

Wāhine Connect LOWDOWN

Thank you for your interest in Wāhine Connect!
We are a registered charity that aims to support
New Zealand women working in medicine and
health.

Women working in the health sector represent a
substantial collective resource of experience and
knowledge. We can use this resource to support
each other, both professionally and personally.



WHAT IS MENTORING?

Mentoring provides the opportunity for the sharing of experiences both in the professional and personal sphere. It has been described as 'a reciprocal, dynamic and collaborative relationship in which an experienced professional provides offers guidance, support, and knowledge to a junior learner' (Steel et al, 2013).

Traditional mentorship has historically emphasised teaching and working towards achieving professional goals. In the broader context mentors can also provide support and advice to an individual on other matters, and facilitate personal development.

Wāhine Connect has chosen to support two types of mentor programme. They are:

Wāhine Connect JUMP

A one-off connection with 1 – 3 mentors, in order to gain advice and insight about a specific decision or scenario.

Wāhine Connect JOURNEY

A one-to-one relationship between a mentor and a mentee, over a period of around 6 months. The pair may work on several goals over this time frame.



SO YOU'RE A MENTOR...

Firstly, thank you. You are our most precious resource :-)
Wāhine Connect wouldn't be here without you, and we value and appreciate the time and effort you are volunteering.



What is a mentor?

A mentor may act as a sponsor, an advisor, or a facilitator (where the mentor listens, questions and challenges the mentee). It's a flexible and rewarding role, which will depend on the mentee's individual objectives and may change over time.



What makes a good mentor?

Effective mentors come from all backgrounds and levels of experience: they can be any age or stage. Some will have specific professional and institutional knowledge; others will have important life and world experience that is valuable for mentees. All will use their communication skills and enthusiasm to inspire, listen, and help generate ideas and strategies.



A WĀHINE CONNECT MENTOR IS EXPECTED TO:

- + Listen actively and with interest.
- + Co-manage the framework of the mentoring sessions with the mentee, while encouraging the mentee to take responsibility for the content.
- + Take appropriate approaches such as sympathising when discussing a bad experience, or supporting a mentee to take ownership of an issue and respond judiciously.
- + Help the mentee to see the bigger and longer-term picture.
- + Help a mentee to reframe the way they view a concerning issue and to consider a different perspective.
- + Take an interest in the mentee's progress.
- + Be prepared to give positive feedback to the mentee about what is working in the relationship and factors that may need be reviewed.

There are loads of resources out there to support you. Check out:

- [Tips on the mentor-mentee relationships](#)
- [Basic ideas and principles of mentoring and the role of the mentee \(Annexe 5\)](#)
- [Mentoring overview](#)



THE ABCS OF MENTORING FOR MENTORS¹



- Assess their skill, knowledge, and attitudes when offering advice.
- Allow them to fail at times.
- Challenge them.



- Be available when you say you will.
- Introduce them to key contacts.
- Pay attention to their promotion.
- Recognise them.



- Tailor sessions to individual mentee.
- Lead – don't direct.
- Set high standards and articulate them clearly.



- Give constructive feedback in a timely manner.
- Be frank with opinions.
- Foster open communication and be an active listener.



- Collectively set goals and agenda for subsequent meetings.
- Assist with creating their career plan.



- Model professional behaviour.
- Discuss "survival skills."
- Assist them with socio-political navigation.
- Inform them of additional professional development opportunities.



- View them as a respected colleague.

- ✗ Don't seek to replicate yourself.
- ✗ Don't do the work for them.
- ✗ Don't be offended if they choose not to take your advice.
- ✗ Don't become best friends.

Mentors, please remember: Your role is one of support and advice as a fellow 'woman in the field' only. It is important not to act in your professional capacity.

¹Adapted from the University of Arizona



SO YOU'RE A MENTEE...

Congratulations! We know how hard it can be to take the step to ask for mentoring. Good on you for being bold and courageous, and for taking the leap with Wāhine Connect.



What is a mentee?

A mentee is simply someone who has opened themselves up to seek support and advice from a mentor. There are no limits by age, stage, or profession.



What makes a good mentee?

Mentors can be hard to find - make the most of this opportunity and your mentor's time! Please also understand your obligations as a Wāhine Connect mentee and the expectations of the programme. The key take-away is that the mentee role is an active one, and should be the driving force behind the relationship.



A WĀHINE CONNECT MENTEE IS EXPECTED TO:

- + Organise the scheduling of meetings.
- + Set the meeting agenda, and drive the content of the meetings.
- + Follow through on agreed tasks and take responsibility for their development.
- + Maintain a professional relationship and be respectful of the mentor's time. This means being punctual, and committed to attending planned sessions.
- + Be prepared to be challenged at times, when the mentor feels that this may be of benefit.
- + Be prepared to give feedback to the mentor about what is working in the relationship and factors that may need be reviewed.

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You have got to drive it yourself
- you get out what you put in!

(2018 mentee)

**Top tips from our
previous mentees**

“Be open minded.”

“Be honest.”

“See this as an opportunity to learn about yourself and to hear of other's experiences. I found just listening to my mentor's own experience and life journey was encouraging and gave me insight on tools and skills to navigate my own experience.”

“Set up a meeting time and stick to it!”



THE ABCS OF MENTORING FOR MENTEES¹



- Set your own goals.
- Actively seek feedback and ask questions.
- Keep accurate records of your progress and reflect on what happens.
- Own your failures and share your thoughts.



- Use recommendations and information to improve your performance.
- Observe your mentor solve problems, make decisions, manage others.
- Respectfully give reasons as to why you choose not to adopt recommendations.
- Be receptive of feedback.



- Show your appreciation of their time.
- Be sensitive about their background and differences.
- Discuss “survival skills.”
- Enquire about professional development opportunities.

- ✗ Don't take advantage or abuse your mentor's time and trust.
- ✗ Don't make assumptions, ask for clarification.
- ✗ Don't expect them to do the work for you.
- ✗ Don't become best friends or try to force a friendship.

Mentees, you are the driver here: It is up to you to contact your mentor, coordinate meetings and follow through on your commitments.

¹Adapted from the University of Arizona