

## Case Study

# The Pulse

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**Community Hubs and Partnerships**

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# Case Study 11: The Pulse



## Northland Region, New Zealand

### Overview

Te Hotu Manwa Service Centre, operating as “The Pulse” is a service centre for families and young people, delivering a number of community services. Established in 2006, it aims to engage the community of Whangarei, with a particular focus on addressing issues of teenage pregnancy, low socio-economic status, domestic violence and suicide<sup>1,3</sup>.

The Pulse brokers multi-agency partnerships, engaging both government and non-government organisations, and was established principally to improve service coordination and access for families and young people<sup>2</sup>.



Source: Youth One Stop Trust

Note that no consultation has been undertaken for this case study, and therefore the information contained in this case study is based on desktop research.

### Context/setting

					
Education	Health	Community Services	BrownField	Urban	Public

### Service mix

  	<p><b>Education</b>, including early years education, child care services, parenting education, correspondence school and truancy services<sup>1</sup></p> <p><b>Health</b>, including immunisation and teen parent services<sup>1</sup></p> <p><b>Community services</b>, including job mentoring, budgeting services, counselling and community development projects<sup>1</sup></p>
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**Level of integration** *Unable to be confirmed through desk top research*

**Site characteristics**  


**Brownfield**  
**Urban**

**Funding**  

**Public**, funding provided through the Ministry of Social Development as part of the Early Years Services initiative<sup>2</sup>.

**Partners (inc. lead agency)**  
**Lead agency:** Operated by the Whangarei Youth One Stop Shop Charitable Trust<sup>1</sup>  
**Partners:** The Pulse currently hosts 33 community services including youth groups, food help and maternity programs<sup>3</sup>

### Foundations for success

This hub exhibits three key success factors that were identified in the literature review.

		
Leadership and management	Collaborative and detailed planning	Governance and culture

### Leadership and management

The efficacy of the governance structure was facilitated by a shared vision and leadership qualities of the manager<sup>2</sup>. The Pulse demonstrated close working relationships between the Coordinator and Manager in which the individuals had complementary skills and roles. Further, it was understood that employing a Coordinator with the right skill-set and having opportunities available for professional development, supervision and ongoing support were key success factors.

### Collaborative and detailed planning

Successful establishment of the Pulse was related to leveraging previous professional relationships, their use of local relationships, networks, credibility or 'track record', which facilitated rapid buy-in from the community. The use of community consultation also helped them differentiate from pre-existing services in the community.

### Governance and culture

In an evaluation of The Pulse, clear governance and management structures were found to be in place<sup>2</sup>. Further, the Manager reported to an Advisory Group or Trust, which strengthened the credibility of The Pulse with external stakeholders. The Pulse also provided the opportunity for families to provide feedback on the services, which was discussed and used to inform best practice. Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) have been developed with the other services operating on the site<sup>2</sup>.

### Outcomes

At the time of evaluation, it was only possible to evaluate the Pulse's effectiveness in meeting its short term outcomes, including increased service access and awareness, which acts as a precursor to other outcomes. The medium and long term outcomes should be assessed at a later date.

### Service awareness and access

The Pulse effectively established relationships across their core service areas and raised awareness among agencies of early services available within their communities. Improved service awareness (between services) resulted in better communication and more appropriate referrals. Regular meetings held with services and the collocation of services facilitated the improved service-service awareness.

The Pulse had strategies in place to facilitate proactive contact with families. Some of the strategies used to encourage vulnerable families to drop in and meet with the services included providing written information to families, conducting community events and recreational activities, running group workshops and support groups, and providing supported referrals. Other engagement strategies included liaison with core services (where both core services and relevant community agencies directly engaged with families) and reaching parents through their children.

Stakeholders reflected that a combination of these activities improved accessibility, and maintained their engagement with services.

### Lessons

- Conducting in-depth research and needs assessment of the community in which it operates allows easier determination for future directions and strategies of a hub. This is particularly relevant in the context of engaging hard to reach and vulnerable families. The uncertainty about their future funding was identified as a deterrent to this longer-term planning.
- The hub would benefit from increased information and evidence, not only about community needs but also with respect to best practice elements of Hubs models. The availability of community data, service mapping information and best practice varied in its availability, timing and relevance making it difficult to leverage this information.

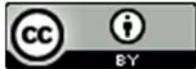
### References

1. Whangarei – The Pulse – Te Hotu Manawa Service Centre, Heartland Services, 2017, <http://www.heartlandservices.govt.nz/locations/whangarei.html>
2. Ministry of Social Development, 2009 - Evaluation of the Early Years Service Hubs Final Report
3. McAllen, 2017, Trauma Layered upon trauma: the fight to turn the tide in Maori youth suicide, *The Spinoff*, <https://thespinoff.co.nz/society/08-02-2017/trauma-layered-upon-trauma-the-fight-to-turn-the-tide-in-maori-youth-suicide/>

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