

Related records improvement initiatives

Read about the 5 records improvement areas identified by the Crown Response Unit and how they're grounded in the voices of survivors, their whānau and support people.

The Crown Response Unit

The [Crown Response Unit](#) was set up in February 2019 to coordinate and drive the Government's response to the Abuse in Care Royal Commission of Inquiry.

[Find out more about the Abuse in Care Royal Commission of Inquiry](#)

The Crown Response Unit is leading the Crown's work to improve the experience of seeking redress for survivors of abuse in care. The Unit has identified 5 records improvement areas, which have been approved by Cabinet to start before the Royal Commission's final report is released.

Records improvement areas

Central website

A new central source of information providing:

- survivors
- people who have been in care
- whānau, and
- support people

with information and guidance on how and where to access records, and what to expect from the process.

Records support service

Designing a records support service to assist survivors with:

- safely and easily requesting and receiving their records, and
- finding other services that can help them.

Cataloguing and indexing

Increasing cataloguing and indexing of care records already held at Te Rua Mahara o te Kāwanatanga Archives New Zealand so records holders can find personal information more easily when someone asks for it.

Shared guidance principles

Developing shared principles to guide records holders on trauma-informed and human-centred access and management of care records. These will help them meet people's needs better within current legislative frameworks.

Starting with redaction guidance, followed by work on wider guidance about:

- records access
- records creation, and
- records disposal.

Retention and disposal of records

Improving the rules around:

- how long care records should be kept, and
- what should happen to them after that.

And also improving how people have a say in these decisions.

How the records improvement ideas were identified

Ideas for records improvements were drawn directly from:

- the voices of survivors
- survivors' whānau and support people
- other experts and advocates
- report recommendations.

This means the ideas were seeded by people's experiences as Māori survivors, Pacific Survivors, Deaf and disabled survivors — and those supporting them.

Consultation with Māori to test the impact of the initiative on Māori survivors, iwi and hapū

Ideas for records improvements were grounded in analysis of:

- the voices of Māori survivors
- Māori survivors' whānau and support people
- report recommendations — including voices from the Royal Commission's Māori hearing and Māori witnesses at other hearings.

They were tested further with Māori survivors, advisors and organisations, including representatives from:

- the Iwi Chairs Forum
- VOYCE Whakarongo Mai
- Te Pae Whakawairua
- Te Puni Kōkiri.

After Cabinet approved the records improvements proposals, the high-level design involved:

- Treaty partners
- Māori survivors
- whānau
- Māori experts and care services providers.

They explained what information and concepts they value in the context of retention and disposal — such as the intergenerational value of information and collective rights in decision-making.

[Read the December 2022 Cabinet Paper](#)