



PVINZ

eVision April 2021

Parents of Vision Impaired
New Zealand Inc
supported by Blind Low
Vision New Zealand
(formerly The Blind Foundation)



Pinky Fang and guide dog



PVI.ORG.NZ



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Chairperson's Report April 2021

It seems a long time since our Annual Conference in October and the world continues to keep changing in these tricky times. We can no longer expect the 'norm' and I guess that this is one thing that the Parents of Vision Impaired are very good at—adapting! I was thrilled that our Annual Conference went so well and a huge thanks to the Conference Committee for yet again working in such exceptional circumstances to allow our parent community to meet and have such a great time together.

Christmas has been and gone, I hope this was a time for families and friends to spend time together. For a number of families, our parents, grandparents, and wider family members were not able to travel from overseas to celebrate the Christmas season; one more stress and disappointment we had to accept along with the rest of the 'Team of 5 Million'. For our family, Christmas was a time of doing some serious section tiding and landscaping at Krystal's flat. Krystal and Tim got a lot of pleasure in getting involved and now have their own barbeque patio and raised garden for planting flowers and shrubs and so on. The silverbeet (pictured) seems to be growing with great success! There is a new lawn pathway which is a work in progress.



Krystal's garden box, as you can see, the silverbeet has taken off!

Since our conference, we have had Priscilla McEwan accept secondment to the vacant Board position of Tangata Whenua. A very warm welcome from the Board and look forward to getting to know you, and you getting to know us over the next few months. Our Wellington area position remains vacant, in need of a successful appointment in the Lower North Island region.

It is great to see that we have hit the ground running. Collaboration continues to be the key to achieving outcomes for our parent organisation. We have had recent confirmation that Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga have agreed to fund a small research project between us (PVI), Kāpō Māori Aotearoa and the University of Waikato. We have also had our funding confirmed by Blind Low Vision NZ which allows us to frame our coming years activities. Rebekah appeared at a Justice Committee District Court (Protection of Judgement Debtors with Disabilities) Amendment Bill via Zoom. This gives us a real voice at the decision-making level whilst supporting our partners in the blind sector.

Looking forward to a productive year, meeting our commitment to the Strategic Plan and Mission and Vision of our parent lead organisation.

Ngā mihi, Judith

EO Report



Lily celebrating her 8th birthday

Kia ora anō,

Welcome to the first eVision for 2021! This month we're having an "Arts in April" theme for our eVision and highlighting a few things that are available as well as what people we know are doing in this space. Enjoy!

Our Lily celebrated her eighth birthday with afternoon tea at her nan's and a swim in the pool. She had a great time and was delighted to be the birthday girl and centre of attention for the day! All our children are now settled into their respective schools, which is a great relief.

The last few months have gone by very quickly. I have been very busy with various projects and things happening - I summarise a few here for readers.

PVI has made submissions on the following bills:

- Judgement of Debtors with Disabilities Amendment Bill 2020
- Social Security (Financial Assistance for Caregivers) Amendment Bill
- Oranga Tamariki (Youth Justice Demerit Points) Amendment Bill

You can find our submissions in full on our website, here: pvi.org.nz/documents

As always, our key aim is to keep our children and their needs in front of law makers, elected MPs, and government officials as they shape our country's responses and laws and systems.

I've continued to represent PVI at the Blind Sector Network Aotearoa, a group of consumer organisations representing blind and low vision people across the *motu*. The accessibility legislation continues to slowly progress; I am the Access Alliance Co-Chair for the Accelerating Accessibility Advisory Group. This mostly involves a lot of meetings! These notwithstanding, we are on track for this legislation to become a reality this parliamentary term, which is super exciting. PVI is a founding member of the Access Alliance and I am very proud to continue on with PVI's work in this space.

I am also collaborating with Kāpō Māori Aotearoa and the University of Waikato on a small research project - this is highlighted later on in this eVision. It is great for PVI to move into this space and there is potential for future collaborations at a larger scale (funding dependent of course!).

→

EO Report continued...

