



**Dr Margret Dudley**, Te Rarawa, Te Aupōuri me Ngāti Kahu is a Clinical Psychologist who has had a long-standing interest in neuropsychology. She worked in community health settings and private practice for 18 years conducting neuropsychological assessments for both paediatric and adult clients.

In 2015, Margaret completed 4 years of postdoctoral research at Taupua Waiora Centre for Māori Health Research, Auckland University of Technology. Her research

focussed on the cultural bias in neuropsychology and its implications for Māori. Margaret is a Principal Investigator for Brain Research New Zealand. Her current research is in the area of dementia and Māori. She is leading a large project exploring dementia from a Māori world view as well as developing Māori-friendly tools for detecting dementia. She is also a leading researcher in a New Zealand prevalence study of dementia.

Since 2016 Margaret has been a lecturer on the Doctorate of Clinical Psychology programme at the University of Auckland.

### **Keynote “But you never asked me anything I know!”**

#### **How can we improve current neuropsychological practices when evaluating Māori?**

The number of Māori who experience traumatic brain injury and/or stroke or suffer from dementia is high relative to the total population. Neuropsychological assessments that evaluate these conditions are conducted on a regular basis throughout Aotearoa however, cultural bias in cognitive testing has been well established in the international literature and reiterated in studies conducted with Māori participants.

Culture is central to good health and wellbeing, yet current protocols and processes that accompany the administration of neuropsychological assessments are devoid of any knowledge from te Ao Māori. It is argued, that this absence of Māori content disadvantages many Māori. In a study of 16 Māori who reported on their experience of neuropsychological assessment, *Cultural Invisibility* was a theme that emerged as a major critique of their experience.

The absence of culturally appropriate assessment tools and protocols is rightly, becoming less tolerated by minority cultures. As tangata whenua, Māori have a right under the Treaty of Waitangi to access culturally fair and safe health services as detailed in the Health and Disabilities Services Act. It is incumbent on assessors/clinicians to provide a service that is scientifically robust in every aspect including cultural relevance.

This presentation will discuss the scientific validity of neuropsychological assessment when applied to Māori and provide some suggestions on how to improve its relevance and effectiveness when applied to Māori.