

# Walk with us

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Peer support for male survivors  
of sexual abuse, a social investment  
that rebuilds lives

Social Investment Proposal  
October 2024



**Tautoko Tāne**  
Male Survivors Aotearoa

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*Content note: This report includes quotes shared by male survivors and peer workers which may be upsetting or triggering. The quotes were selected from research reports funded by Tautoko Tāne Aotearoa and MSD<sup>1</sup>.*

“Pupurutia hō whakaaro.  
He ringa hei pupuru, he  
taringa Whakarongo, he  
ngākau Mārama noa iho  
e hiahiatia ana.”

“People don’t always  
need advice. Sometimes  
they just need a hand to  
hold, an ear to listen, and  
a heart to understand.”

## About Tautoko Tāne Aotearoa

Tautoko Tāne Aotearoa is an established network of government funded, peer support services for male survivors of sexual abuse that has supported more than 9,000 male survivors of sexual abuse since 2014.

The Tautoko Tāne network covers eleven of the thirteen regions, with regional services yet to be established in Manawatu and Southland.

In 1991, a male victim of sexual abuse in Christchurch asked his counsellor to introduce him to other men who had experienced childhood sexual abuse, so they could share

their experiences. In 1997 that group of men registered the Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse Trust. Between 2007 and 2015 male survivors' groups were established in Auckland, Waikato, Wellington, Otago and Nelson.

In 2014, government funding resources the establishment of Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse Aotearoa New Zealand, now known as Tautoko Tāne Aotearoa. From 2015 to 2018, Tautoko Tāne built national governance frameworks, comprehensive policies and protocols, a qualifications framework for peer workers, implemented a case management system, and, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development (MSD), developed a new funding model.

In 2019, the Government allocates \$12 million in funding over four years to provide peer support services for male survivors and Tautoko Tāne establishes five new service centres in Bay of Plenty, Te Tai Tokerau, Taranaki, Tairāwhiti and Hawkes Bay.

### Tautoko Tāne Service Centres

#### Te Tai Tokerau

Kaitaia, Whangārei, Kaikohe

#### Tāmaki Makaurau

North Shore, Central Auckland, South Auckland, West Auckland

#### Waikato

Kirikiriōra, Te Kuiti, Te Awamutu, Taupō

#### Bay of Plenty

Whakatāne, Tauranga, Rotorua

#### Taranaki

New Plymouth, Hawera, Waitara, Whanganui

#### Tairāwhiti

Gisborne, Te Araroa, Wairoa

#### Hawkes Bay

Hastings, Napier

#### Wellington

Central Wellington, Lower Hutt, Porirua

#### Nelson

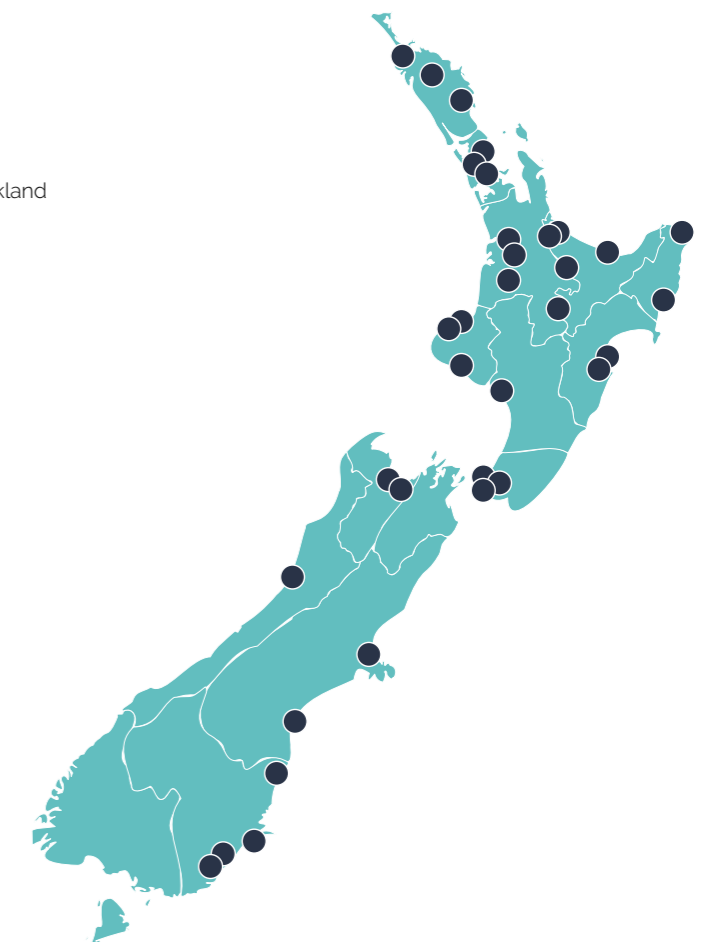
Nelson, Motueka, Greymouth

#### Canterbury

Christchurch, Timaru

#### Otago

Dunedin, Milton, Balclutha, Oamaru



# Summary

## Male victims of sexual abuse are our sons, brothers, fathers, nephews, uncles, friends, and colleagues – at least one in eight New Zealand men.

Most New Zealanders know a man who has suffered from sexual abuse, but you may not have been told. Men and boys have been reluctant to speak up.

There are over 244,000 male victims of sexual abuse in New Zealand. Te Aorerekura, the National Strategy to Eliminate Family Violence and Sexual Violence, acknowledges the need to review whether support services for men need more investment. This proposal for additional social investment in Tautoko Tāne shows they do. Peer support gives male victims the tools they need to be survivors of sexual abuse.

### Support services for men need more investment

The high-profile Dilworth Inquiry and Abuse in Care Royal Commission have made it clear to men they are not alone in their suffering. With greater public recognition that men and boys are also victims of sexual abuse will come increased expectation of government funded support for survivors.

A quarter of victims of sexual abuse in New Zealand identify as male. A third of them are experiencing serious mental illness – an estimated 84,448 men in mental health crisis<sup>2</sup>. They need help to overcome their trauma, so they and their families can reach their full potential. Investment in these men will benefit New Zealand as whole. Currently, sexual violence costs New Zealand over \$6.9 billion a year.

Peer support services for male survivors of sexual abuse are dangerously overloaded. Tautoko Tāne's workload has doubled since the last government funding allocation in FY2020. Without additional funding, Tautoko Tāne faces case load levels that are not safe for peer workers or the male survivors they are supporting. Tautoko Tāne services in some regions will be at risk of collapse.

Current funding is not sufficient for the scale of the crisis ahead. Nor is it equitable. A quarter of victims of sexual abuse are male<sup>3</sup>. Tautoko Tāne is the only provider specifically funded by MSD to support male victims but receives only 11% of MSD funding for crisis services.

### Tautoko Tāne gives men the tools they need to be survivors of sexual abuse

Male survivors participating in Tautoko Tāne Aotearoa peer support find more purpose, need less support from the health, welfare and justice systems, and contribute to the integration, safety and resilience of their families and communities. These services make a real difference in the lives of male survivors and their families across New Zealand, supporting men from all walks of life.

### Tautoko Tāne is a solid social investment

Tautoko Tāne has robust governance and management, and a strong track record in providing support services that work well for male survivors. It has a proven operating model which can be scaled at low risk to provide positive outcomes for more men, and increase return on investment for government.

Tautoko Tāne has identified the level of funding needed to deliver wrap-around services for male survivors of sexual abuse, close regional service gaps and build Tautoko Tāne's capacity and capability. By addressing historic under-funding and investing in growing the breadth and scale of the network of regional services, Tautoko Tāne will be able to support increased numbers of male survivors.

**"Many men are impacted by family violence and sexual violence as children or young people. Men want to be heard and visible in conversations on violence and intergenerational harm that often focus on women and children. They want to feel supported to reach out for help to address their trauma and heal from skilled, available and accessible services and professionals. Increasing capacity for healing will include government investigating whether there are gaps in support services, including peer support, for men impacted by violence and whether more is needed in this area."**

*Te Aorerekura*

### Walk with us: the roadmap for investment in Tautoko Tāne Aotearoa

Tautoko Tāne recommends a phased approach, with an initial funding commitment of \$8.7 million in FY2026–2027. Baseline funding is currently \$3.8 million per year, a level of funding set in FY2019 and frozen since then despite the considerable growth in the number of men supported.

