

Lived Experience Navigators (LENs) Rōpū

Snapshot – Jan 2026



Te Ara Whakamua | Our Journey Forward

The LENs Rōpū has moved into an active implementation phase, translating foundational work into meaningful partnership and presence across the Clinical Networks. We're guided by a commitment to meeting whānau where they are, building genuine relationships rooted in respect and shared purpose.

Building on What We've Learned

Lived experience input has already been shaping our clinical networks' work over the past couple of years. Our Diabetes and Neurodevelopment Networks have benefited from the insights and advocacy of lived experience contributors who've helped refine guidelines, develop whānau resources, and inform network projects and planning. The Rōpū formalises and expands on this existing commitment,

What We're Doing Now

We're finalising core partnership and guidance documents that will shape how lived experience sits at the centre of clinical network work, including frameworks for partnership, complaints resolution, and evaluation. These documents are being tested and refined with our current members to ensure they're practical and grounded.

We've begun early engagement with the Clinical Networks, with active involvement underway in the Gastroenterology Network. Through this work, we're documenting our onboarding processes and learning what it takes to build genuine connections. We're also establishing a 'buddying' model, with LENs members working as connectors and navigators within specific networks, building relationships at the pace each network needs.

Our approach is intentionally relational rather than transactional. Rather than a single launch event, we're taking a soft, rolling approach, supported by an upcoming short video introducing who we are and what we do to build visibility within the networks.

Our Position

We've received positive feedback from Health NZ leadership on our progress and positioning. As we move forward in 2026, we're establishing a dedicated interim co-chair role to strengthen leadership capacity and ensure sustainability. We're also documenting our learnings as we go, to strengthen our understanding of what partnership truly means in practice.

Our Foundation

Underpinning everything is our commitment to partnership, storytelling that centres community experience, conversations held with respect and care, and reciprocity.

Who We Are

We are a group of health and advocacy professionals who represent the voice of whānau and community within the New Zealand Child and Youth Clinical Networks.



Vision

We navigate and connect spaces between the community and the health system to improve health outcomes for taitamariki and whānau.



Values

Kaupapa Whānau

Whānau are the reason for our mahi

Kotahitanga

Working as one for a common goal

Whanaungatanga

Valuing our connections

Synergy

Partnering to amplify change

Respect

We operate with, and advocate for respect across experiences



Find out more at: www.paediatrics.org.nz/our-work/lived-experience-navigators
Contact: lens@paediatrics.org.nz