

RURAL MEN ACCESSING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

A Case Study



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Barriers to Health??

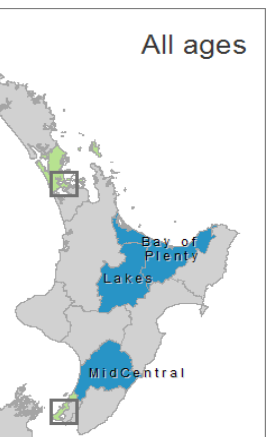
The experiences of men accessing mental health services: A case study



Research Question

The research seeks to understand how men living in rural New Zealand/Aotearoa access mental health support. The study is positioned within a case study methodology

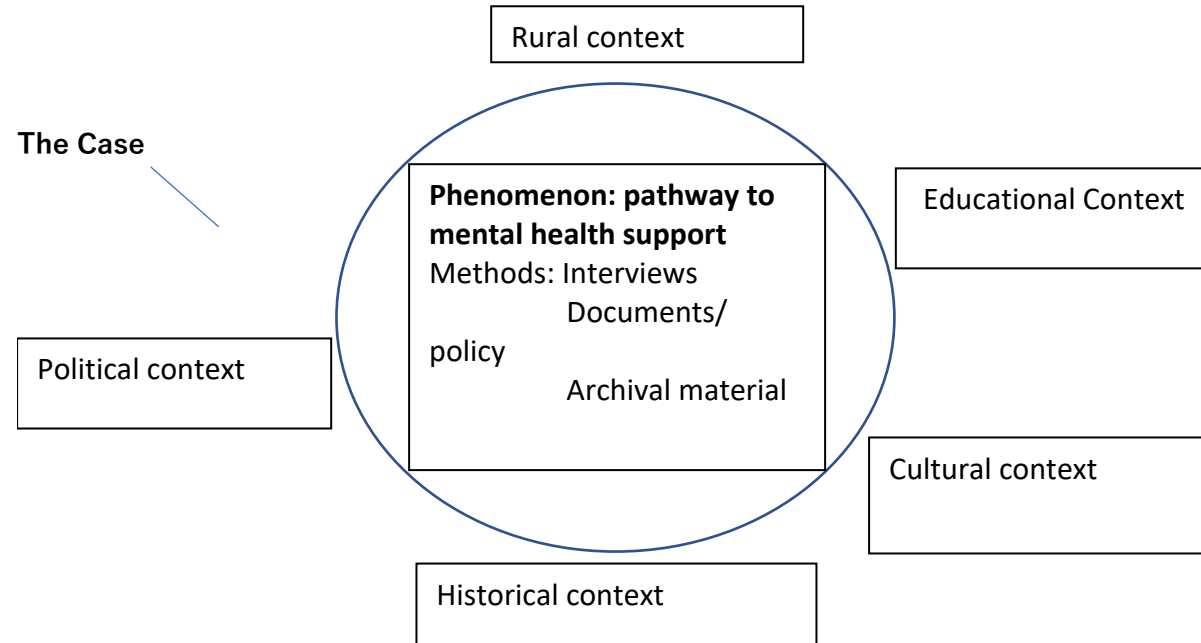
- New Zealand/Aotearoa research into the mental health of rural New Zealand/Aotearoa residents is limited.
- Research has argued that a more detailed examination needs to occur on differences in gender and mental health
- Wairarapa has a high suicide rate (2021)



Aims

- How is mental health supported in a rural community?
- What is the experience of men accessing mental health support?
- How and why do men access mental health support services?
- What is the family/support people's experience of providing support?

Adapted from Stake (2006)- the quintain



Importance of Men's Mental Health

- Mental health is vital for everyone, regardless of gender.
- Men's mental health is often overlooked because of various societal expectations and stereotypes.
- Addressing men's mental health concerns is crucial for their overall well-being and the well-being of their families and communities.

Stigma Surrounding Mental Health

- Stigma remains one of the significant barriers preventing men from seeking help.
- Society often expects men to be strong, self-reliant, and emotionless, which discourages them from expressing vulnerability or seeking support.
- This stigma leads to fear of judgment, embarrassment, and a reluctance to discuss mental health concerns

Societal Expectations and Gender Roles

- Traditional gender roles can contribute to barriers in men's mental health support.
- Men are often expected to be breadwinners, strong providers, and caretakers, leaving little room for them to prioritize their mental well-being.
- These societal expectations can lead to feelings of guilt, shame, and a sense of failure when struggling with mental health issues.