This funding will build a stable foundation for growth, ensuring nationwide coverage and regional services that are safe and sustainable. It addresses the gender inequity in sexual abuse support services and helps support the growing number of men who will seek help as recognition and understanding of male sexual abuse grows.

Future funding will help even greater numbers of male survivors by supporting further growth in service size and scope and enabling the full set of wrap-around support in all regions. Tautoko Tāne forecasts it will need \$11.3 million per year in FY2028–2029, and \$15.3 million per year from FY2030.

With the proposed future investment Tautoko Tāne will scale to support 10,600 male survivors each year by FY2030. This represents a much greater share of male victims in mental health crisis. This level of funding will also allow Tautoko Tāne to achieve economies of scale in its operations.

From an economic perspective, Tautoko Tāne already represents excellent value for money, with a current net return on investment estimated between \$14–27 million each year. This additional social investment would more than pay for itself – the net return on investment for this proposal is estimated at between \$20 million and \$39 million

by FY2027. The further increases in funding outlined in this investment roadmap could return up to \$78 million by FY2030<sup>4</sup>.




### Male survivors and their families are worth investing in

When applied to the enormous damage and cost of sexual abuse, the proven efficacy and potential of Tautoko Tāne support services provide a return that fully justifies the investment of government funds.

Integrated care built around a core of peer support is arguably the most successful and cost-effective intervention available for male victims of sexual abuse in New Zealand. With an equitable share of government funding for sexual abuse services, Tautoko Tāne could support many more men and their families to thrive.

**"I know I can be a good dad and someone fit for society. I can be the person that I always wanted to be and reach my higher self. It's more attainable now because I've looked into the darkness and it doesn't scare me as much. I'm early in my journey with a lot still to be done, but every time I talk about what happened to me, it helps. It's like a puzzle that fits together a little better every time."**

*Male Survivor*

	Current Funding	Initial Funding	Projected Future Funding	
	FY2019–25 Underfunded	FY2026–27 Stable and Nationwide	FY2028–29 Service Growth	FY2030 + Scale and Efficiency
	<b>\$3.8 m per year</b> Current funding	<b>\$8.7 m per year</b> Proposed initial funding	<b>\$11.3 m per year</b> Proposed future funding	<b>\$15.3 m per year</b> Proposed future funding
	<b>\$14–\$27 m per year</b> Annual net benefit	<b>\$20–\$39 m per year</b> Annual net benefit	<b>\$30–\$58 m per year</b> Annual net benefit	<b>\$41–\$78 m per year</b> Annual net benefit
	<b>3,463 in FY2024</b> Male survivors supported	<b>Up to 5,400 per year</b> Male survivors supported	<b>Up to 7,900 per year</b> Male survivors supported	<b>Up to 10,600 per year</b> Male survivors supported





# Support services for men need more investment

### Addressing inequality

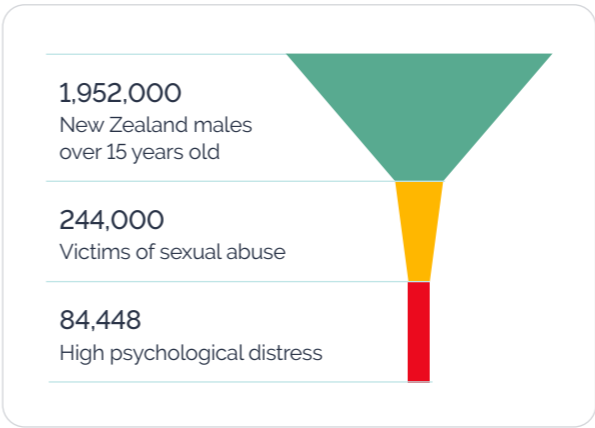
A quarter of sexual abuse victims in New Zealand identify as male. The Ministry of Justice New Zealand Crime and Victim Survey estimates that 12.5% of New Zealand males over the age of 15 have experienced sexual assault in their lifetime<sup>6</sup>.

This equates to 244,000 male victims – at least one in eight New Zealand adult males.

34.6% of males who have been sexually abused in their lifetime are experiencing high level of psychological distress<sup>6</sup>.

Māori, disabled, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary and young men experience higher rates of sexual abuse.

Men's experience of sexual abuse is often dismissed in the context of higher rates of sexual abuse of females and a perception that men are perpetrators not victims. The reality is that men and boys do experience sexual abuse and lack of recognition and empathy means they receive less support.



### Male victims wait decades for help

It takes 18 years on average before male victims of sexual abuse contact Police or ACC and only 31.3% report in the first three years<sup>7</sup>.

Homophobia and false beliefs about male victims of sexual abuse prevent many men and boys admitting to having been abused. They fear not being believed, or being judged harshly.

In 2012, the Youth12 national youth health and wellbeing survey of 8,500 New Zealand secondary school age students found 9% of males had already experienced

unwanted sexual contact<sup>10</sup>. Of these male students, 25% reported that the last unwanted sexual experience that they had was 'pretty bad', 'really bad' or 'terrible'. 55% were 13 years or younger at the time they were first abused.

70% of these male students who experienced unwanted sexual contact didn't tell anyone. Males were 18% less likely than females to have told someone<sup>11</sup>.

Delayed disclosure is also evident in Police data. In 2022, men made up 24% of adults reporting child sexual assault to Police, but only 15% of children reporting are male<sup>12</sup>.

**The truth**

- Men can be sexually assaulted
- Being sexually assaulted doesn't make you gay
- Male victims of sexual abuse are not more likely to become perpetrators
- Women can, and do, sexually abuse men and boys

### Sexual abuse can destroy the lives of victims and their families

Many male victims' experiences of sexual abuse have been denied, hidden or sublimated, leaving them to suffer alone. Some of these horrific stories have been disclosed recently through the Dilworth Inquiry and Abuse in Care Royal Commission.

Sexual abuse can destroy the ability to trust and form healthy relationships. Issues with family, friends, workmates and others make it difficult to function normally. Victims' physical and mental wellbeing suffer<sup>13</sup>.

**"My biggest demon out of my abuse, I struggled, and I still do today, is self-esteem. A voice in my head still tells me I'm a piece of s\*\*t. Then there's this other voice that's been healing that goes, get away."**

*Male Survivor*

A 2019 survey of 7083 New Zealand secondary school students aged 13-18 found sexual harm was the strongest single predictor for serious mental health distress<sup>14</sup>.

Victims of sexual abuse are at increased risk of death by suicide<sup>15</sup>. New Zealand males are more than twice as likely to die by suicide than females, and suicide rates are particularly high for Māori men<sup>16</sup>.

The confirmed rate of death by suicide by age group and sex is highest for men aged 45-65<sup>17</sup>. New Zealand also has one of the highest rates of death by suicide for youth in the OECD.

**“You’re looking at someone who is has been abused a number of times in his life so far. Yeah, the number of times I’ve tried to kill myself is three.”**

*Male Survivor*

Without support to deal with the impact of abuse, victims become isolated and more vulnerable to addiction, re-victimisation and further abuse. Many factors affect the types and degree of problems men experience following sexual abuse including whether the victim was believed and supported when they told someone.

### At least 84,448 New Zealand male victims need support now

The need for more funded support services for male victims of sexual abuse is acute. Nearly 60% of male victims of sexual abuse in New Zealand are experiencing at least a moderate level of psychological distress<sup>18</sup>. Most concerning, 34.6% of males who have been sexually abused in their lifetime are experiencing a high level of psychological distress.

This means at least 84,448 male victims of sexual abuse are currently experiencing serious mental illness and some may be suicidal. Victims with moderate psychological distress could also benefit from interventions like peer support.

