

A Longitudinal Study Exploring Resilience and Wellbeing of Staff from Five Institutions Across Te Pūkenga Network During the 2020 Covid-19 Lockdown and Subsequent Lifting of Social Restrictions

By Pippa McKelvie-Sebileau, Sally Baddock, Ella Iosua, Lee Smith, Lian Wu, Patrea Andersen, Suzanne Miller, Griffin Leonard, Carmel Haggerty, Kelli Te Maihāroa, Sharon Brownie, David Tipene-Leach

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#### Abstract

The strict nationwide Covid-19 lockdown that began in March 2020 in Aotearoa New Zealand required staff from tertiary education institutions to immediately adapt and move their teaching and professional activities online, as well as maintain social contact remotely. The aim of our study was to explore the impact of the lockdown and restrictions on working life and personal wellbeing for staff at five Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITPs) across Te Pūkenga national network. Participants were invited to complete an online survey at five time points, corresponding to different alert levels and decreasing social restrictions. They responded to questions about changes to work and personal life, activities to maintain wellbeing, adequacy and trustworthiness of information sources, and provided qualitative comment. Overall, 2250 responses were collected from 1240 individuals over the five time points. They show that participants made higher levels of adjustments in their working lives than in their personal lives or their efforts to maintain social contact. Levels of adjustment decreased over time, despite an increase in alert level (increased social restrictions) in September 2020. Attention to wellbeing also dropped off over time, with an increasing proportion of staff becoming at risk of poor wellbeing (below the cut-off of the WHO-5 depression index). Qualitative comments show innovative and creative ways of maintaining wellbeing despite the requirements for considerable adjustments to participants' daily working and personal lives.

Keywords: Covid-19 lockdown, resilience, tertiary education staff, wellbeing

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