life skills	See the value in budgeting & saving Gain cooking skills & nutritional knowledge Learn computer skills Better management of daily lives

All of the completers in the above sub-group felt buoyed and confident on leaving the programme, and reported good levels of motivation at the six month mark, even in those cases where the client had returned to prison to await release. They generally felt positive about their programme experience, and expressed the desire to maintain and extend their personal development, and especially to rebuild whānau relationships.

#### *Few or no positive impacts*

Of the sample of 16 clients interviewed, two were somewhat ambivalent about their programme experience, and what they believed they had gained from it. A further six participants felt mainly negative about it.

The two ambivalent participants (one a completer and the other a non-completer) described a limited range of gains, including motivation to avoid re-offending, better self-awareness, some development in their communication skills, improved health and fitness, and acquiring cooking skills. The remaining six (four non-completers and two completers) reported having gained little or nothing from the placement at Te Ihi Tū. While some of these believed they had made positive changes over the course of the current sentence, they felt these changes were achieved not because of Te Ihi Tū but in spite of it.

It was apparent from interviewing the ambivalent or dissatisfied participants that a number of specific issues emerged as the source of their dissatisfaction. Their perceptions of having not made gains were based particularly on their experiences with programme staff, and to a lesser extent with programme rules. Because the specific issues were raised by almost half of the full sample, were each mentioned by at least two and usually more participants, and because participants tended to express these concerns quite forcefully, the main issues raised are outlined here. These include clients' perceptions of:

- programme rules being applied inconsistently; individuals feeling “picked on” or singled out for unfair criticism
- certain apparently arbitrary programme rules, such as prohibitions on certain types of foods and beverages, and unreasonable restrictions on making and receiving telephone calls (allegedly even in two emergency situations where whānau members had sought to make contact)
- the pace of the programme being too great, and expectations of participants unreasonable; for example, long programme sessions (often extending from dawn to dusk) that were exhausting and overwhelming, allowing little opportunity to reflect; this was coupled with facilitators' unwillingness to adjust the pace, intensity or requirements of the programme to match client capabilities
- facilitators' insistence in the early stages of the programme that clients disclose personally sensitive information in the group situation
- facilitators disclosing personally sensitive information concerning individual clients in the group situation without that client's consent
- some staff making contact with clients' whānau members without clients' knowledge or permission; staff monitoring or listening in to private phone calls
- some staff making assessments and judgments of clients' psychological states that clients believed staff were not qualified to make
- some staff speaking to participants in a demeaning, derogatory or bullying manner, using what was perceived as abusive language
- staff being unwilling to accept or discuss reasonable challenge or criticism from clients
- “punishments” (such as suspension of privileges or entitlements) being applied to the entire group for the misconduct of a single client
- clients dismissed from the programme without adequate opportunity to improve their behaviour or even fully understand the concerns involved, and/or being dismissed for conduct that had been overlooked with other clients.

Departmental personnel, when interviewed, were not specifically asked to comment on these complaints. However, in a number of instances these personnel expressed concerns which served to support complaints of participants.

Clients also disclosed a range of negative impacts for them personally which had either undermined motivation to stay in the programme, or spurred the decision to leave. Common amongst these feelings were loss of trust, shame, resentment, pessimism about their future, and a sense of failure. Some were particularly concerned that whānau members would interpret their non-completion or dismissal as evidence of unwillingness to change. Others were either anxious or angry that their prospects for early release on parole were jeopardised.

*Programme characteristics affecting client response:*

Based on the full range of stakeholder interviews, review of programme documentation, and direct observations of programme activity, the evaluators identified a number of critical programme characteristics, some of which can be viewed as strengths and others as weaknesses

(i) Programme strengths

In relation to programme strengths, the factors discussed below are listed in order which corresponds roughly to the extent to which each element was identified as of being valued by the programme clients themselves.

The tikanga Māori basis to the programme was a key reason noted by clients in choosing Te Ihi Tū over other available programme or service options. Many clients stated that they would not have applied for entry had it been a mainstream programme; this was especially the case for those who were from outside Taranaki. Factors inherent to the tikanga base that were of particular value to participants included the following:

- te reo and tikanga practices and protocols encouraged participants to “own” their Māori identity, and to feel comfortable in tikanga Māori settings; this was mentioned as building a sense of “entitlement to personal pride” by virtue of being Māori
- core concepts of tika and pono (honesty and integrity) served to provide a credible moral code with which clients felt able to identify, and commit to; this included the concept of personal accountability, which included the realisation that criminal behaviour brought shame and harm upon their whānau
- the programme hikoi on Mt. Taranaki was also mentioned as a means whereby clients learned about accountability to their whānau and their tupuna. Though affecting clients in different ways, the hikoi was said to have focused some on the need to take personal responsibility for offending.

For several, the focus on whānau meant that clients were spurred to put right certain painful and unresolved issues in their family relationships; others had a reinforced sense of the value of whānau, both as a support system but also as an integral part of their Māori identity and tikanga. Components of the programme focused on whanaungatanga meant clients came to appreciate that meeting their responsibilities towards whānau meant they could in turn call on whānau for assistance.