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PVI collaborated on open letter with Blind Low Vision NZ & Kāpō Māori Aotearoa requesting that the government prioritise disabled people for the Covid-19 vaccine. It seems the government has listened to us and the many other disabled organisations and persons who actively engaged and requested this, which is a fantastic result! Here's hoping we will all be able to return to relative ordinariness later this year (fingers crossed!).

Lastly, an article I wrote for the most recent edition of the *Journal of the South Pacific Educators in Vision Impairment* was published early this year. In it I summarise the way PVI utilised the resources available during the nationwide lockdown to support parents and make the argument for barrier-free supports for all parents, all the time. Here's hoping this might become a reality in the future! Read online here: spevi.net/jspevi

Take care,
Kia pai tō rā,
Rebekah



Introducing Priscilla McEwan

A very warm welcome to our newest Board member, Priscilla McEwan. Cilla has been seconded for a one-year term in the Tangata Whenua position (which was vacated by Andrea Lamont during 2020). She joins us from South Island, where she lives in Christchurch with her husband Roy and their 18-year-old son Jonathon, the youngest of five. Cilla introduces herself in her own words below:

Tena koutou katoa! Nga mihi nui ki a koutou!
Ko nga kohatu whakarekareka Tamatea pokai
whenua te puke,
Ko Ōtakaro te awa,
Ko Ngai Tahu te iwi,
No Ōtautahi ahau
Ko Priscilla McEwan taku ingoa.
Mauri ora!

It has been a privilege to join the PVI Board and meet such wonderful people in the process. I am a mother first and foremost and an operations manager for Barnardos Care across South Island in my day job. My interest in the Board position grows from when my youngest Jonathon joined the family at seven months old from the care sector. In his formative years he presented with a significant astigmatism and strabismus which after two operations was unable to be corrected. The result has been the brain shutting off the affected eye with ongoing problems regarding vision. He also has ID, and education and navigating his world has been a challenge. In spite of this, he remains a 'gentle giant' with a love of Playstation and family...an odd combination!

I look forward to being an active participant within the Board as *tangata whenua* and hopefully do justice to the vision and *kaupapa* of PVI.

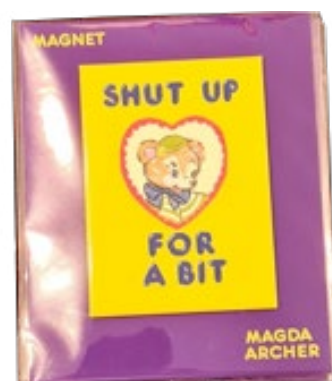


Na reira, nga mihi, nga aroha i a tatou katoa.

Cilla McEwan

Arts In April Theme

At our recent Board meeting, Board member Stacey and I (Rebekah) visited the Dowse Gallery in Lower Hutt. We very much enjoyed wandering through the exhibits and introducing ourselves to the beautiful works on display. I'd forgotten how nourishing for the soul it can be to have time to spend in art spaces. Also, I found the perfect fridge magnet in their art store!



Quite keen on this purse too :D

So we thought this month we would highlight some of the local organisations making the arts accessible for blind and low vision persons. We also introduce two creative blind and low vision artists and showcase their art. And we have a giveaway! Exciting!

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Watercolour Giveaway



Many PVI parents will know Stacey from the PVI Board, but did you know she makes amazing and beautiful handmade artisanal watercolour pigments under the name of Stakiwi Colours?

Stacey has put together a stunning introductory giveaway pack for readers of eVision. The giveaway pack includes:

- Variety of watercolour paper samples
- Watercolour round brush
- Watercolour dropper
- Watercolour Paints (artist grade)

Be in to win! Click on the link below, fill out your name and email address, and be in to win! It's as easy as that!

<https://forms.gle/eqc8ohStCT8FuyLi8>

The winner will be drawn 5pm on 20 April 2021.

For more on Stacey's watercolour pigments, see stakiwicolours.com and if you're on Insta, her videos are surprisingly soothing: [instagram.com/stakiwicolours](https://www.instagram.com/stakiwicolours)

Meet Wellington Artist, Pinky Fang!



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Pinky Fang is a Wellington-based artist. She talks to eVision about her art and being legally blind.

Do you have an art studio?

