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[Mobile COVID-19 vaccinations yield results by summer studentship](#)

Mobile COVID-19 vaccinations yield results by summer studentship

The proof is in the data, which was analysed by a student who spent her summer researching making COVID-19 vaccinations accessible to Māori in rural areas.

Pharmacology student Branagh Overington spent her summer researching Kowheori-19 (COVID-19), Kaupapa Māori approach to COVID-19 vaccinations. Her research was one of ten Te Niwha summer studentships and in partnership with Te Puna Ora Mataatua (TPOOM).

Co-Supervised by Dr Melanie Cheung from TPOOM and Professor Katrina Poppe from The University of Auckland, Branagh analysed vaccination data in Eastern Bay of Plenty which has one of New Zealand's highest Māori populations.

“When the Omicron outbreak was at its peak, vaccination rates of Māori living in the Eastern Bay of Plenty were very low, some of the lowest in the country. One of Te Puna Ora o Mataatua’s tactics was to go mobile.”

The health care centre went out to rural areas to provide accessible vaccinations. The University of Auckland student says some of the findings were quite enlightening.

“We found that more than 50% of the vaccinations administered by TPOOM were done so at one of their mobile clinics. It’s interesting to note that had we not gone mobile, half of those vaccination may not have happened.”

The second-year student relocated to Auckland last year with a plan to work towards her Bachelor of Pharmacology. However, since her summer studentship, Branagh has realised she might have another passion.

“I did work around Kaupapa Māori health approaches and a lot of my studies in first year carried through into my research, it was cool to see those cross over.

“I’ve enjoyed the research a lot more than I expected. Now I have to go back and do a little more deliberation with myself because I think Māori health research could be a research career for me.”

Branagh was one of ten students around the country who received funding for summer research.



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