Several completers identified the staff’s commitment and support as a major factor

in the programme's effectiveness for them. Some clients commented that they considered this the first time in their lives that they had been shown personal respect, and for many it was the first time that other people had expressed belief in their ability or willingness to change. The staff also represented a range of ways in which Māori men could operate effectively in their lives.

Clients frequently cited the benefits of their group work, such as learning through sharing issues, having support to discuss difficulties, learning to disclose to others, and being honest with them. However, for those who sometimes found the group sessions threatening (e.g., in response to having to disclose in front of others), greatest progress was felt to have been made in individual counselling sessions. Disclosure of personal and sensitive memories, problems and fears was acknowledged by others as a catalyst to building desire to make significant positive changes in their behaviour and lifestyle.

Most completers and some non-completers found the focus on learning interpersonal and self-management skills valuable. Noted particularly were communication skills and conflict resolution. Participants responded well to personal release planning and goal-setting. This activity appeared to be strengths-based, with clients encouraged to make a long-term plan for their lives that built on their optimism and vision of their future.

Many clients expressed the belief that being in the community while undertaking the programme was of value, that they would not have responded as positively had the programme been delivered in prison.

Finally, clients appreciated learning about connections between healthy diet and exercise, a positive wairua and hinengaro, and positive relationships. Building their physical health was seen as a here-and-now thing they could work on, feel pride in, and observe tangible changes in.

## (ii) Programme issues

An on-going problem for Te Ihi Tū has been the low rate of referrals. While some improvements appear to have occurred in recent times, Te Ihi Tū staff reported continuing obstacles to achieving referral targets, which they attributed to "inflexible business rules" within the Department and perceived lack of follow-through by prison personnel, often resulting in apparently approved candidates being declined approval at very late notice. Some Department personnel confirmed these problems in Departmental process, and also commented on a lack of written information available about the programme so it was difficult to tell whether the programme was suitable for a particular candidate.

Secondly, records of previous and the current-period cohorts indicate that on average about one in three offenders who commence in Te Ihi Tū subsequently exit prematurely. While there are targets for client recruitment, there are none for client retention or programme completion.

Obviously, the issues relating to complaints expressed by participants, outlined above, have relevance to this issue. Other considerations identified included the

possibility that some clients entered the programme with specific and limited expectations (e.g., to deal with drug and alcohol issues) but were then confronted with expectations concerning comprehensive personal change. Once under way, several clients acknowledged being surprised and dismayed to find themselves being challenged over issues that they felt were unrelated to the problems they were personally concerned about.

With respect to the major issues expressed by the second (mainly non-completing) sub-group of participants, it is apparent that the programme is failing to adequately engage all of the offenders who commence it. Conclusions about the significance of those findings are discussed in the final section.

Thirdly, as far as could be determined by the evaluators, Te Ihi Tū lacks adequate documentation of its core systems and procedures. As a result it was unclear to the evaluators, and apparently also to clients interviewed, and Departmental staff involved with the programme, what the programme's specific outcome goals are. Clear definition for successful client outcomes were not provided by the programme, and overall programme outcomes appear not to have been assessed with any regularity. How the various components and activities align to client objectives is not specified. As a result it is difficult to argue that the programme is indeed based on sound, "evidence-based" principles.

Fourth, observations of programme clients, Department personnel and the evaluators in relation to staffing indicated that this is a core area of concern. Programme staff job descriptions, including the Manager's, were limited to one-page 'task lists' that did not clearly identify core competencies or performance standards, or how the jobs were linked to the programme's design or to programme outcomes.

Staff recruitment systems are not transparent. Hiring of programme personnel appeared to occur primarily through informal channels, rather than via positions being advertised publicly. As has been noted above, few staff had relevant professional training or qualifications prior to being appointed to the staff; for some, having formerly been an offender appeared to be a factor in their being hired. While hard and fast rules cannot always be applied on this question, there are certainly risks associated with the practice of employing former offenders in this type of work.

Following initial staff induction, on-going training and professional development of staff appeared to be left significantly to individual staff members to arrange. While there was an expectation that staff members would engage "regularly" in professional supervision, actual supervision frequency was at the discretion of individual staff. Some staff training that had occurred seemed ad hoc, based on what was available locally from other agencies, and in some cases only indirectly related to the competencies one might assume were central to such a role.

While a staff performance appraisal system was in operation, again this did not appear to be based on explicit performance standards or indicators. The Manager's performance did not appear to have been reviewed regularly prior to 2006, nor on a '360 degree' performance appraisal model allowing staff input. Further, the most

recent performance review<sup>13</sup> noted that the Manager had declined training opportunities on the basis that she believed she “has the required skills to fulfil the role adequately”.

Finally, Te Ihi Tū does not provide post-programme follow-up support to clients leaving the programme; responsibility for this rests with Departmental personnel (e.g., Probation Officers). When interviewed at the six-months point, several clients commented on the lack of structured follow-up to assist them in maintaining gains. Particular concern was raised about the situation of clients who returned to prison - many of these felt that prison staff did not provide adequate post-programme support. Similarly, there was no follow-up service for clients dismissed from the programme, even though this experience is known to have potential for negative impacts (this issue is discussed more fully below).