Currently I have a desk in the living room of my house, but I have had art studios in the past where I worked with other creatives. Often I will just sit on the ground at my coffee table and work from there. Luckily I live alone so I can leave all of my things out!

What are the artistic influences on your art style?

I'm very influenced by retro and colourful styles, mostly from the 1970s, '80s and '90s. I am stylistically influenced by graffiti, memphis design, and art deco. Conceptually I am inspired by internet culture, music and pop culture. My biggest artist inspiration would be Keith Haring.

What future direction do you want to take with your art?

I am currently working with a musician to creatively direct their new album cover and I would love to do more of this work in the future. I like the idea of working with other creatives to create concepts and the problem solving required to make them work.

Can you tell us a bit more about your vision impairment?

I have retinitis pigmentosa, an inherited condition. At this current point I have about five degrees of vision left, which is right in the middle of my eyesight line. I essentially have very narrow tunnel vision, and my vision will continue to deteriorate with time.

What tech and other items are really useful for getting about?

My guide dog is an amazing tool for getting around independently as she is able to anticipate obstacles and get around them seamlessly. She is also a lovely companion and excuse to get out of the house every day and get some exercise.

Because my dog is very clever (but not compatible with GPS!) I also use my smartphone maps app to orientate myself if I'm not as familiar with a place. I use a headphone in one ear to hear audio directions from the app.

I love online grocery shopping and online shopping in general because it means I can find everything I need easily without having to navigate in a shop! Plus it all gets delivered right to my front door.

“My guide dog is an amazing tool for getting around independently as she is able to anticipate obstacles and get around them seamlessly.”

Blind Low Vision NZ recently provided me with an Amazon Alexa Echo Dot. This is a type of AI which you can talk to. You can get the Alexa to set alarms, tell you how the weather is, take notes, and all sorts of handy things!

I also absolutely love podcasts and mostly listen to them in favour of TV shows now because they are made to be interesting without the use of visual aids.

What words of wisdom do you have for parents of a vision impaired young person?

The cool thing is that you can still do loads of stuff with limited or no vision. I started learning the drums recently because I know it's something I'll be able to do without any vision at all, muscle memory will remember where everything is.

Humans are much more adaptable than we think and always find different ways to do whatever we dream of doing, even if we have to do it in a completely unique way!



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More about Pinky Fang!

Pinky has talked previously about some of the challenges she faces here: odi.govt.nz/whats-happening/pinky-fang-experiencing-both-invisible-and-visible-disability

You can see more of Pinky's work here: folks.pillpack.com/pinky-fang-blind-cartoonist

Meet Jewellery Artist, Daniel Younghusband

Having purpose to your day is essential, whether you live with or without a disability. Daniel Younghusband has turned a small idea into an inspiring enterprise. Beginning with a few pāua shells collected by his father, Dan was inspired to make shapes from the beautiful native shell. These shapes evolved into simple jewellery pieces and "Paua by Dan" was born. Dan introduces himself below:



Hi there,

My name is Daniel, I live in beautiful Nelson, and in spite of being legally blind and faced with a few other physical challenges, I have my own jewellery business called Paua by Dan. It all started after seeing the shine of the polished pāua shells from my dad's fishing weekend in March 2010. I just loved the colours of the shells and decided to have a go at making pendants from them.



At home, with a hacksaw and sandpaper, I determinedly set about my project. I can't see well enough to work with tiny beads and wires, but my sense of touch allows me to determine shapes, file, and sand each piece of pāua. The project was simply meant to keep me busy, but friends and family loved the jewellery so much they said I should start a business!

I now create all sorts of pāua jewellery, each piece unique, carefully sanded to a satin smooth finish.