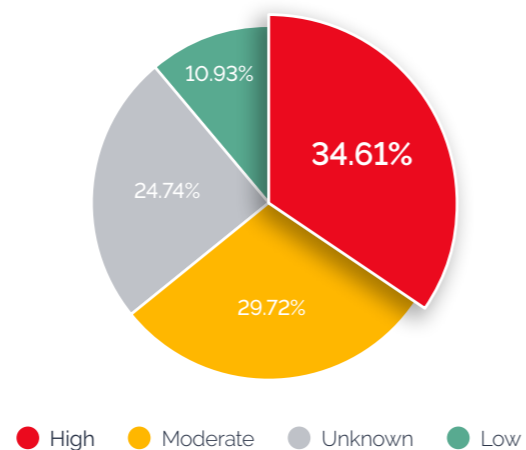
**“For me it took getting hospitalised [...] like it kind of got exponentially worse until I was sent to hospital [...] if I’d got help back then it probably wouldn’t have come to that.”**

*Male Survivor*

### Common issues affecting victims of sexual abuse

- Use of alcohol or other drugs
- Suicidal thoughts and behaviours
- Flashbacks and invasive thoughts
- Nightmares and insomnia
- Anger
- Anxiety and fear
- Depression
- Mood swings
- Mental health difficulties
- Self-blame
- Feelings of guilt, shame, or humiliation
- Numbness
- Sense of loss, grief
- Helplessness, isolation, alienation
- Low self-esteem, self-doubt, low self-belief
- Difficulties with relationships and intimacy
- Masculinity and gender identity problems
- Questions and difficulties related to sexuality

New Zealand Male Victims of Sexual Abuse Level of Psychological Distress



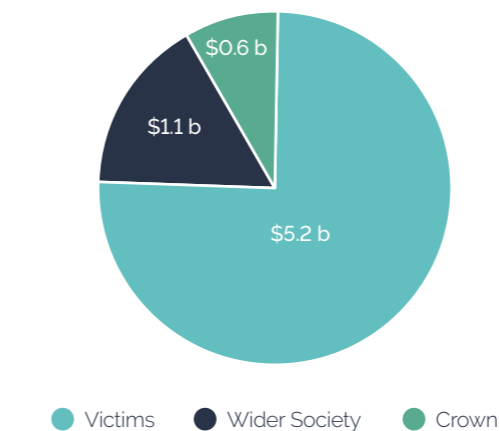
**“It would have been nice to have support in the earlier years where I think we could have avoided a lot of the bad behaviours that I got into [...] The drinking, the drugs. I just sort of went off the rails completely here.”**

*Male Survivor*

### Sexual violence costs New Zealand over \$6.9 billion a year

It is not just victims and their families who suffer. We are all affected when victims are unable to fully participate in society and we all bear the cost of dealing with the impacts of sexual abuse. In 2021, BERL estimated the annual economic cost of sexual violence in New Zealand at \$6.9 billion, representing costs to victims, government agencies and communities<sup>19</sup>.

\$6.9 b annual cost of sexual violence in New Zealand (2020)



**The economic cost of sexual assault will be \$99,987 per victim by 2025<sup>20</sup>.**

Many of these costs will continue to pile up until the victim is able to recover from the trauma of their abuse. Victims

who have been badly affected may never fully recover without support.

Most male victims of sexual abuse carry their trauma and the associated costs for years before seeking help. When they do seek help, they find the processes of government and other institutions onerous, re-traumatising and often disappointing.

### Barriers accessing money to recover

At the time of writing, the Government has yet to announce its decision regarding redress for survivors of abuse in care. Historically, payments for New Zealand survivors of abuse in care have been very low compared with payments by overseas schemes<sup>21</sup>.

Financial compensation for survivors of sexual abuse in other settings is negligible. Current legislation prevents many victims from commencing civil proceedings or negotiated settlements against their abusers and it is not yet clear if the current Government will relax these restrictions. Victims are not always willing or able to progress criminal cases. With access to financial compensation so challenging, it is even more critical that support services for victims be funded by government

### Barriers to funded support services

The ACC Sensitive Claim Scheme funds some healing services for victims of sexual abuse in New Zealand but not all victims submit a claim. ACC receives 2000 sensitive claims from males on average each year, of which only 27% are accepted<sup>22</sup>.

Even with men taking an average of 18 years to submit a claim, the volume of claims made, let alone approved, seems too low relative to the population of male victims of sexual abuse in crisis.

The sensitive claim scheme currently excludes peer support, which means this funding is unavailable for the majority of Tautoko Tāne services.

For those victims whose sensitive claims are accepted, there can be long wait times before they see a counsellor. There are also relatively few male counsellors available for survivors who prefer this.

With access to financial compensation and funded services so challenging, it is critical that effective support services for victims of sexual abuse be freely and easily available.



# Peer support gives men the tools they need to be survivors

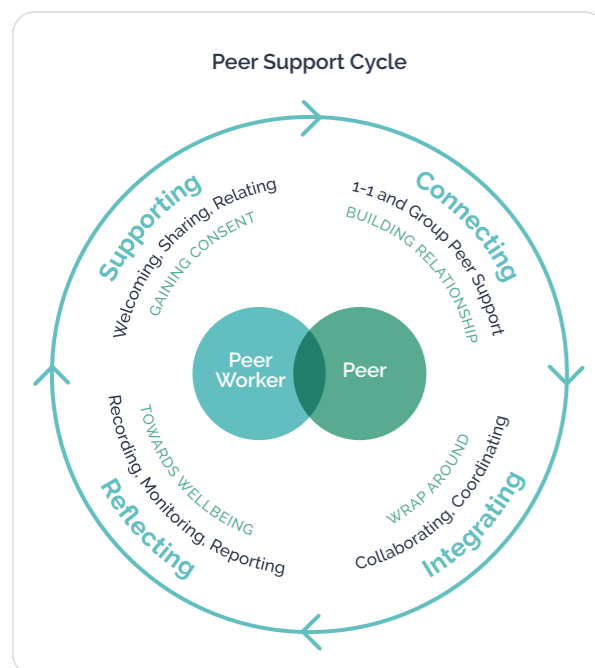
**“He was in a really bad state when he found [peer support]: out of work, on the benefit and suffering from a range of health issues. He’s now back into full-time work and functioning well again.”**

*Peer Worker*

Male survivors who participate in Tautoko Tāne peer support find purpose in life, need less support from health, welfare and justice systems, and contribute to the integration, safety and resilience of their families and communities<sup>23</sup>.

## Lived experience

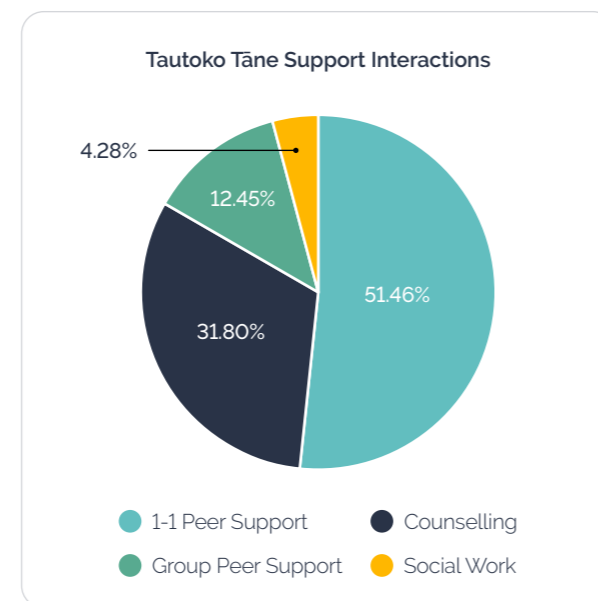
Peer support works because survivors are their own greatest resource. Adverse life experiences can be sources of resilience and knowledge. Tautoko Tāne peer workers have first-hand understanding of how to recover from being sexually abused. With their own lived experience and Tautoko Tāne’s training, peer workers are uniquely equipped to support survivors to move forward.



## Holistic support

Peer workers provide practical as well as emotional support as male survivors rebuild their lives. This means help and advocacy for the day-to-day issues survivors face, including Police, Justice, ACC processes, and financial, transport and housing issues.

Survivors will have one-on-one meetings with their peer worker; they and their families may participate in group peer support; and survivors can access other support such as social work, counselling and cultural healing.



