



NZSTA's Commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Equity, and Excellence

NZSTA Position Statement

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At the New Zealand Speech-language Therapists' Association (NZSTA), our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion is intrinsically linked to our responsibility to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi. These values guide our work as we recognise that social justice is fundamental to ensuring the rights of individuals, particularly their ability to communicate effectively and advocate for themselves.

We advance the science of speech and language therapy through our commitment to equity and inclusion. These values help us to set professional standards, promote excellence in education and practice, and ensure high-quality, accessible care for people with communication needs. These values enhance our members' ability to deliver effective therapy and prepare for their roles while improving access to quality services and achieving meaningful outcomes for all clients, patients, and students. Furthermore, they support our members and staff, ensuring their well-being and professional growth.

NZSTA acknowledges the unique and foundational place of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in Aotearoa New Zealand. We uphold the importance of evidence-based practice and deeply respect the extensive body of scholarship and understanding that informs the application of Te Tiriti principles across our courts, parliament, and state sector.

As professionals working in health, education, justice, disability, and non-government organisations across the motu, we understand that true equality has not yet been realised. Māori, in particular, remain overrepresented in many of the most concerning statistics within these sectors. Addressing this inequity is critical to our work, as understanding and enhancing communication is at the heart of what speech-language therapists do.

We believe that dialogue is essential for building understanding and resolving issues. Whether through a kōrero, a yarn, or a conversation, open and genuine engagement begins with a willingness to listen and explore together. As an Association, we reaffirm our commitment to fostering these conversations and to acknowledging, honouring, and embracing the vital role of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in shaping a just and equitable future for all.

Toitū te Tiriti.