

Systems Innovator

Position Summary:

The Systems Innovator holds a helicopter view of the prevention system in the East Cape region and is able to navigate local systems and structures with confidence and ease, identifying and acting on opportunities for scale and impact.

The Systems Innovator does not deliver services, but creates opportunities and initiatives through scalable, system-level experiments, design challenges and prototypes utilising a systems approach to the reduction of risk factors for major health loss and improving equity.

Reporting to the Practice Lead, the Systems Innovator partners with, and connects others to Healthy Families East Cape. The Systems Innovator builds the capacity and capability of the Healthy Families East Cape workforce, sharing learnings and innovative practice across the network to strengthen and support the healthy prevention systems within the East Cape region.

A Systems Innovator:

- A bright, conceptual, innovative thinker with a passion for co-design, user-centred design and design thinking, and is able to develop locally-relevant, design-led solutions to key issues in the East Cape region.
- Can identify system leaders, opportunities and levers, and has an inquisitive mind that questions and challenges the status quo while holding relationships
- Is passionate about working collectively to enable change that positively impacts the East Cape community and beyond.
- Is open to new ideas, innovative, and is a creative problem solver
- Provokes new thinking and fosters collaboration
- Supports evidence informed practice

Overview

Title	Systems Innovator
Organisation	Te Ao Hou Trust
Group / Unit	Healthy Families NZ
Work location	Gisborne
Position reports to	Practice Lead, Healthy Families East Cape
Direct reports	Nil
Employment type	Full-time fixed term to 30 June 2026

About Healthy Families NZ

Our approach

Healthy Families NZ is a large-scale prevention initiative that brings community leadership together in a united effort for better health. It aims to improve people's health where they live, learn, work and play by taking a systems approach to the reduction of risk factors for major health loss and increasing equity.

The goal is for all New Zealanders to enjoy health promoting social and physical environments that enable healthy food and physical activity choices, being smoke free, drinking alcohol only in moderation and increasing mental health resilience and wellbeing.

Healthy Families NZ is a move away from disconnected, small-scale and time-limited projects and interventions, towards a whole-of-community approach that makes sustainable and long-term changes to the systems that influence the health and wellbeing of families and communities.

While the initial design for Healthy Families NZ drew on overseas models, Healthy Families NZ has been adapted, and continues to adapt, to reflect the unique context of New Zealand communities, and the special relationship between Māori and the Crown, including obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The Healthy Families NZ Principles include an explicit focus on equity, improving Māori health and improving health equity for groups at increased risk of chronic diseases.

Healthy Families NZ takes an innovative, system-building approach to prevention, including:

- Targeted community-level investment into the Building Blocks of a Prevention System;
- Bringing community leadership together in a united effort for better health;
- A dedicated prevention workforce who are embedded within their local community, driving and supporting systems change across the region;
- National level support and strategies to encourage a whole of system approach;
- Dedicated strategic communications functions across all locations, harnessing the power of storytelling to amplify the collective impact of the initiative, and accelerate activation at scale;
- Multi-year evaluation that identifies key themes, scalable initiatives, and builds a national picture of the progress and impact of Healthy Families NZ over time.

About the Systems Innovator role

Purpose

The Systems Innovator is part of a dedicated prevention workforce who are embedded within their local community, driving and supporting systems change across the East Cape region. The Systems Innovator contributes to building healthier environments where people live, learn, work, and play by:

- Driving co-design and collaboration activities to enable change at a local level
- Holding a helicopter view of what is happening across systems, settings, and the East Cape community and identifies leverage points for large-scale systems change
- Unlocking new partnerships and opportunities at a local level
- Using expected and unexpected partners to identify, create and secure opportunities for change

The Systems Innovator seeks opportunities to leverage change at a local level. The Systems Innovator demonstrates empathy and has a strong understanding of what mobilises others into action. The Systems Innovator works with partners across the East Cape community to identify and secure opportunities for change, accelerates new ideas and brokers relationships with expected and unexpected partners.

This position is based in the Healthy Families East Cape office in Gisborne and reports directly to the Practice Lead and Manager, Healthy Families East Cape or the designated Lead.