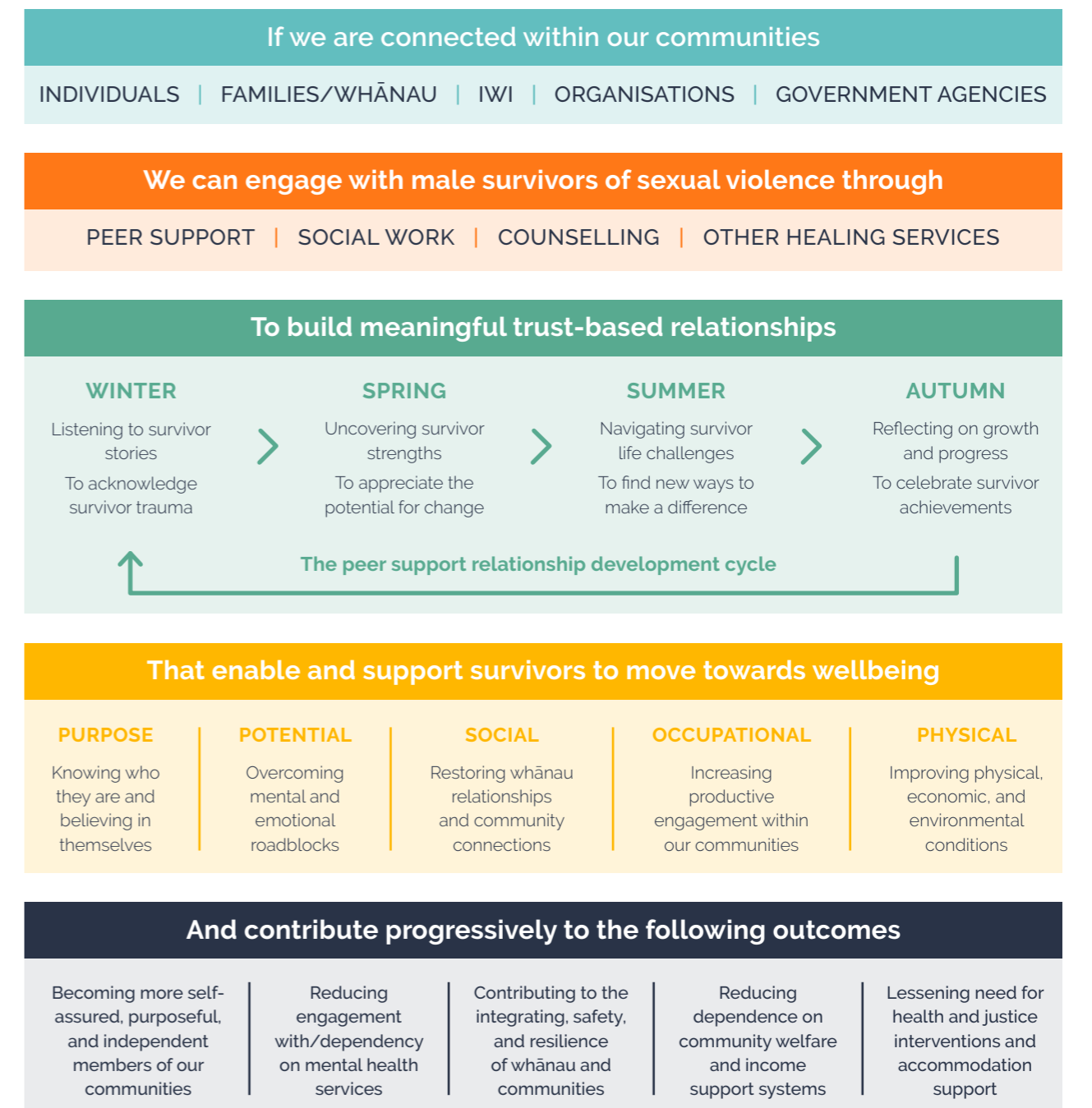
**“Peer support is picking up the guy to go get his methadone. Peer support is shifting a guy in his house, or finding him another place. It’s towing their car. It’s just all that other stuff that builds up and goes wrong for them through the week, and through their lives ... We don’t see hurdles, we don’t see barriers. If there’s anything there that they need that we think is going to help them with their wellbeing or improve them or move them on, we will look at it.”**

*Peer Worker*

# Tautoko Tāne Aotearoa Theory of Change

Peer support is grounded in the belief that people are their own greatest resource and that adverse life experiences can be sources of resilience and knowledge. It draws on a shared understanding of recovery and focuses on what will sustain recovery – for example: employment, reconnection with family and communities, achievement and purposeful activities. It instills hope by being with someone who has been there and through it.

It is not about fixing things but building on strengths. The Tautoko Tāne Aotearoa Theory of Change maps the intervention logic from community and survivor engagement through its services and interventions, most critically strong peer support relationships, to achieve better outcomes for survivors and wider New Zealand society. It builds on an earlier intervention logic developed by MSD<sup>37</sup>.



# Tautoko Tāne is making a difference

Survivors who are supported by Tautoko Tāne are overwhelmingly positive about the impact of peer support on their wellbeing and relationships. Multiple independent evaluations funded by MSD have confirmed the social impact of Tautoko Tāne peer support services.

Between 2022 and 2024 Tautoko Tāne and Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington researched the male survivor experience. Living or merely existing highlights the issues facing male victims in New Zealand as they interact with government agencies and other services<sup>24</sup>. Thriving, just not just surviving documents survivors' experiences of peer support as a **life changing, even lifesaving, intervention**<sup>25</sup>.

In 2023, Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington and University of Otago evaluated how male victims of sexual abuse access and benefit from support services including peer support. They found **formal models of peer support deliver results**, especially for those men who have little informal social support. This report made several recommendations, including increased government funding for peer support.

A further evaluation by the University of Canterbury (due for publication in 2024) directly assessed the impact of Tautoko Tāne's government funding and recommended increase to funding for the service<sup>27</sup>. The evaluation found that the diverse range of supports able to be offered with the funding led to **increased wellbeing for male survivors and their family or whānau**, including enhanced social connection, greater resilience to daily crises, and enhanced self-confidence and self-worth. The male survivors interviewed were overwhelmingly positive about the impact of peer support on their wellbeing and family relationships. Survivors reported peer support had **unique benefits beyond those provided by counselling or therapy**. The authors found that survivors want to share experiences with people who will understand what they are going through, emphasising the importance of male-centred services.

**"I haven't had hope ever since I experienced [abuse]. No hope. I had no hope of being understood. I had no hope of being respected, cared for. But after [Tautoko Tāne peer support] that changed."**

*Male Survivor*

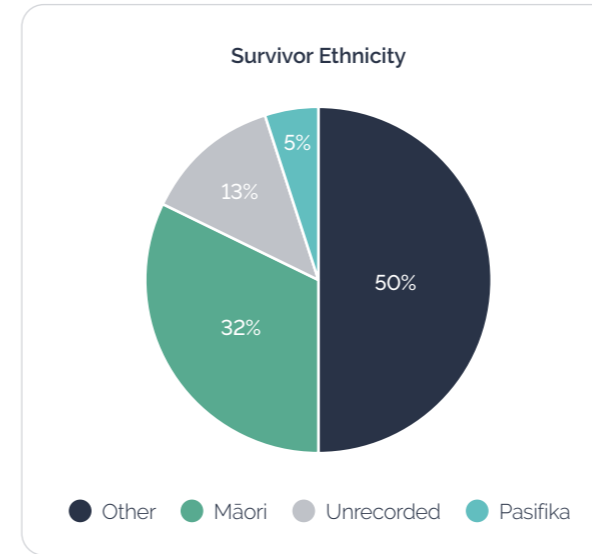
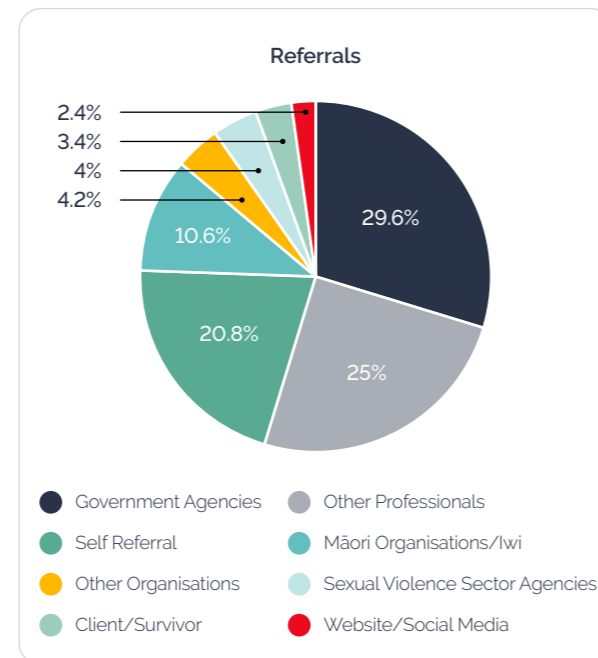
**Tautoko Tāne had an 89% client satisfaction rating in FY2024**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## By New Zealanders for New Zealanders