Some clients thought, however, that the programme itself did not focus sufficiently on release and transition to the community. Although release plans were prepared, several clients felt that they were still unprepared for the realities of the return to the community. Areas of support seen by clients as desirable in this regard included strategies for avoiding criminal associates, dealing with conflict with whānau members, managing money, and conducting themselves in ordinary social situations.

All interviewed clients, Te Ihi Tū staff and several Department personnel believed that, to be more effective, the programme needed to incorporate a follow-up component, involving Prisons and Probation input.

#### *Reintegrative outcomes (full sample)*

The social circumstances of all clients in the three cohorts were investigated at the point six months after the programme completion date. The following table gives a simple summary of their circumstances and degree of social adjustment. This information is based on both Departmental records, and interview information.

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<sup>13</sup> Dated 30 June 2006 and undertaken by the Trust Chairman.

Table 3: Client situations at c. 6 months following programme exit

	Completers (13)	Non-completers (6)
Current sentence/order	Not yet released from prison=1 Home detention=4 Parole/conditions=3 None=4 No information =1	Not yet released from prison =2 Parole/conditions=2 None=1 Returned to prison, new charges=1
Complying with parole requirements	Yes=6 No information=1 NA =6	Yes=2 NA =4
Stable accommodation	Yes=10 No information =2 Not applicable (in prison)=1	Yes=3 Not applicable (in prison)=3
Employment	In employment=8 Unemployed=3 No information =1 Not applicable (in prison)=1	In employment=3 Not applicable (in prison)=3
Regular and positive contact with whānau	Yes=11 No information =2	Yes=5 No information =1

Given the short follow-up period, no particular differences are evident between completers and non-completers. However, in the main, the post-programme reintegration of participants generally appears to have been adequate, with most of the client group employed, in suitable accommodation, and enjoying positive whānau relationships.

### *Recidivism analysis*

#### (i) Reconviction rates: Programme participants 1997-2006

A reconviction rate of 82% within two years of release (for prisoners) or programme completion (community sentence participants) was found for all clients recorded as having participated in Te Ihi Tū during the years up to 2006. When disaggregated by exit status, reconviction rates were 77% of completers, 80% of absconders, 95% of those who were dismissed, and 100% of those who voluntarily withdrew.

The overall rate of re-imprisonment within two years was 57%; smaller differences were apparent on this outcome with respect to exit status: re-imprisonment occurred amongst 54% of completers, 60% of absconders, 61% of those who were removed, and 80% of those who withdrew. Men removed from the programme appeared to offend more prolifically (i.e., multiple reconvictions within the 24-months follow-up period) than those who completed the programme, although the difference was not statistically significant.

Risk score data gave an average of 0.59 for the completers in the file sample (an average risk score of .59 suggests that, of the sample, 59% will be returned to prison within five years). The follow-up period here was two years, rather than five. Given that, after two years, actual re-imprisonment rates tend to be around two-thirds of the full five year rate, the *expected* rate of re-imprisonment after two years, for a sample with an average risk score of 0.59, would be around 40 - 45%. The

actual re-imprisonment rate found with this sample was 54%, which is therefore higher than might have been expected by the two-year follow-up point.






(ii) Pre- and post-programme convictions: Programme participants 1997-2006

The Department has recently developed a method of graphically representing offenders' criminal histories by way of a timeline. In the figure presented on the pages below, each line represents a complete criminal history, including each of the different sentence and orders served, of individual offenders.





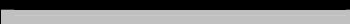

The timeline example below can be read in conjunction with the following key.

Example: 

The key to the timelines, in terms of line *height* is as follows:

-  Prison sentenced
-  Remanded in custody
-  Home detention
-  Other community managed
-  Not currently managed by Department

The key to the timelines in terms of line *colour* is as follows:

OFFENCE GROUP	Colour
Sexual offences	
Homicide	
Robbery, aggravated robbery	
Assaults, abduction, threats	
Drugs, liquor, gambling-related	
Drunk and drugged driving	
Driver licence and conduct	
Misc. offences against good order	
Burglary, conversion, theft	
Fraud, receiving	
Property damage, endangering	
Other	

Therefore, each timeline is made up of each offender's distinct periods of management. By using the key one can identify both the *type* of sentence or order (using line height) and offence *type* (using colour). Thus the example given above represents an offender with a period of supervision for drug offending, followed by remand, reverting to community work for burglary, then at large in the community; later, there is a further remand period, followed by a prison sentence for violence, then release on home detention (the red denoting violence relates to the original sentence), then release on parole, and eventual return to unmanaged status in the community.

Figure 1 on following pages provides a graphical representation of the pre- and post-programme conviction and sentencing histories of all Te Ihi Tu participants

who completed the programme up to 2006. The left column denotes year of entry to the programme, and the green vertical line denotes the programme exit point, which have been aligned over the ten years. The criminal history data is up to June 2008 – hence, post-programme histories for more recent participants are shorter.