As a member of the Healthy Families East Cape team, you will:

- **Bicultural practice** - take a bi-cultural approach that acknowledges the special relationship with Maori under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and actively support Maori-led systems change.
- **Cultural competency** - work cross-culturally and to take a culturally centred and strengths-based approach. Act in an inclusive manner with integrity to ensure all cultural groups and community diversity are empowered in the work through a genuine commitment for equity and equality.
- **Systems thinking and acting** - understand systems change and collective impact and utilise systems thinking tools and principles and apply them to create large-scale change.
- **Relationship building and management** - enhance collaboration across the Healthy Families East Cape team and the community through strong effective relationships and partnerships at all levels; forge useful partnerships with people across business areas, functions and organisations; build trust through consistent actions, values and communication; minimises surprises.
- **Workforce development** - actively contribute to the Healthy Families network, workforce development and communities of practice to grow and share the way of working

Key Selection criteria

The ideal applicant will demonstrate the following key selection criteria:

Knowledge and skills

Healthy Families NZ Core Competencies		The role requires the following demonstrated experience / skills
Building	Relationship building and management	Effectively brings people together to achieve collective impact Understands that opportunities come from building relationships and keeping them alive
	Influencing	Can find a common language to relate to the audience to influence and create change Comfortable in describing the desired effects of change
	Politically Savvy	Able to navigate the political context, structures and processes to leverage support, maximise impact, identify and reduce risk
	Storytelling and communication	Is approachable, open and willing to listen Excellent written and verbal communication skills
Leading	Collaborative Leadership	Engages both the usual and the unusual suspects and able to engage those who don't see themselves in Healthy Families NZ
	Adaptive Leadership	Mobilises others to create systems change by diagnosing the situation, energising self and intervening skilfully Comfortable in adaptive and changing environments (e.g. can pivot with ease)
	Systems thinking and	Understands systems thinking and its application to health

Designing / Doing	acting	<p>promotion; recognises components of a system and their interconnectedness; supports effective system communication and feedback.</p> <p>Understands concepts of health from a mātauranga māori perspective.</p>
	Co-design and design thinking	<p>Understanding of design thinking, co-design or related fields and can apply to this work</p> <p>Uses social innovation tools to co-design, test and iterate solutions for systems-level impact</p>
	Systems Intrapreneurship	<p>Adaptable; open to new ideas; accepts changed priorities without undue discomfort; recognises the merits of different options and acts accordingly</p> <p>Has a wide network and strong community relationships across systems and settings. Help people understand the part they play in the Healthy Families NZ initiative and can unlock change through others</p>
	Data / Evaluation	<p>Supports evidence-informed practice</p> <p>Supports the team and network to draw on insights and analysis to make decisions</p>
Managing / Sustaining	Reflective practice	<p>Critically reflects on self, team, and the work and can adapt the work programme, processes and actions accordingly</p> <p>Support the whole team in reflection, direction and adaptation</p>
	Risk Management	<p>Can effectively manage reputational risk which may result from working with stakeholders from different parts of the system</p> <p>Manages risk, escalates up, and reports blockages when they occur</p>
	Project Management	<p>Has proven experience in project management or coordination.</p> <p>Able to work on multiple projects effectively and facilitate engaging workshops</p> <p>Proactive and self-starting; seizes opportunities and acts upon them; takes responsibility for own actions</p>
	Sustainability	<p>Integrates sustainability into the systems change roadmap at the level of practice, resource, and relationships</p>

Personal qualities

The Healthy Families NZ workforce are innovative and creative, and must exhibit the following mindsets and qualities:

- **People-focused:** Empathetic and supportive, act with integrity in all that you do. A personal commitment to social change and collaborates in positive and meaningful ways.
- **Action-oriented:** Curious, proactive and takes initiative; seizes opportunities and acts upon them; resourceful and learns by doing; takes responsibilities for own actions.
- **Adaptive:** Flexible and agile; open to new ideas; accepts changed priorities without undue discomfort; has an experimental mindset and recognises the merits of different options and acts accordingly.
- **Open and Courageous:** Seek diverse perspectives and value difference, comfortable in ambiguity, possess a growth mindset and courageous in actions.
- **Reflective and Strategic:** Can see the bigger picture through a bird's eye view and is able to respond in a strategic manner, critically reflective and can adapt activities to suit.
- **Cultural responsiveness:** Aware of the important place of indigenous leadership, strengthening relationships with mana whenua, and working within a bicultural context. Understands Māori, Pasifika and other community health priorities and needs; is comfortable working with diverse communities and knows when to seek support.

Qualifications

- A tertiary qualification in fields related to health, public health, business, education or similar would be desirable
- Demonstrated experience in social innovation, community-led development or related fields

Specialist expertise

- Valid New Zealand driver's license.
- To be considered you must have the right to live and work in New Zealand.