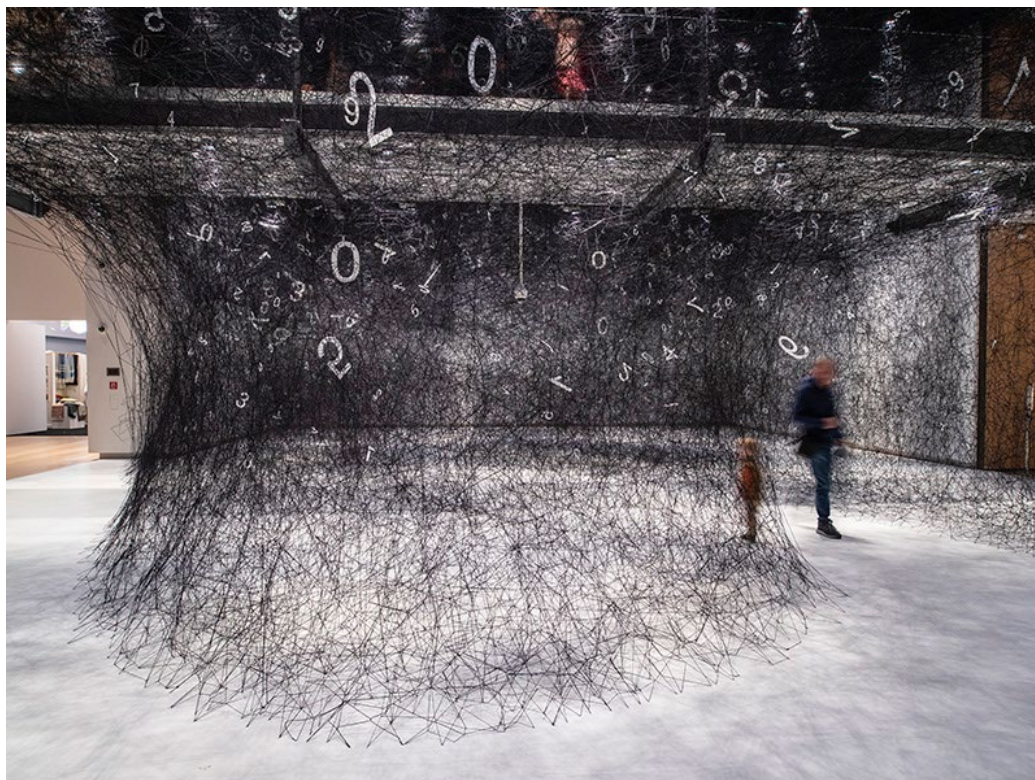
With a little help, the pieces are treated with a clear enamel varnish and fashioned into beautiful necklaces, earrings, bracelets, and more. I believe the simple designs enhance the natural beauty of the pāua shell. More recently, I've been inspired by the natural shapes of the leaves in Isel Park, where Cassie (my little dog) and I go for walks daily. With a little help and the use of an amazing firing process, we've been able to turn the leaves into pure silver necklaces and earrings.

I am very proud of my jewellery and hope you like it too!

- Daniel



MUSEUM OF
NEW ZEALAND
TE PAPA
TONGAREWA



The Web Of Time,
art installation by
Chiharu Shiota. Toi
Art, Te Papa. Photo
by Michael O'Neill,
2020. Te Papa

Te Papa Sensory Tours

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Te Papa have FREE sensory tours for specific exhibits. They currently have TWO sensory tours available. The sensory tours have been developed with adults in mind but may be of interest to members – the Te Papa Learning Team works with BLENNZ and school students. Judith Jones organises the sensory tours and is more than happy to answer any questions
Judith.Jones@tepapa.govt.nz

One tour is Through Memory and Time and there are three dates.

- Sunday, April 11, 2021 at 10:30 AM
- Wednesday, May 5, 2021 at 10:30AM
- Sunday, May 9, 2021 at 10:30AM
- Price: Free event, but booking required
- Duration: 1 hr 30 min

Experience *The Web of Time*, a two-storey art installation designed for Te Papa by international artist Chiharu Shiota, and Walk (Series C), by New Zealander Colin McCahon. With audio description, handling objects and discussion.

We will spend around an hour in the Toi | Art gallery. There will be seating. Afterwards, we'll continue our discussion over a cup of tea.

Sighted companions and guide dogs are welcome.

Bookings are essential, as places are limited. After you book we will email you with more information – please tell us if you will be bringing a companion or if there's anything else you'd like us to know.

Email us at **accessibility@tepapa.govt.nz** to make a booking or find out more.