Ideally, such a method of representation, effective correctional programmes targeted at high-risk offenders should yield participant timelines featuring denser criminal histories leading up to programme participation, followed by markedly reduced frequency or severity of subsequent criminal sanctions. Although the data presented below are indicative only, they unfortunately reveal little evidence of reduction in post-programme re-offending amongst Te Ihi Tū participants. Those individuals with little or no new offending post-programme tend to be those with short criminal histories *prior* to the programme (i.e., lower-risk offenders). Note that this data set does not include the participants in the three cohorts who were studied during the fieldwork part of the evaluation

### (iii) Rehabilitation Quotient

The Rehabilitation Quotient (RQ) methodology involves matching “treated” and “untreated” offenders on a range of variables that are associated with risk of re-offending. These variables include, age, gender, ethnicity, sentence type (prison vs community), risk score, and period of release/sentence commencement<sup>14</sup>. As is commonly done with RQ analyses, only the records of programme participants who completed Te Ihi Tū programme were used. For reasons described above, the analysis used records of those who completed between 2001 and 2006 – a total of around 60 participants. To maximize sample size, a shorter follow-up period (12 months) was also utilised.

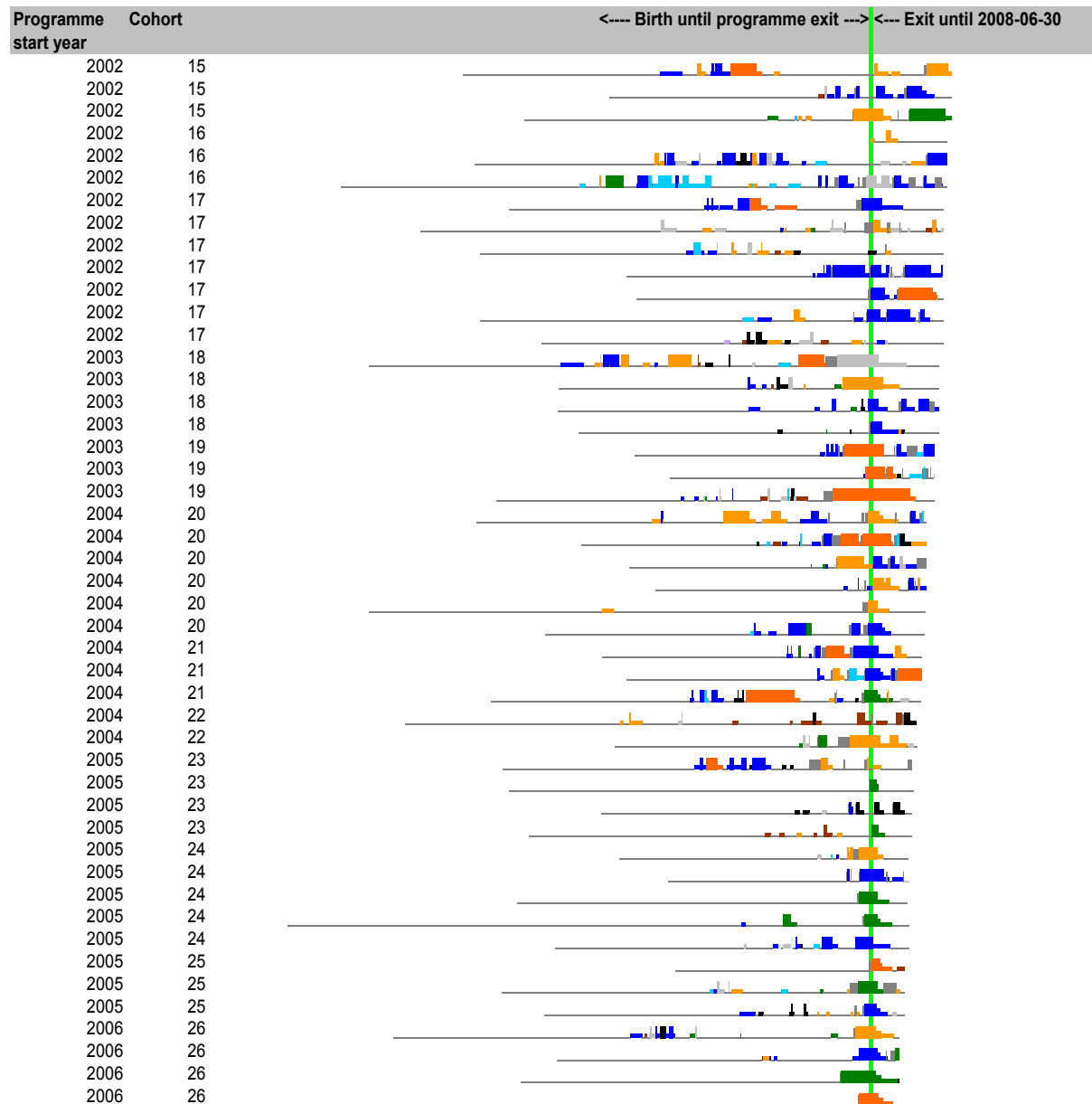
Thus the analysis compared rates of reconviction and reimprisonment, within 12 months of release from prison, between a sample of Te Ihi Tū completers, and a sample of matched, untreated offenders who were released from prison in the same period.