Tautoko Tāne is a leader in the theory and practice of peer support. Its Purposeful Peer Support Aotearoa Framework was developed specifically for New Zealand, incorporating mātauranga Māori as well as Western principles, and was designed to be applied in other peer support settings across New Zealand<sup>28</sup>.

Tautoko Tāne is connected to 876 community organisations and has 289 referral systems in place. A wide variety of organisations refer male victims of sexual abuse to Tautoko Tāne for support, including government agencies.



Māori are over-represented in male sexual abuse statistics<sup>29</sup>. Tautoko Tāne's Kia Mārire strategy, enabled and supported by its Ropu Tautoko, has invigorated national engagement with Māori. 41% of Tautoko Tāne governance, 23% of employees and 32% of the male survivors supported by Tautoko Tāne identify as Māori.

Tautoko Tāne also recently appointed a National Pasifika Community Liaison to represent Tautoko Tāne on Pasifika Sexual Violence committees and fonos and to build engagement with Pasifika communities.

## Peer support in prisons

Tautoko Tāne works in many of New Zealand's prisons. Not all prisoners have access to counselling while in custody, so peer support provides much needed assistance for inmates, including helping probationers to understand their circumstances and prepare for life after prison.

**"[Peer support] kept me alive [...] I was in prisons, in darkness for a long time. I struggled to find the light until I came here. Learning venting and coping skills helped me carry on. We have a laugh here too, not a lot of places you can laugh."**

*Male Survivor*

## Peer support works

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission has said that peer support presents an opportunity to transform the mental health system and address wider workforce challenges. Its research into the peer support workforce found using peer support within mental health services contributes to greater hope, satisfaction and quality of life for service users. Peer support is an effective, innovative mental health intervention with potential to reduce the load on existing clinical services.

**"I've probably learnt more from peer support and these guys sitting around a table than I have from all the years I've done counselling."**

*Male Survivor*

## Tautoko Tāne is a leader in peer support

Tautoko Tāne is the leading training provider for sexual abuse survivor peer support. It delivers a comprehensive suite of peer support training programmes to enable and support the Purposeful Peer Support Aotearoa Framework, including on-boarding foundational training for new peer workers; peer support principles and practice, peer group training for experienced staff; and reflective practice. Training is generally held in person over multiple days.

Peer workers are often graduates of Tautoko Tāne's peer support themselves, who are at a point on their journey of recovery where they know they have valuable lived experience to offer others.

## Advocacy for male survivors of sexual abuse

As the leading national voice for male survivors of sexual abuse, Tautoko Tāne has been closely involved in the evolution of Te Aorere Kura, advocating for male survivors and providing advice on practical actions that can be taken to better support them.

Tautoko Tāne also plays an important education role, providing information and resources for male victims of sexual abuse, the general public and the wider sexual violence sector through its website.







# Rapidly growing demand for Tautoko Tāne services

**“Not having immediate access [to support] is really horrible. It’s the equivalent of turning up to the ER with half your leg missing and they’re like, “Come back in a couple of weeks, we’ll fix you up then.”**

*Male Survivor*

### Closing the support gap

For Tautoko Tāne, waitlists are not an indicator of service demand – support is provided when it is needed so men in crisis don’t fall through the cracks. Tautoko Tāne’s network of referrers trust that men will get looked after without delay. The result is extreme pressure on Tautoko Tāne services and service providers.

Since its last government funding allocation in FY2020, Tautoko Tāne’s workload has doubled, and its current resources are not sufficient to tackle the massive support gap for male victims of sexual abuse.

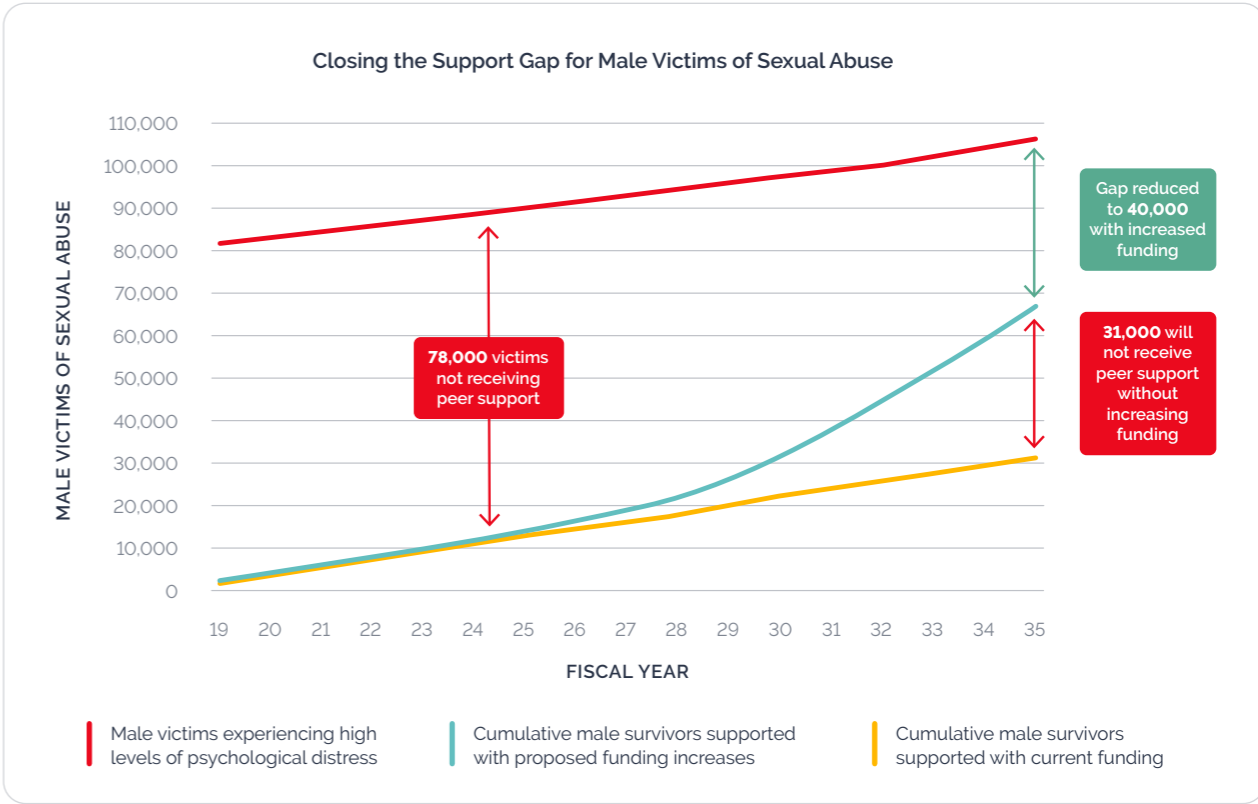
The chart below shows the size of the gap between the projected number of male victims in crisis who could benefit from peer support and the support capacity available currently. It also models the maximum number of survivors Tautoko Tāne could feasibly support with additional funding.

### Demand for peer support services has outpaced funding

Successive independent evaluations funded by MSD have recommended increasing Tautoko Tāne funding in response to rapidly rising demand for its services<sup>30</sup>.

