

Dr Waiora Port

Dr Waiora Port, (Te Aupouri [Ngāti Pinaki], Te Rarawa [Ngāti Maroki]), Auckland, a respected Kuia with long-standing community knowledge of Māori health issues. Waiora was awarded her PhD in 2007 after investigating the cultural and spiritual issues around DNA testing for Māori with a genetic predisposition to cancer.



Waiora Port is of Te Aupouri and Te Rarawa iwi affiliation. She was born in Auckland in 1932 and for the first eight years of her life lived in the Far North. She began her education at Ahipara Native School in 1937 and in 1940 her parents moved back to Auckland.

Her strong ambition to teach began the first day she attended school in Ahipara in 1937.

Waiora began her teaching career as a probationary assistant at Richmond Road School in 1953. Her belief that her main job was to raise her children saw her leave Richmond Road School to do this and when her 5 daughters were all at school she returned to teaching in 1973. In 1985 she began the first bi-lingual unit at Richmond Road School, and in 1988-1991 was the Supervisor-Kaiako of Ritimana Kohanga Reo where she continues to remain involved some 24 years later.

She attended the University of Auckland part-time and was awarded her BA in 1992. Her thesis for her MA was on Waehape (Clubfoot). She was later invited by the Director of Genetic Services to study for her PhD in Molecular Medicine/Māori and Pacific Health, DNA testing for Cancer Susceptibility: The needs of Māori. She is still employed part-time by the Auckland District Health Board (ADHB) as Kai Arataki (Cultural Advisor) to Northern Regional Genetic Services.

Waiora has served on many advisory committees such as the Kaunihera Kaumātua of ADHB, ACART, Toi Te Tai Ao: The Bioethics Council, Te Hau Mihi Atū, and is called on in an advisory capacity in many research projects which involve Māori.