The resulting reconviction RQ score derived for Te Ihi Tū was – 0.11 and, for reimprisonment, – 0.08. These (negative) scores were statistically non-significant. The scores indicate that completers between 2001 and 2006 were reconvicted and reimprisoned at a rate slightly higher than those of comparable offenders. The non-significance means that this cannot be interpreted as a negative treatment effect: it is more accurately interpreted as indicating simply that, for this sample, the programme was not associated with a positive effect with respect to re-offending.

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<sup>14</sup> A more complete explanation of the RQ methodology can be found in the Department’s 2005 Annual Report, available at <http://www.corrections.govt.nz/public/pdf/annualreports/ar2005-part1-strat-context.pdf>





Criminal history data source: Courts Management System (CMS), Ministry of Justice  
 Programme completers only; excludes 46 non-completers, 2 PRN's not found, duplicates of 4 offenders with second placement at Te Ihi Tu..

**Cost-effectiveness**

In the year in which the evaluation field work occurred, total contract cost for Te Ihi Tū was \$450,000.

Taking the fixed and performance cost of \$450,000 and dividing this across the 19 new starts gives a cost of \$23,684 per offender new start at Te Ihi Tū. However, to be meaningful, programme costs should be divided across only those participants who complete a programme. In the year in which the evaluation occurred, this equated to 13 offenders. Thus, cost per “treated” offender rises to \$36,538.

There are varying ways in which the cost-effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes can be assessed. The simplest way is in term of “prison bed years avoided”. Given that the annual costs per prison bed is currently around \$70,000<sup>15</sup>, a programme costing \$450,000 per year would need to prevent 6 - 7 re-imprisonments each year to “break even”. Alternatively it can be argued that cost savings through avoided re-imprisonments should also include wider justice sector and social costs. Analysis conducted by the Department of Corrections suggested that the total costs resulting in an re-imprisonment are approximately three times that of the annual imprisonment costs: thus, preventing one imprisonment avoids around \$200,000 in costs<sup>16</sup>. Using this figure, Te Ihi Tū would need only to demonstrate prevention of 2-3 imprisonments per year to cover its costs.

This same analysis suggests an alternative means of assessing cost-effectiveness. This involves computing the total cost per treated offender that can be justified if a programme achieves an “effect size” of ten percentage-points reduction in re-imprisonment. The analysis indicated that a programme that targeted the highest-risk offenders (risk score greater than 0.75) justified expenditure of up to \$30,500<sup>17</sup>. For offenders in the risk mid-range (0.4 – 0.74), costs of up to \$20,300 per treatment are justified.

Given the average risk score of Te Ihi Tū participants of around 0.59, costs of up to \$20,300 per treatment are justified if the programme was reliably reducing re-imprisonment rates by ten percentage points. Conversely, to justify the *current* level of expenditure, the programme would need to be consistently demonstrating an effect size each year considerably *higher* than 10%. However, data reported here do not indicate any measurable effects on re-imprisonment.

#### 4. Discussion and conclusions

Based on all of the data available for analysis in the current evaluation, a number of conclusions emerge about Te Ihi Tū programme.

Information reveals a programme that in many ways embodies a uniquely tikanga Māori approach to rehabilitation. Following participation, several participants appear to have embraced ethical values arising from tikanga Māori: honesty and integrity, and acceptance of personal responsibility for actions. The programme encourages recognition of the importance of whānau relationships, concepts of reciprocity, and the need to re-build damaged relationships with whānau members. It builds a positive sense of Māori identity through understanding of tikanga and Te Reo.

The programme also focuses on participants’ attitudes and beliefs, encouraging in some a sense of personal responsibility and building motivation to avoid re-offending. Through personal disclosure, participants are assisted to identify triggers

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<sup>15</sup> See p. 39, at <http://www.corrections.govt.nz/public/pdf/annualreports/ar2007-parta-strat-dir.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> Estimating the costs of crime and the benefits of rehabilitation (2002). Department of Corrections (unpublished).

<sup>17</sup> Dollar figures used in the report have been adjusted for inflation.

to offending, and ways to manage these triggers. Some participants displayed evidence of having learned skills to manage drug and alcohol use, communicate more effectively in relationships, and other useful life skills. Several clients reported gaining emotional maturity through their time with the programme.

However, most striking from fieldwork data was finding that the programme generates sharply polarised reactions amongst participants. Roughly half of those interviewed (mainly those who completed the programme) were very positive about the experience, and most recounted a range of major personal benefits that had been gained. Of the remainder, the opposite applied – they were highly critical of the programme and its staff, and felt that they had gained little or nothing. Some expressed a sense of having been adversely affected by the experience.

It must of course be acknowledged that a premature exit from programmes is a common problem in offender rehabilitation; further, it is not at all uncommon for offender participants who are dismissed to blame others for their situation. It is therefore possible that some of the negative views recorded in interviews were nothing more than predictable complaining and blaming of disaffected offenders. Non-completers in the current study (who formed the bulk of the disaffected individuals) tended to be younger and had higher risk scores than the completers.

It is difficult however to disregard the concerns reported by participants on these grounds. Reasons for not doing so are the reasonable degree of consistency in the views expressed by the negatively disposed participants, that these “complainers” were not all non-completers, and that several Departmental staff reported observations that supported certain of the complaints.