The current funding freeze means Tautoko Tāne is struggling and can support only a small fraction of male victims of sexual abuse.

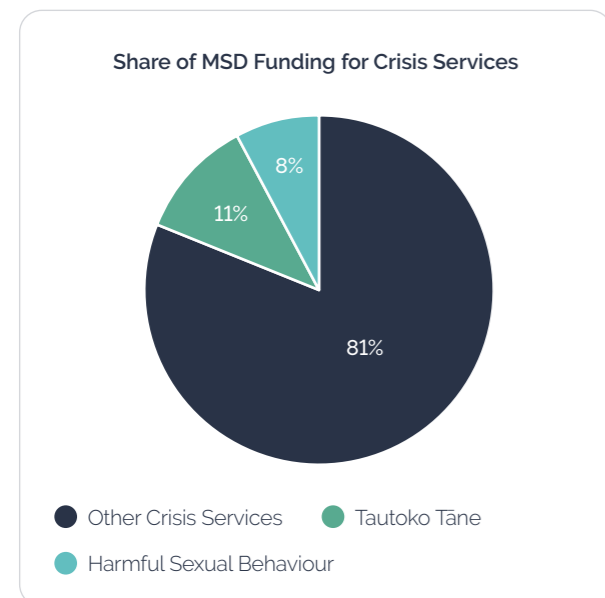
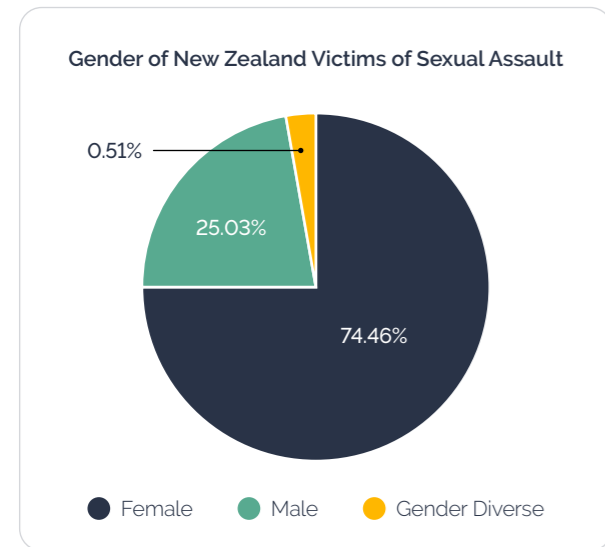
Services in some regions are at risk of collapse without additional funding. Current case load levels are not safe for peer workers or the male survivors they are supporting.



A quarter of victims of sexual abuse identify as male yet only 11% of MSD funding for sexual abuse services is allocated to services which support male victims<sup>31</sup>.

Research shows male survivors prefer to access services specifically designed for them<sup>32</sup>. In addition, men may be unwelcome or feel uncomfortable at mainstream services where most clients are female.

With the sexual abuse services sector already underfunded, there is no suggestion that funding be reallocated from other crisis services. New investment is needed to correct funding inequities.



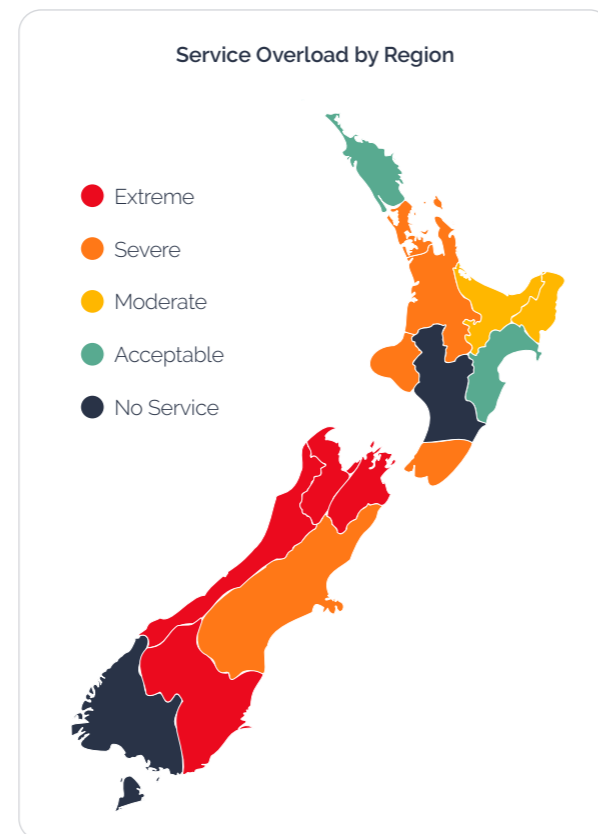
### Regional support gaps

Key elements of Tautoko Tāne's national network remain unfunded. Research has shown the value of one-on-one and group peer support for male survivors and whānau peer support groups for families, but resource limitations mean many regions cannot offer group options<sup>33</sup>.

There are no peer support services in Southland or Manawatu and most other regional peer support services do not have enough employees to operate safely.

Almost all regions have become extremely overloaded, particularly Waikato and South Island centres, and employees in many regions are facing burnout. Auckland is severely under resourced to service our largest city of over 1.7 million people.

Transport is a barrier for male survivors in smaller centres and rural areas, who have to travel large distances to attend groups and other support that cannot be offered remotely. Regional services do not always have sufficient funding to help with transport costs.



**"I can only speak of peer support services, but I can say they're doing a fantastic job even though they're running on the smell of an oily rag. I personally think they are the best avenue to reach victims."**

*Male Survivor*

### Employee burnout

Unlike some trauma support, peer support is designed to be immediately responsive rather than scheduling survivors into fixed time slots. Much of the peer support work is crisis-based, making it demand-driven both in terms of timing and how intensive the support is. This is contributing to unsafe case loads and stress for service providers (employees and contractors) and male survivors.

Tautoko Tāne requires service providers to have professional supervision and active wellbeing plans and the sense of meaning they have in their work means peer workers generally report good levels of wellbeing despite unreasonable workloads. But in the longer term, this is an unsustainable model of practice and will negatively impact employee wellbeing and service quality<sup>34</sup>.

### Lack of awareness that support is available

Many male survivors wish they had help earlier but were not aware of the support available. Male victims of sexual abuse navigate a society that views men as perpetrators rather than victims, and where support services are predominantly targeted at and advertised to female survivors.

**"I knew nothing of these services that were available to me. Work and Income don't give a s\*\*t whether you've been abused. Often people don't get the right help because they don't know where to go."**

*Male Survivor*

Research has highlighted the need to raise awareness and better advertise the services available that can help<sup>35</sup>. Recommended interventions have included:

- Enhancing online resources for male survivors to provide comprehensive information for men, their families and supporters, and for professionals

- Supporting a primary prevention campaign to inform the public and challenge myths about male sexual abuse
- Ensuring early intervention to reduce the long tail of trauma that builds up for male survivors over time and delays them seeking help
- Educating and training specialist and non-specialist service workers so they understand that male survivors exist, how to encourage disclosure, how to respond appropriately to male survivors and how to encourage and maintain survivor engagement with support services

While Tautoko Tāne works hard to provide research and resources via its website, it is not currently resourced for the scale of work needed to fully counter myths about male victims and make it feel safe for them to come forward.

**"[...] the visibility thing of just realising its [survivorship] normal would have helped a lot as well, like we were saying, even if there was billboard ads or something. Just having any sort of something I can relate it to that didn't make me feel so isolated, even if I didn't get direct help, and just realising in some way or another that other people go through it with lots of help."**

*Male Survivor*



# Walk with us: a roadmap for investment in Tautoko Tāne

## Toward a national network of support services for male survivors

In September 2023, Tautoko Tāne responded to a request from MSD to build a funding model for a nationwide, wrap-around service for male survivors, with purposeful peer support as the core service with the addition of counselling, social work and cultural healing.

Tautoko Tāne has identified the funding needed to deliver wrap-around services for male survivors of sexual abuse, close regional service gaps and build capacity to enable Tautoko Tāne to support over 10,000 survivors each year.

