



Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi
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Ngāti Kahungunu to Establish its own Iwi Health Authority

In September 2025, iwi Chairman Bayden Barber announced the formal establishment of the Te Toka Tū Moana o Ngāti Kahungunu (Kahungunu Health Authority), a bold and visionary step toward reshaping health outcomes for whānau across the rohe.

Born out of decades of advocacy, partnership, and lived experience, the Kahungunu Health Authority will serve as a Māori-led kaupapa focused on our whānau accessing holistic, whānau-centred health services. It will operate with the values of manaakitanga, kotahitanga, and tino rangatiratanga at its core—ensuring that the voices, needs, and aspirations of our people are not only heard but embedded in every decision.

“This is more than just a new kaupapa—it’s a reclamation of our right to design and deliver health solutions that reflect our tikanga, our whakapapa, and our vision for thriving whānau,” said Bayden Barber, Chair of Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Inc. “The Kahungunu Health Authority will be a vehicle for transformation, equity, and healing.”

The Authority will begin by integrating existing health programmes and expanding its reach through strategic partnerships with local providers, national agencies, and Māori health experts. It will also invest in workforce development, data sovereignty, and innovative models of care that honour mātauranga Māori. Key priorities for the first year include, strengthening access to primary and mental health services across the rohe, supporting rangatahi wellbeing through targeted initiatives, building a whānau-first workforce pipeline rooted in Kahungunu values and establishing robust systems for measuring impact and accountability.

The launch of the Te Toka Tū Moana o Ngāti Kahungunu follows extensive engagement with whānau, hapū, marae, and health sector partners. It reflects a collective commitment to reversing inequities and building a future where every Kahungunu whānau can flourish.

Ngāti Kahungunu acknowledges the many champions who have paved the way for this moment and looks forward to working alongside communities to shape a health system that truly serves.

“The health sector in Aotearoa is in crisis”, says Barber. “We have relied on the mainstream system for decades, yet our Kahungunu statistics in every health category continue to languish behind non-Māori. This is about giving our people priority and hope that they can live longer, healthier lives.”

The Ngāti Kahungunu Board recently completed a two-month road show engaging with whānau from its regional Taiwhenua and urban taurahere groups on the Kahungunu 2050 strategy. Says Barber, “Our people are concerned about the health and well-being of their whānau. Our kaumātua are dealing with social isolation and loneliness, our rangatahi are struggling with mental health issues, and whānau generally are finding it very difficult to access affordable health

care when they need it. We want a brighter health future for Ngāti Kahungunu, and we see the establishment of this kaupapa as a key first step.”

Barber has been very vocal about calling out this government and its actions against Māori. “The Minister’s intention to amend the Paeora Act and, in doing so, dilute and weaken Māori influence on shaping and designing how health services are delivered in our rohe is the final straw.”

He continues, “Te Toka Tū Moana o Ngāti Kahungunu is, as the name says, an anchor stone that will endure. Both Te Tiriti o Waitangi and The Ngāti Kahungunu Declaration of Rights clearly articulate our right to self-determination. We will build our Whare Rangatira one pou at a time.”

Health New Zealand has an annual budget of \$32.7 billion, yet Māori continue to see very little in terms of a health return on this investment.

CEO of Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi and former Chair of Health Hawke’s Bay, Chrissie Hape says, “Many of our whānau are suffering in silence. We have an estimated 9,000 whānau Māori not enrolled in a General Practice in Hawke’s Bay alone with most GP Practices registers not taking on new patients. It is unacceptable that whānau are not able to access affordable basic primary care services in 2025. The high number of whānau showing up at emergency departments across our rohe is testament to that. We must do better.”

Te Toka Tū Moana o Ngāti Kahungunu will be launched at the inaugural Ngāti Kahungunu Health Wānanga held on **20 November at Toitoti**, Hastings. Barber adds, “This will be an opportunity for the kaupapa to be shared with whānau, providers, funders, IMPB and stakeholders. We will be bringing some of our best health minds and practitioners together to share and celebrate who we are as Ngāti Kahungunu and as Māori, that being, he kākano i ruia mai i Rangiatea, a seed sown in greatness!”

Ngāti Kahungunu is the third largest tribe in Aotearoa, with 97,751 people and spans from Paritū, north of Te Māhia, through to Te Wairoa, Te Matau-a-Māui, Hawke’s Bay, Tamatea, Central Hawke’s Bay, Tāmaki-nui-a-Rua, Dannivirke and ending at Tūrakirae in Southern Wairarapa. It has the second-largest tribal land area and coastal boundaries in the country. Within its rohe, there are 7 District/ City Councils and 3 Regional Councils. Over the past 15 years, Ngāti Kahungunu has sent several iwi delegations to the South Central Foundation, which operates the Nuka indigenous health system out of Anchorage, Alaska and has relationships with numerous First Nations peoples around the world.

Appendix 1. Te Toka Tū Moana o Ngāti Kahungunu establishment paper.

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Ngāti Kahungunu Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated is a Mandated Iwi Organisation/Authority. Ngāti Kahungunu is the third largest iwi. Geographically the tribe has the second longest coastline in the country from Paritū in the North to Turakirae in the South. Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated maintains an independent position to provide research, advice and advocate for the interests, rights, values, beliefs and practices of Ngāti Kahungunu alongside our whānau and hapū. Our mission is to enhance the mana and well-being of Ngāti Kahungunu.

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