

## **Mid-Term Update**

“Unmasking COVID-19: Pacific Islanders, Health Equity, and Survival in New Zealand and the United States”

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### Institutional Review Board (IRB) Review

Since receiving the exciting news in November 2020 that our seed grant had been selected for funding, we developed and submitted an application to Brown’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) to soon be able to begin the data collection phase of the project. Upon approval of our IRB application on December 18, 2020, we learned that due to our submission under the Exempt Category, our protocol not eligible for an IRB Authorization Agreement (IAA). Instead, we were informed that we would need to submit separate IRB applications to the University of California, Los Angeles and the University of Auckland. Therefore, my co-PIs are currently finalizing their IRB applications to submit to their respective institutional IRBs by the end of April 2020.

### Community Outreach and Interviews

Given that the project will soon be submitted for review to the University of California, Los Angeles and the University of Auckland IRBs, we have delayed the start of interviews with leaders and members of local community based organizations until June 2021. This has also provided us with critical time to hire and train members of the research team.

### Hiring and Training Research Team Members

During February and March 2021, we reached out to and interviewed potential graduate and undergraduate student research assistants for the project. This process involved reaching out to colleagues at the Brown School of Public Health, Native American and Indigenous Studies Initiative, and Warren Alpert Medical School as we aim to build a dynamic team of Indigenous health focused scholars who bring critical expertise to academic/community research partnerships. We are working to have the hiring and training process for all students completed by the end of April 2021.

### Additional Grant Funding

In February 2021, we were notified that our project had also been selected for a \$40,000 seed grant from Brown’s Office of the Vice President for Research. These funds will assist in ensuring that the project can be completed in a timely manner with the support of a team of graduate and undergraduate student research assistants. Funds will also be used to provide honoraria to interviewees for their participation in the project.