**Researcher Biography**

*Name: Dr Ema Tokolahi*

*Role: Lecturer/Post Doctoral Research Fellow*

*Institutional affiliation: Otago Polytechnic/Wintec*

As an occupational therapist and a health educator I am passionate about the next generation of health professionals learning to practice collaboratively, interprofessionally and across sectors, in order to achieve the best outcomes for the wellbeing of Aotearoa.

*Name: Dr Dale Sheehan*

*Role: Senior lecturer*

*Institutional affiliation: University of Canterbury*

I originally trained as an MRT but have been involved in clinical education keen to supervise and teach from the time I qualified seeing the value of good clinical supervision for students and patient safety. I moved into teaching and research in clinical education and eventually was captured by the potential of interprofessional education to improve patient care. Long time ANZAHPE supporter too!

**Project Summary**

*Title:* **Development of an online, Open Education Resource for building workforce capacity to apply a public health approach to children’s mental health**

*Names of the research team:* Ema Tokolahi1,2, Dale Sheehan3, Deirdre Richardson4, Susan Bazyk5, Dean Sutherland3, Sharon Bryant1, Jess Fenwick6.

*Institutional affiliations:*

1Otago Polytechnic; 2Wintec; 3University of Canterbury; 4South Island Alliance; 5Every Moment Counts; 6Minstry of Education;

*Contact details of the corresponding author:* Ema Tokolahi, [ema.tokolahi@op.ac.nz](mailto:ema.tokolahi@op.ac.nz) 02102315654

*Take home messages:*

* Children’s mental health is everyone’s responsibility.
* Communities of practice involving practitioners from education, health and social services can facilitate translation of knowledge into practice.
* An Open Education Resource for building workforce capacity to apply a public health approach to children’s mental health is being developed for the New Zealand context.

**Extended Abstract**

**Background:** Australia and New Zealand governments have identified a need to build the capacity of all professionals working with children to promote mental health and prevent, manage, and treat children’s mental health challenges at the universal, targeted and individual levels. Currently, there is no structure in place to facilitate the translation of knowledge, about applying a public health approach to children’s mental health, to practice in the New Zealand context.

**Aim:** A multi-institution collaborative is working to develop an evidence-based, inter-professional, online Open Education Resource (OER) for building workforce capacity to meet this need. The OER will be based on Inter-professional Education (IPE) workshops facilitated in early 2020, contextualised to New Zealand, and freely available on a publicly available online platform.

This project is unique, as it extends the inter-professional context beyond not only health professionals but to include education professionals too. The project brings together educators and health professionals, who work in schools, hospitals, clinic and community settings, promoting an inter-disciplinary, collaborative approach. It is aimed at a range of professionals with a vested interest in the mental health and wellbeing of children, such as psychologists, nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, special and general education teachers, counsellors, teaching support staff, community youth providers, and speech and language therapists.

**Study design:** This project commenced with a series of one day workshops across New Zealand (five sites) facilitated by Otago Polytechnic, University of Canterbury, Werry Workforce Whāraurau, the South Island Alliance and Auckland University of Technology. This gave us our first chance to identify what knowledge translated into practice could improve the application of a public health approach to children’s mental health by health and education professionals starting with the American resources. We then followed up with participants three months later to see what was being used and what barriers they experienced. The next stage involved establishing communities of practice to help us develop locally relevant, culturally appropriate online, Open Education Resource (OER) to build workforce capacity in applying a public health approach to children’s mental health. Co-researchers will be recruited from health, education and community sectors, to be actively involved in the research process and development of the online OER.

**Update on progress:** Regular focus groups are currently being run, in the form of recorded virtual Communities of Practice (CoP) forums, over a 6 month period. Findings are being discussed and critiqued as they emerge to inform the development of the OER in an action research spiral process. The intended outcome will be an evidence-based, inter-professional, OER, freely available for use on an Australasian repository (such as the one being developed by the Australasian Inter-professional Practice and Education Network: AIPPEN).