Lack of Awareness and Knowledge

- Many men lack sufficient knowledge about mental health and available support resources.
- Limited education regarding mental health concerns, symptoms, and treatment options can hinder men from recognizing their own struggles.
- Raising awareness and providing accessible information are crucial to breaking down this barrier.

Reluctance to Seek Help

- Men are more reluctant to seek help compared to women.
- Factors such as stoicism, fear of appearing weak, and concerns about loss of control can discourage men from reaching out for support.
- Encouraging open dialogue, reducing the stigma, and fostering safe and inclusive environments are vital in addressing this reluctance.

Limited Access to Male-Centered Support

- The lack of mental health support services specifically tailored to men's needs is a significant barrier.
- Men may feel uncomfortable in traditional mental health settings that predominantly cater to women.
- Developing male-centred support groups, therapy options, and outreach programs can enhance accessibility and engagement for men.

Healthcare Provider Bias

- Some men may encounter bias or judgment from healthcare providers when seeking mental health help.
- Stereotypes and preconceived notions about masculinity can lead to misdiagnosis or inadequate support.
- Ensuring that healthcare professionals receive training on gender-sensitive care and addressing biases is essential.

Strategies for Overcoming Barriers

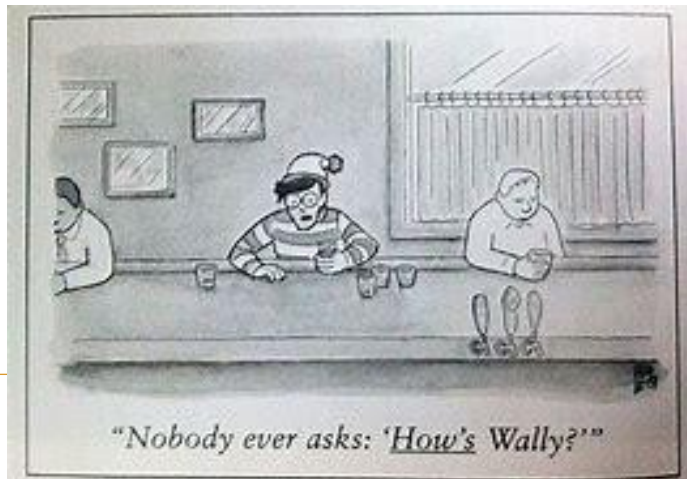
- Promote mental health literacy and awareness through educational campaigns targeting men.
- Foster safe and inclusive spaces for open discussions about mental health.
- Develop male-centred mental health support programs and resources.
- Increase the availability of affordable mental health services.
- Train healthcare providers to provide gender-sensitive care.



Really just help

“ I wasn’t coping at work, and my team leader just said, rule number five- just harden the f... up” **(male participant)**

“I was stressed out, and I even went to my manager to alert her that I was suicidal, to which she responded, sorry, that's not my problem. I need you here to work” **(male participant)**



probably often
sitting long pretty cliff something medical
social stress though services partner told moment
doctor hard town phone work things please
next nothing crisis time even back come five little
gonna support really going home went needed
farm around mental just think right ring kind
none anybody good people know help much anything
give point actually like health okay thing still
sort saying well need talk want another bottom
realized better also look person feel tell system years
kids quite someone life working every anyone many
call community worse male working stressed funding
rather knew important

2021 “We will have better understanding of mental well-being, be able to support themselves and each other, and will be able to get help in the places they already visit, like schools, workplaces and sports clubs”
NZ government”



- It was a complete shambles. And I wasn't at the point of ringing 111 with you but that it was like, where are these people? You know I need help, and I'm trying to ring the numbers I've been told and there's no one to talk to **(wife of a participant)**
- Please, can we get a GP who understands this mental health? And she said, no, I'm sorry. We haven't got anybody in that position who is going to be able to help you any more than this GP **(Male participant)**



never been found

What recommendations do you suggest to address 'barriers 'to health?

- [The Five Ways to Wellbeing - boosting mental wellbeing.mp4](#)

Recommendations

- Ensure there is a diversity of mental health/ social and emotional wellbeing services
- Support is timely and available
- Services are visible
- Connection with services