

SPHC National forum 2026

Strengthening families, strengthening services

Application support guide for kaimahi

Forum at a glance

Date	Tuesday 21 July 2026
Location	Salmond House, Wellington
Online option	Yes — available for those who cannot travel to Wellington
Host	Whāraurau
Theme	Strengthening families, strengthening services
Cost	Free to attend
Format	Keynote speakers, workshops, peer networking

About the SPHC programme

The Supporting Parents Healthy Children (SPHC) programme supports services and organisations to take a family-led approach; enhancing, encouraging, and empowering parents and caregivers who are experiencing their own mental health, substance use, or wellbeing challenges.

By attending to the needs of tāngata whaiora alongside their tamariki and whānau, SPHC helps services achieve better outcomes for children. It is a whole-of-system approach that recognises adults do not exist in isolation from their whānau.

Why attend this forum?

The theme ‘Strengthening families, strengthening services’ reflects our awareness that to deliver for whānau, we need to support the kaimahi doing that mahi. This forum will offer:

- Keynote presentations from leaders in the field including Dr John Crawshaw
- Practical workshops to build skills and confidence coupled with panel discussions on leading change, governing for impact, leveraging data, research and lived experience
- Opportunities to connect with peers across Aotearoa doing similar mahi
- Resources and tools you can take back to your team or service
- An online attendance option if travel is not possible

This is not a generic professional development day. It is a focused, practical forum directly relevant to the SPHC kaupapa and the work you do every day.

Making your case | Suggested language by role

Choose the section most relevant to your role. Adapt the language to reflect your own context and experience. The more specific you make it, the stronger your application will be.

Mental health clinical kaimahi (nurses, social workers, psychologists, and others)

Many of the adults I work with are parents or caregivers. Research consistently shows that when mental health services engage with clients' parenting and caregiving roles, outcomes improve for the adults and their children. Children of parents with mental health challenges are themselves at higher risk of needing services. By attending this forum, I will gain practical skills to integrate this lens into my existing clinical practice. This is not additional work, it is about working more effectively with the people I already see.

Tip: Strengthen your case by adding specifics, for example, an estimate of how many clients on your current caseload are parents of dependent children.

Team leaders and coordinators

One of the challenges our team face is building confidence and buy-in among kaimahi who are uncertain about how parenting fits within their clinical role. This forum will provide me with practical tools to support my team, including how to engage with data to demonstrate the value of this work, and how to work alongside kaimahi who feel anxious or unsure in this space. The skills and resources I will bring back directly strengthen our team's capacity and consistency towards achieving key performance targets.

NGO kaimahi

Our organisation plays an important role in the SPHC network, and this forum is a direct opportunity to strengthen our practice and connection to the national programme. Working at the interface of mental health, substance use, and family wellbeing, this forum is directly relevant to the mahi I do every day. I will return with updated knowledge, resources, and connections that will benefit the whānau we work with.

SPHC champions and whānau advisors

As an SPHC champion / whānau advisor, this forum is one of the key ways I stay connected to the national programme, build my skills, and bring back learning that strengthens our local delivery. The forum is specifically designed to support people in roles like mine. It will give me tools to continue driving this kaupapa within our organisation, and to support kaimahi who are still building their confidence in this area.

Managers and service leads

Attending this forum will allow me to connect with national-level thinking on how services can most effectively implement the SPHC approach. I will gain access to data tools and frameworks that support service improvement, as well as strategies for building workforce capability. Given the current pressures on our workforce, this investment in how we work, will strengthen our effectiveness. Services that integrate attention to parenting and caregiving roles see better outcomes for adults and reduce the likelihood of children entering services in the future.

Responding to common concerns

If your manager raises concerns, the following responses may help.

“We don’t have the budget for travel.”

There is no registration cost for this forum, and an online attendance option is available. The only cost is your time and what you bring back is directly applicable to your day-to-day mahi.

“We can’t spare you for the day.”

This is a one-day forum. The skills and resources gained will directly support your effectiveness on return, including building confidence and capability in an area that has significant downstream impact on workload and future demand. Attending is an investment in the service, not a distraction from it.

“This isn’t core clinical work.”

A large proportion of adult mental health service clients are parents or caregivers. Evidence consistently shows that addressing parenting and caregiving roles as part of mental health care improves outcomes for adults and reduces risk for children. This is clinical work, and this forum will help you integrate it into what you already do.

Key messages to include in your application

Whatever approach you take, try to include:

- A brief description of what SPHC is and your connection to the programme
- Why this specific forum is relevant to your role (draw on the language above)
- The concrete benefit to your team or service
- That there is no registration cost and an online option is available

Questions?

If you need more information to support your application, please contact:
coordinator@wharaurau.org.nz