That a substantial proportion of each cohort fails to complete the programme and that, sometimes, strong feelings of dissatisfaction and resentment were held by such individuals, are of concern. A range of studies has shown that offenders who drop out of correctional rehabilitation programmes have rates of re-offending higher than would have been predicted had they not entered a programme in the first place<sup>18</sup>. It appears possible therefore that the process of being dismissed from, or opting out of a programme, may exert a specific and negative impact on offenders, potentially heightening risks of relapse into offending behaviour. This means therefore that these observations concerning Te Ihi Tū programme drop-out, and participant dissatisfaction, have particular importance.

Although speculative, a “formulation” presents itself regarding the process whereby Te Ihi Tu participants become disaffected, resulting in the strange polarising of reactions. A self-reinforcing but dysfunctional process appears to ensue when participants commence the programme. Clients who are more confident, cooperative, motivated and able to engage with the programme, elicit largely

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<sup>18</sup> See (1) Dalton, R., Major, S., & Sharkey, M. (1998). Non-attenders and attrition from a forensic psychology outpatient service. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 42(2), 174-180; (2) DeMaris, A. (1989). Attrition in batterers' counselling: The role of social and demographic factors. *Social Service Review*, 63, 142-154; (3) Dowden, C., & Serin, R. (2002). *Anger management programming for federal male inmates: the impact of dropouts and other program performance variables on recidivism*. Unpublished manuscript. Correctional Service of Canada; (4) Gondolf, E. W., & Foster, R. A. (1991). Preprogram attrition in batterers programs. *Journal of Family Violence*, 6, 337-349).

positive responses from staff, which initiates a “virtuous cycle” of interactions. Positive responses and encouragement from staff then bring further increases in levels of engagement and motivation amongst those participants, resulting in a positive experience which is valued by those individuals.

On the other hand, a “vicious cycle” seems to ensue with participants who are more diffident, withdrawn, or perhaps inclined to challenge and dispute. In response, staff react with frustration and hostility, increasing their demands that those individuals cooperate. These reactions however serve only to intensify the level of disengagement amongst participants, resulting (sometimes) in premature withdrawal.

It is generally accepted in offender rehabilitation field that the ability to respond productively to lack of client motivation or engagement, and expressions of hostility, is an essential competency, part of the core skill set of anyone who chooses to work in this field. However, the skills are not simple: maintaining professionalism in the face of difficult and challenging client behaviour is not easy. At such times staff have to draw on their professional training, self-awareness and self-management, and specific skills and knowledge that serve to promote the offender’s learning and change.

These findings then point to what may be a critical problem with Te Ihi Tū programme - levels of competence and professionalism amongst programme staff. Information gathered in the current evaluation suggests that some Te Ihi Tū staff did not always display the specific kinds of professional skills that make for client growth. As has already been noted, this is a particularly critical concern, given what is known about outcomes for programme drop-outs.

Available evidence converges on the conclusion that a positive treatment effect is not being achieved by Te Ihi Tū programme. Although the sample sizes used in the various recidivism analyses reported here are not large, the data indicate that offenders who complete Te Ihi Tū programme are no less likely to re-offend, or be returned to prison, than are “untreated” offenders with similar risk levels. While a proportion of participants value the experience highly, and report having made personal gains from being there, for the majority these gains appear not to be sufficient to reliably carry over into avoidance of new offending. To cover annual costs, Te Ihi Tū needs to demonstrate between two and seven “prison bed years” are avoided; the data analysed here indicate that no prison beds at all are being avoided as a result of the programme.

The limitations of this study – especially having access to a relatively small sample – are an obvious caveat on the overall conclusions. However, based on the collated fieldwork data on the experiences of clients in the three evaluation cohorts, input from other stakeholders, and analysis of reconviction data, it is possible to conclude as follows: Te Ihi Tū produces some very positive short-term impacts on a proportion of the offenders who complete it. However, the programme also appears to result in adverse short-term impacts for other clients, especially those who are dismissed, or who opt out prematurely. These findings therefore shed important light on the main finding of this study, that, in the longer-term, the programme is not effective in reducing recidivism amongst participants.

## Appendix 1: Client questionnaire

### Te Ihi Tū personal gains questionnaire

About the questionnaire: This questionnaire is designed for you to check your own gains from attending the programme at Te Ihi Tū, and also to help evaluate how useful the programme has been for the men who have taken part in it in the last year or so. Please answer the following questions as honestly as you can. The questionnaire is anonymous, and it will not be seen by anyone other than you and the evaluation team.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date you started at Te Ihi Tū: \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of weeks in the programme: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Iwi/hapū: \_\_\_\_\_

Your gains from taking part in Te Ihi Tū:

For each of the following factors, circle one number to show how much you think your abilities and well-being have increased as a result of taking part in Te Ihi Tū. Please think carefully before you answer each one, and try to judge how much you benefited from attending Te Ihi Tū, rather than from other factors (for example, support from your whānau or other people).