Tautoko Tāne recommends a phased approach, with an initial funding commitment of \$8.7 million in FY2026-2027, up from baseline funding of \$3.8 million per year in FY2025. The initial funding increase will build a stable foundation for growth,

ensuring nationwide coverage and regional services that are operated safely and sustainably.

Future funding will increase service size and scope, enable the full set of wrap-around support and help much greater numbers of male survivors. To support the target of 10,000 male survivors each year, Tautoko Tāne will need \$11.3 million in FY2028-2029 and \$15.3 million from FY2030.

These are the minimum funding levels needed to equip Tautoko Tāne to meet projected increases in the number of male survivors seeking support, and to achieve economies of scale in its operations.

The investment roadmap on the following pages details the increasing capacity and service scope Tautoko Tāne can achieve with additional funding.

CURRENT FUNDING		INITIAL FUNDING	FUTURE FUNDING REQUIREMENTS	
<i>Underfunded and Overloaded</i>	<b>PHASE</b>	Stable and Nationwide	Service Growth	Scale and Efficiency
<i>FY2019 – FY2025</i>	<b>FINANCIAL YEARS</b>	FY2026 – FY2027	FY2028 – FY2029	FY2030+
<i>\$3.8m per year</i>	<b>ANNUAL FUNDING</b>	\$8.7m per year	\$11.3m per year	\$15.3m per year
<i>3,463 in FY2024</i>	<b>SURVIVORS SUPPORTED</b>	4,800 ↑ 5,400	7,000 ↑ 7,900	↑ 10,600
<i>\$1,100</i>	<b>AVERAGE COST PER SURVIVOR</b>	\$1,800 ↓ \$1,600	\$1,600 ↓ \$1,475	\$1,475 ↓ \$1,325
<b>\$14m – \$27m</b>	<b>NET BENEFIT</b>	<b>\$20m – \$39m</b>	<b>\$30m – \$58m</b>	<b>\$41m – \$78m +</b>



## Tautoko Tāne Aotearoa Initial Funding Proposal

CURRENT FUNDING		NATIONWIDE SERVICE
FY2019 – FY2025	FINANCIAL YEARS	FY2026 – FY2027
\$3.8m per year	ANNUAL FUNDING	\$8.7m per year
3,463 in FY2024	SURVIVORS SUPPORTED	4,800 ↑ 5,400
\$1,100	AVERAGE COST/SURVIVOR	\$1,800 ↓ \$1,600
<b>Underfunded</b>	PHASE	<b>Stabilisation Phase</b>
24.5 EFT	FUNDED WORKFORCE	54.5 EFT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Unsafe FTE levels</li> <li>✗ Unsafe case loads</li> </ul>	CASE LOADING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Safe workforce</li> <li>✓ Safe case loads</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Regional service gaps</li> <li>✗ Multiple regions overloaded</li> </ul>	REGIONAL SERVICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ National coverage</li> <li>✓ Increased capacity in all regions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Peer support 1-1</li> <li>✗ Limited peer groups</li> <li>✗ Limited wrap-around services</li> <li>✗ Only one cultural healing service</li> </ul>	SERVICES AVAILABLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Peer support 1-1</li> <li>✓ Peer support groups</li> <li>✓ Whānau support groups</li> <li>✓ Some counselling and social work</li> <li>✓ More cultural healing services</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Connected with 800+ community partners</li> <li>✓ 280 referral systems in place</li> <li>✓ Web resources for survivors</li> </ul>	OUTREACH CAPACITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Increased community connections</li> <li>✓ More referrals systems and referrals</li> <li>✓ Enhanced website access for survivors with disabilities</li> <li>✓ National communications strategy</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Supporting regional services</li> <li>✓ Providing national standards and training</li> <li>✓ National planning and reporting</li> </ul>	NATIONAL COORDINATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Establishing and supporting regional services</li> <li>✓ Providing national standards and training</li> <li>✓ Level 3 NZQA credentials</li> <li>✓ National planning and improved reporting</li> </ul>

## Tautoko Tāne Aotearoa Future Funding Requirements

WRAP AROUND SUPPORT	SCALE TO MEET NEEDS
FY2028 – FY2029	FY2030 +
\$11.3m per year	\$15.3m per year
7,000 ↑ 7,900	↑ 10,600
\$1,600 ↓ \$1,475	\$1,475 ↓ \$1,325
<b>Growth Phase</b>	<b>Economy of Scale</b>
68.0 EFT	88.0 EFT +
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Increased safe survivor case loads</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Significant increase in number of survivors supported</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Mature services nationwide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ All Services have the capability and capacity to meet demand</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Peer support 1-1</li> <li>✓ Peer support groups</li> <li>✓ Whānau support groups</li> <li>✓ More counselling and social work</li> <li>✓ Cultural healing services</li> <li>✓ Increased Pasifika focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Peer support 1-1</li> <li>✓ Peer support groups</li> <li>✓ Whānau support groups</li> <li>✓ Counselling and social work</li> <li>✓ Cultural healing services</li> <li>✓ Enhanced minor ethnicities focus</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Increased community partnering and collaboration</li> <li>✓ More effective referral systems</li> <li>✓ Enhanced web and digital resources for survivors</li> <li>✓ Targeted campaign to increase disclosure and engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Increased community partnering and collaboration</li> <li>✓ More effective referral systems</li> <li>✓ Enhanced web and digital resources for survivors</li> <li>✓ Targeted campaign to increase disclosure and engagement</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Supporting growth in regional services</li> <li>✓ Providing national standards and training</li> <li>✓ Level 4 NZQA credentials</li> <li>✓ Enhanced data and outcome reporting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Supporting growth in regional services</li> <li>✓ Providing national standards and training</li> <li>✓ Level 5 NZQA credentials</li> <li>✓ National research and prevention centre</li> </ul>





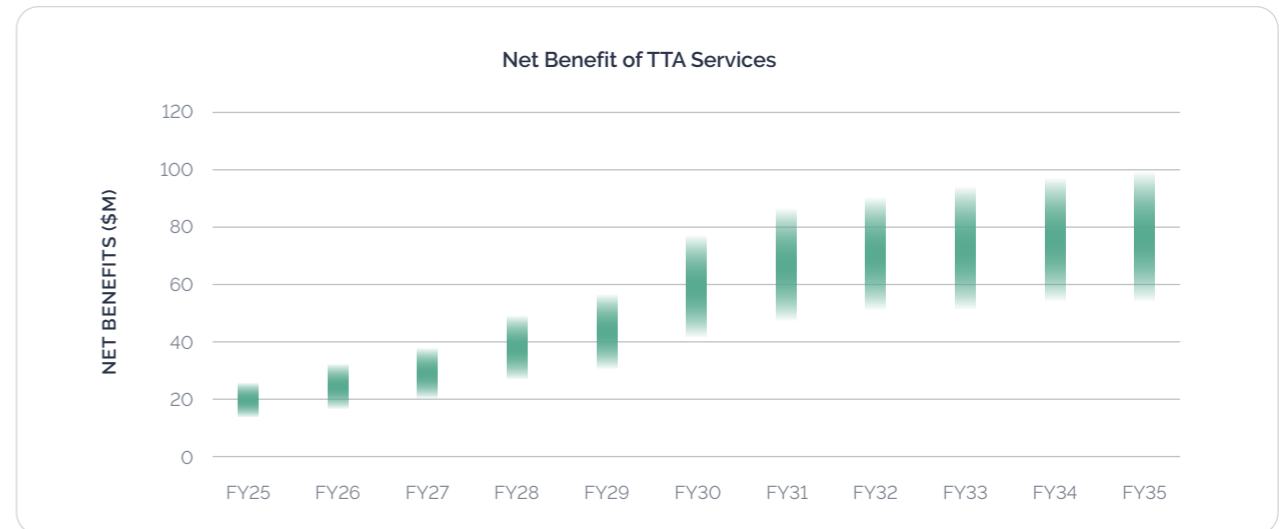
# Tautoko Tāne is a solid social investment

From an economic perspective, the net return on investment for this proposal is estimated at between \$41 million and \$78 million per annum by FY2030<sup>36</sup>. Relatively modest increases in funding have the potential to deliver significant economic benefit to New Zealand, by helping to reduce the enormous social and economic cost of sexual abuse to survivors, the Crown and wider society.

