

Te Marae Ora Mourns Former Colleague 11 January 2021

On behalf of the Minister of Health, Hon Vainetutai Rose Brown, the staff and management of Te Marae Ora Acting Secretary Bob Williams expresses his deepest condolences to the anau of Karen Tairea. Karen had been a much admired and respected member of the Te Marae Ora team during her more than 30 years of service. In this time too, Karen completed a Bachelor of Science (Nutrition) and post-graduate qualifications from the University of Otago.

A staunch advocate for public health, Karen joined Health in 1983 and worked as a dietician up until 1987. Karen then turned her focus to nutrition and worked as the ministry's nutritionist until 2007. When Karen took early retirement in March 2019 she was the Manager for Health Promotion.

Karen made it her mission to impress upon people the importance of healthy eating and healthy lifestyles. Karen was also an integral part of the small Te Marae Ora team who worked with the Rotary Club of Rarotonga on several projects benefitting the community.

The last project she assisted with was the Rotary funded mobile health clinic. This former bus has proved invaluable this last year and in many respects serves as a legacy of Karen's final service to Te Marae Ora. Karen's unwavering support to projects in the wider community where volunteering her services to help others was second nature to her.

Karen was passionate about improving the lives of people living in the Cook Islands. She contributed to the development of national, regional, and international policies, plans, guidelines, including research to combat NCDs and promote healthy living.

Karen will be greatly missed by her many health colleagues both nationally and internationally.

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