1 = A lot of benefit

5 = No benefit at all

n/a = Doesn't apply to you

	A lot of benefit			No benefit at all		
	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
1. Better understanding of yourself						n/a
Comments:						
2. Able and confident to go looking for a job, or new training or education, by yourself						n/a
Comments:						
3. Able to make or keep good relationships with members of your whānau						n/a
Comments:						

4. Able to make or keep good relationships with people who aren't involved in crime	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Comments:						
5. Able to stay away from bad influences (e.g. criminal mates, gang members, etc)	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Comments:						
6. Able to keep your drinking under control	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Comments:						
7. Able to stay drug-free	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Comments:						
8. Able to avoid re-offending	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Comments:						
9. Feeling confident about making a good future for yourself	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Comments:						
10. Able to find an appropriate place to stay after leaving prison	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Comments:						
11. Willingness to face up to and address the real reasons why you have offended in the past	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Comments:						
12. Interest in keeping on learning about tikanga Māori after the programme	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Comments:						
13. Interest in keeping on trying to use te reo after the programme	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Comments:						
14. Able to stay out of prison from now on	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Comments:						

15. Able to communicate effectively with other people	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Comments:						
16. Seeing yourself positively as a Māori man	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Comments:						
17. Able to set positive and healthy goals for your future	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Comments:						
18. Improved physical health and fitness	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Comments:						
19. Able to solve your problems in positive ways (that is, rather than re-offending)	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Comments:						
20. 'Life skills' (e.g. cooking; budgeting; computer skills)	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Comments:						

Other gains for you from attending Te Ihi Tū were:

Thank you for your input into the evaluation.

## **Appendix 2: Interview guides**

### *Te Ihi Tū interview guide – Client 6 month follow-up*

- Introduction
- Explain purposes of the evaluation and this interview
- Note that this is a follow-up kōrero and focused on programme impacts and outcomes for the clients
- Independence of the evaluators
- Confidentiality provisions – note consent already given
- Privacy reminder – don't divulge information given to them in confidence by others
- Intended uses of data and reporting back process
  
- Impacts
- What's happening in your life at the moment?
- Looking back, what do you think you got out of being at Te Ihi Tū?
- Do you think you've made any lasting changes as a result of doing the programme – changes that you've held on to? (Probe specific, concrete examples)
  - motivation to change
  - attitudes to their offending
  - cultural knowledge and belief
  - links to whānau / hapū / iwi
  - any other impacts
- Why have those changes been important? What differences have they made in your life?
- What do you think has been the biggest impact for you of doing the programme?
- What do you think is the most significant change that you've made?
  
- What did you learn on the programme that is useful to you now?
- Have there been any difficulties in trying to hang onto the changes you made through the programme?
- How well do you think the programme prepared you for making permanent changes once you were back in the community?
- Specific skills acquired
- Degree of confidence
- What kind of support did you need to maintain the changes you made in the programme? Did you get that support? If so, where from? If not, what else would have helped?
- Are you still getting any support from Te Ihi Tū, or any agency which Te Ihi Tū referred you to? (If yes, what?)
- In what ways is your probation officer supporting you to hold onto any changes as a result of Te Ihi Tū?
- Looking back, were there any negative impacts for you of taking part in the programme?

- Perceptions of the programme
- What are your thoughts now about the programme and how it was run?
- What aspects of the programme do you think have had the most positive impacts for you?
- Were there any parts of the programme that you didn't like or found difficult? Why? (retaining this question because clients can often reflect more objectively with some distance from the programme, and once they are no longer within the authority of the programme staff)
  
- Obstacles to effective outcomes
- Did anything get in the way of you benefiting from Te Ihi Tū ...
- Things about the programme
- Things about you
  
- Suggestions for programme enhancement
- Are there any bits of the programme that you'd think should happen differently?
- Are there any other ways in which you think the programme could be improved?
  
- Other
- Do you want to make any other comments?

*Te Ihi Tū interview guide – Clients' whānau, 6 month follow-up*

- Introduction
- Mihimihi and appreciation
- Explain purposes of the evaluation and the interview
- Independence of the evaluators
- Confidentiality provisions – consent form
- Privacy reminder – don't divulge information given to them in confidence by others
- Intended uses of data and reporting back process
  
- Post-programme effects
- In general, how is [client whānau member] doing?
- Do you think attending the programme has had any lasting positive effects on [client whānau member]??
- Probe (for specific examples)
  - motivation to change
  - attitudes to their offending
  - cultural knowledge and belief
  - links to whānau / hapū / iwi
  - other impacts
- How has [client whānau member] been supported to hold onto these changes? (By probation officer, whānau, other agencies?)
- How have his changes affected the rest of the whānau?
- Did attending the programme have any negative impacts on either [whānau member] or any others?
- What needs to happen for the positive impacts of the programme to be maintained?
  
- Other
- Do you want to make any other comments?

### *Te Ihi Tū interview guide – Probation Officer 6 month follow-up guide*

- Introduction
- Explain purposes of the evaluation and this interview
- Note that this is a follow-up kōrero and focused on programme impacts and outcomes for the clients
- Independence of the evaluators
- Confidentiality provisions
- Privacy reminder – don't divulge information given to them in confidence by others
- Intended uses of data and reporting back process
  
- Impacts
- In what ways do you think [client] has made changes through taking part in the programme at Te Ihi Tū?
- Positives
  - motivation to change
  - attitudes to their offending
  - cultural knowledge and belief
  - links to whānau / hapū / iwi
  - other impacts
- Negatives?
- How did you know he had changed? In what ways is he different?
- How well do you think the programme prepared him for going back into the community?
- Specific skills acquired
- Degree of confidence
- What kind of support does he need to maintain the changes he made in the programme? Is he getting that support? If so, where from?
  