Link to website for more info:
tepapa.govt.nz/visit/whats-on/events/through-memory-and-time-sensory-tour-for-blind-and-low-vision-visitors-0

There is one more Modern Living sensory tour left!



Te Papa Sensory Tours Continued...



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Visitors might be familiar with objects like this Brown Betty Teapot, Unknown maker, about 1950s, glazed earthenware. Photo by Maarten Holl. Te Papa

Sunday, 18 April, 2021 at 10:30am

As above, free but bookings needed. See the link for more details: **[tepapa.govt.nz/visit/whats-on/events/modern-living-sensory-tour-for-blind-and-low-vision-visitors-0](https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/visit/whats-on/events/modern-living-sensory-tour-for-blind-and-low-vision-visitors-0)**

Join a tour of *Modern Living: Design in 1950s New Zealand* for blind and low-vision visitors. Explore this important era through audio description, handling objects, and discussion. Discover Te Papa's recent exhibition, *Modern Living: Design in 1950s New Zealand*. A vision for a more equal, happier way of life that grew from the devastation of World War II. Good, affordable design was seen as key to society's transformation. *Modern Living* explores this important period for New Zealand artists and designers through local and international furniture, ceramics and art, and architectural ideas.

Audio Described Ballet

PVI continues to support the arts through sponsorship for blind and low vision children to attend audio-described ballet performances and touch tours. Below, an update from Pascale Parenteau from the Royal New Zealand Ballet on 2020:

I'm delighted to report that after being unable to perform most of last year, we attracted a record number of blind patrons to our *Sleeping Beauty* audio described Touch Tours and Performances. As a result, a grand total of 190 visually impaired people booked for our accessibility events. Isn't it fantastic!

Thanks to the Parents of Vision Impaired (NZ) Inc sponsorship, 49 visually impaired students enjoyed the opportunity to take part in a Touch Tour and an Audio Described Performance. For many it was their first ever touch tour and audio described experience. It was such an amazing thing to witness—it brought tears to my eyes! If you can, take the time to look at some of the images captured at Wellington Opera House.

photoboy.photoshelter.com/gallery/Ballet-Education-5502-Sleeping-Beauty-Audio-Described-Touch-Tour-School-Matinee-Performance/G0000jmDf5fKZq9o

If prompted, enter this password: **pascale**

On a personal note, I want to thank you at PVI for your continuing support of these special RNZB events. We can be extremely proud of what we have achieved; despite the challenging of 2020, we (RNZB in collaboration with Parents of Vision Impaired (NZ) Inc) have brought so much joy to many children and family members in these difficult times.

2021 Plans

Following the triumph of 2020, we are planning another four cities Audio Described Tour for this year's *Firebird* ballet (a total of 7 audio described Touch Tours & Performances across Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin and Wellington including three school matinee performances between 29 July - 2 September 2021).

Best wishes for a fantastic year ahead
Ngā mihi
Pascale Parenteau

Pascale Parenteau

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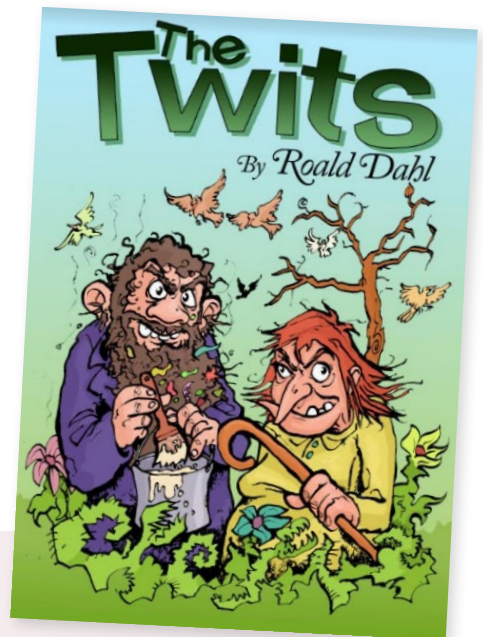


Tim Bray Theatre Company

Established in 1991, the Tim Bray Theatre Company is Aotearoa’s longest running professional children’s theatre company, dedicated to inspiring audiences through the power of imagination by making theatre for children aged 3 to 10 years and their families. On the edge of their seats, these children are immersed: transported, joyful, fearful, anticipating, calling out, and cheering. Precisely as intended, they are playing their part in the performance - their imaginations engaged.