Modelling shows that by FY2030 Tautoko Tāne regional services will be able to support over 10,000 men each year and achieve the scale where per survivor costs begin to reduce. To get to this point requires first addressing historic

underfunding resulting from the funding freeze, increased demand and inflation. Building the capacity, capability and coverage of Tautoko Tāne, so that regional services have sufficient maturity and stability to grow, will result in an initial increase in cost per survivor during the FY2026–FY2027 period. From FY2028, this cost will start to reduce, a pattern seen during the FY2019–FY2025 period due to Tautoko Tāne’s prudent financial and operational management.

The ultimate objective is for all male victims of sexual abuse to have access to the opportunities, support and skills that will enable them and their families to thrive.



# Conclusion

## Tautoko Tāne Aotearoa is a social investment that rebuilds the lives of male survivors and their families.

With the data we now have available, we know there are many thousand male victims of sexual abuse, and that they and their families are suffering without the support they need. All victims of sexual abuse deserve help to move forward with their lives, regardless of their gender.

Current funding is not sufficient for the scale of the crisis ahead. Nor is it equitable when a quarter of victims of sexual abuse are male. A long-term commitment to achieving better outcomes for male survivors of sexual abuse is needed.

Now is the time for funders to increase social investment in Tautoko Tāne, making sure that support exists for the estimated 84,448 male survivors of sexual abuse who are in mental health crisis.

Increasing annual funding to \$8.7 million is the first step needed, to stabilise Tautoko Tāne services, fix regional service gaps and build capacity to support more male survivors.

The estimated net return on this initial investment will be between two and four times government funding by FY2027.

**“Telling my story and finding support saved my life, so now I just try to give that to others.”**

*Male Survivor*

As increasing numbers of male victims of sexual abuse reach out for help, projections indicate Tautoko Tāne will require \$11.3 million by FY2028–2029 and \$15.3 million by FY2030 to continue to provide sufficient support to those who need it.

This future investment will give significantly more men the opportunities, support and skills they need to help them and their families to thrive.

The economic impact will be a projected net return on investment of up to five times government funding by FY2030, by which time Tautoko Tāne will have the capacity to support 10,000 male survivors each year.

Tautoko Tāne's success in supporting male survivors of sexual abuse is undeniable and, with a relatively low per person cost, the service delivers excellent value for money. It is a low risk, less costly and more effective intervention at a time when the Government is determined to reduce deficits in health spending.

Helping male survivors of sexual abuse to overcome their trauma, so they and their families can reach their full potential, is a sound social investment that will benefit New Zealand as a whole.

**“I've got my own toolbelt now and I want to use it to make a difference. I don't want to waste any of the time that's left in my life or for anyone else to go through what I've been through.”**

*Male Survivor*



# Appendix: Methodology

## Number of male victims of sexual assault in New Zealand

Estimated numbers of sexual assault victims used in this report were derived from the Ministry of Justice New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey (NZCVS) Key Findings – Cycle 5 (2021/22) Sexual Violence and Violence by Family Members, using pooled data from 1 March 2018 to 14 November 2022<sup>38</sup>.

NZCVS collects information about New Zealanders' experience of crime, including sexual assault and family violence. NZCVS is the only source that paints the full picture of crime in New Zealand, which is much wider than crime that comes to the attention of justice agencies. Estimates are representative of the usually resident, non-institutionalised, civilian population of New Zealand aged 15 years and over.

NZCVS estimates that 977,000 New Zealanders aged over 15 have experienced sexual assault. 12.54 % of New Zealand adult males have experienced sexual assault in their lifetime, which is equivalent to 244,000 individuals.

This means 25 % of sexual assault victims identify as male. When surveyed, 34.61 % of male victims of sexual assault, equivalent to 84,448 individuals, reported a high level of psychological distress. In the NZCVS, psychological distress is measured by the Kessler-6 (K6) scale. A high rating indicates the probability of experiencing serious mental illness in the previous 4 weeks.

NZCVS also estimates 80,000 victims over the age of 15 were sexually assaulted each year between 1 March 2018 and 14 November 2022 (all genders). This figure is used in the cost-benefit analysis below.

## Tautoko Tāne Aotearoa cost-benefit analysis

In September 2023, Tautoko Tāne responded to a request from MSD to build a funding model for a nationwide, wrap-around service for male survivors, with purposeful peer support as the core service and adding in social work and counselling support<sup>39</sup>.

Tautoko Tāne contracted Suzanne Snively DNZM and her team, analysts AnneMarie Curtis, Chris Jeffreys and Mark Terment MNZM, to take the operating model developed by Tautoko Tāne Pou Whakahaere Tony Chamberlain and

perform a cost benefit analysis to provide a solid economic basis for the proposed investment. Suzanne has extensive experience in the field of family and sexual violence, including leading ground-breaking research into the economic cost of family violence in New Zealand<sup>40</sup>.

This analysis uses BERL's 2020 estimate of \$6.9 billion in annual cost due to sexual violence in New Zealand<sup>41</sup>. Dividing \$6.9 billion by 80,000 annual victims of sexual assault returns a \$86,250 per-person economic cost of sexual assault. Applying a 3% inflation factor results in a conservative per-person estimate of the cost of sexual assault of \$99,987 by FY2025, for all genders. This figure is not the annual cost for each victim of sexual assault (i.e. they do not incur a \$99,987 cost to society every year). It is the cumulative lifetime economic cost of a victim of sexual abuse, expressed in FY2025 dollars.

This cost is then allocated across the years each male victim lives after the abuse to arrive at a per-person annual economic cost. A precise annual allocation is beyond the scope of this report, so the cost has been spread evenly across the years victims live on average after their abuse.

Most survivors who work with Tautoko Tāne are abused in their youth. The model assumes the average victim lives with the impacts of their abuse for 62 years, from 18 to 80 years of age (New Zealand male life expectancy), resulting in a per-person annual economic cost for male victims of \$1,613 (\$99,987 lifetime cost divided by 62 years). Population differences are not accounted for in this model but per person annual economic costs will be higher for populations with lower life expectancy, including Māori.

To estimate the number of survivors who will benefit from Tautoko Tāne's services, the model uses current actual survivor numbers for FY2025. For FY2026 to FY2030, the model projects the number of survivors supported each year assuming the increased funding proposed.

The projection incorporates Tautoko Tāne Safe Case Load<sup>42</sup> levels for each region and includes efficiency factors ranging from 3% in FY2026 to 10% in FY2030 to account for cost efficiencies gained as Tautoko Tāne services grow and mature. A graduated annual growth rate from 10% down to 2% is applied beyond FY2030 to account for increasing capacity while reflecting a reasonable limit to the efficiencies that can be gained.

Approximately 45 % of survivors supported each year are new to Tautoko Tāne. The model accounts for this by only ascribing economic benefits to one fiscal year for each survivor. This avoids double counting the economic benefit of survivors who seek Tautoko Tāne services across multiple years.

This model makes a conservative assumption that survivors will be 40 years old when they first receive help from Tautoko Tāne. It is reasonable to assume that the per-person annual cost of \$1,613 will begin to reduce from the point at which they first receive support from Tautoko Tāne.

This model assigns a cost reduction of 15 to 25% per survivor (equal to between \$242 and \$403 annually) as a conservative estimate of Tautoko Tāne's impact on the lives of the survivors it supports. For individuals, this may be higher or lower and it will be different for different people. When you consider the most recent qualitative evaluation of Tautoko Tāne services<sup>43</sup>, which reported overwhelmingly positive feedback from survivors, it seems a reasonable case to make that survivors' lives will be improved by at least this much due to peer support and related support.

This annual reduction is multiplied by the average number of years lived after seeking care, estimated at 40 years, resulting in a cost reduction of between \$9,676 and \$16,127 per Tautoko Tāne client. The model allocates the 40 years of benefit to the year in which the individual seeks Tautoko Tāne services. This is multiplied by the projected number of Tautoko Tāne clients to arrive at the overall economic benefit attributable to Tautoko Tāne.



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