- Other
- Do you want to make any other comments?

*Te Ihi Tū interview guide – Corrections management personnel / Programme Coordinator follow-up*

- Introduction
- Mihimihi and appreciation
- Explain purposes of the evaluation and the interview
- Confidentiality provisions
- Privacy reminder – don't divulge information given to them in confidence by clients or others
- Intended uses of data and reporting back process
  
- Job and role
- Has the Programme Coordinator (PC) role changed [since last evaluation visit]?
- How well does that role work?
  
- Referrals system
- How well is the referrals system operating at present?
- Are there any problems? How might it be improved?
  
- Programme liaison
- What have been your typical contacts and tasks in relation to Te Ihi Tū in the last 3 months?
  - reasons for contact
  - frequency
  - satisfaction
- Are you sufficiently resourced for this role at present?
  
- Other
- Do you want to make any other comments?

### *Te Ihi Tū interview guide – Non-completer clients*

- Introduction
- Mihimihi and appreciation
- Explain purposes of the evaluation and the interview
- Independence of the evaluators
- Confidentiality provisions – consent form
- Privacy reminder – don't divulge information given to them in confidence by others
- Intended uses of data and reporting back process
  
- Reasons for leaving Te Ihi Tū
- What were the reasons for you leaving Te Ihi Tū? [note: some left involuntarily]
- [If they left voluntarily] Looking back, was that the right decision for you?
- [If they left involuntarily] Looking back, do you think it was reasonable for the programme to ask you to leave?
- Is there anything that could have helped you to stay with the programme?
  
- Impacts
- In what ways do you think you changed as a result of being at Te Ihi Tū?
- Positives
  - motivation to change
  - attitudes to their offending
  - cultural knowledge and belief
  - links to whānau / hapū / iwi
  - other impacts
- Negatives?
- In what ways have you maintained any positive changes since you left the programme?
- Has there been support for you (in prison/community) to help maintain those changes?
  
- Perceptions of the programme
- Looking back, what was most useful about the programme?
- Was there anything about the programme that you thought was not useful?
- Did anything else get in the way of you benefiting from Te Ihi Tū?
  
- Suggestions for programme enhancement
- Are there any bits of the programme that you think should be different?
- Are there any other ways in which you think the programme could be improved?
  
- Other
- Do you want to make any other comments?

### Appendix 3: Evaluation information leaflet Review of Te Ihi Tū

Kia ora. He honore, he kororia ki te atua, he maungarongo ki te whenua, he whakaaro pai ki ngā tangata katoa. Whakairi ki runga kia tina! Hui e, taiki e.

Over the next year, Te Ihi Tu is being reviewed. The purpose of the review is to find out how much people benefit from the programme, in what ways, and what they find most useful. This information will be used to help the programme best meet the needs of its clients.

A team of independent researchers will work with Te Ihi Tu to do this review. The team consists of Laurie Porima (Ngati Manawa, Ngai Tuhoe, Nga Puhi, and Ngati Hikairo, Tainui), Pam Oliver and Shaun Akroyd (Ngati Porou, Rongowhakaata).



Shaun, Pam and Laurie

To find out what works best in Te Ihi Tu programme, it will be important that the research team talks with the men taking part in the programme, and hopefully with their whānau. If you decide to join the programme, you will have some opportunities to talk with the review team about your experiences in the programme.

Taking part in the review is completely voluntary, and if you do want to talk with the reviewers, what you say to them will be kept confidential – your kōrero will not be passed on as coming from you, but it will be included in general feedback from everyone that the review team talks with.

The review team may also contact you a few months after you have left the programme, to give you an opportunity to talk about whether the programme has made a difference for you.

Kia tau te rangimarie.

#### **Appendix 4: Participant consent form**

Evaluation of Te Ihi Tū: Client consent form

I understand the interview I have agreed to is part of the evaluation of Te Ihi Tū, which is being done by Pam Oliver & Associates for the Department of Corrections. The purpose of the evaluation has been explained to me, and I have had a chance to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

In particular, I understand that:

- Taking part in the evaluation is totally voluntarily
- I can withdraw at any time without giving a reason
- I can choose not to answer particular questions if I wish
- The information I give will remain confidential and not be identified to others
- My name will not be identified in the evaluation report
- My decision to take part will not in any way affect my entitlement to services from Te Ihi Tū or the Department of Corrections.

I have been informed about what will happen with the information I give, and I understand that it will only be used for the purposes explained to me.

I agree to take part in the following evaluation activities, on the terms set out above.

- Interview/kōrero while at Te Ihi Tū
- Complete the “Personal Progress” questionnaire
- Interview/kōrero after leaving Te Ihi Tū
- Permission for the evaluator to talk with the following member/s of my whānau:

\_\_\_\_\_

I understand that I can withdraw my permission at any time.

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

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator’s signature: \_\_\_\_\_