Tim Bray Theatre Company has over 15 years of commitment to accessible theatre. They offer accessible performances for all their productions, including Audio Described performances with touch tours, New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) Interpreted and Sensory Relaxed performances.

The Tim Bray Theatre Company has a new show for 2021! *The Lion in the Meadow* (April - May) and *The Twits* (Sept-Nov). Both shows include an Audio Described & Touch Tour.



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THE LION IN THE MEADOW AUDIO DESCRIBED AND TOUCH TOUR DATES

The PumpHouse Theatre
Tuesday 13 April
 12pm Touch Tour, 1pm Show
Saturday 1 May
 12pm Touch Tour, 1pm Show

Māngere Arts Centre - Ngā Tohu o Uenuku
Wednesday 12 May
 9:30am Touch Tour, 10am Show
Wednesday 15 May
 12pm Touch Tour, 1pm Show

THE TWITS DATES AND VENUES FOR AUDIO DESCRIBED SHOWS

The PumpHouse Theatre
Tuesday 28 September
 Saturday 16 October at 1:00pm

Māngere Arts Centre
Wednesday 10 November
 10:30am
Saturday 13 November
 1:00pm

The pre-show Touch Tour begins one hour before the performance.

For show dates and booking information visit their website: **timbray.org.nz/accessible-performances** or call Tim Bray Theatre Company on **09 486 2261**

For Audio Described performances, after booking tickets contact Gail at Tim Bray Theatre Company to book your headset and Touch Tour **09 486 2261** or **gail@timbray.org.nz**



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A touch tour before New Zealand Opera's audio described performance of *The Bartered Bride*
Photo: Samantha Milner. Source: *Arts for All* magazine, September 2020 edition

Arts Access Aotearoa

Every child should be able to enjoy the arts and be creative: painting, dancing, watching a play, taking a music workshop and reading books. Arts For All aims to encourage festivals, artists, performing arts companies, literary organisations, museums, galleries, venues and producers to improve their access to disabled audiences. Their Access and Participation Advisor (Stace Robertson email: stace.robertson@artsaccess.org.nz) meets with arts organisations, artists, venues and representatives from the disability sector all over Aotearoa to discuss ideas, projects and resources that result in more adults and children being included in the arts.

See artsaccess.org.nz for more

Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga **Tautoko COVID-19 Research Programme**

“Seeing” kāpō Māori: Documenting the oft invisibilised experiences of kāpō Māori during and post-COVID-19”



Western views on disability & underfunding of Indigenous health marginalises kāpō Māori. New research aims to change this & centre kāpō Māori lifeworlds

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New and Innovative Research Collab!

Funded by Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga, an innovative new research project sees collaboration between Associate Professor Bridgette Masters-Awatere (Director of the Māori and Psychology Research Unit at the University of Waikato), Chrissie Cowan (EO of Kāpō Māori Aotearoa New Zealand Inc.), and Dr Rebekah Graham (EO of Parents of Vision Impaired NZ Inc). This project will engage with kāpō Māori and their *whānau* in the central North Island region.

This research aims to centre *kāpō* Māori lifeworlds through documenting the experiences of *kāpō* Māori and their *whānau* during and post Covid-19. As part of this, the research team will highlight the aspirations that *kāpō* Māori and their *whānau* have and the barriers they face in achieving them. Throughout the cultural and health needs of *kāpō* Māori and their *whānau* remain central.

Traditional forms of Māori story-telling describe strong and knowledgeable *kāpō* Māori. Ongoing processes of colonisation has seen experiences of marginalisation, invisibility, and ‘othering’ become the norm for Māori, and even more so for disabled Māori. The framing of disability within the Pākehā health sector alongside chronic underfunding of Māori health services has compounded the exclusion and isolation experienced by *kāpō* Māori.

You can read more about the research project here:
maramatanga.co.nz/project/seeing-k-p-m-ori-documenting-oft-invisibilized-experiences-k-p-m-ori-during-and-post-covid

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Notes:

