

## Graduate Women of New Zealand Fellowship – Progress Report 2026

Sarahmarie Kuroko

22 February 2026

Tēnā koutou

Thank you very much for supporting me with this fellowship during the last leg of my PhD. I submitted my doctoral thesis last week, such a relief!

Between applying for this fellowship earlier in 2025 and commencing it in September, I presented some of my PhD work at Sleep In Aotearoa, the regional annual scientific meeting of the Australasian Sleep Association.

- **Kuroko S**, Miller L, Rowan M, Gray A, Meredith-Jones K, Edmonds L, Taylor R, Taylor B, Galland B. Zooming in on bedtime routine activities and subsequent sleep among preschool-aged tamariki: A wearable camera study. Oral presentation by S Kuroko at Sleep In Aotearoa, June 2025, Tauranga, Aotearoa.

I was fortunate to win the New Investigator's Award, which included some travel funds and registration to attend Sleep DownUnder, the Australasian Sleep Association conference in Australia. I had a wonderful time at Sleep DownUnder, where I met many other researchers and clinicians, learned a great deal, and was a finalist for the New Investigator Award at that conference. Published abstracts are available here:

- Kuroko S, Miller L, Rowan M, Gray A, Meredith-Jones K, Edmonds L, Taylor R, Taylor B, Galland B. O001 Preschoolers' bedtime activities and subsequent sleep: a wearable camera study. *SLEEP Adv* 2025;6(Suppl. 1):A1. Oral presentation by the candidate at Sleep DownUnder, October 2025, Adelaide, Australia.  
<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC12492198/>
- Miller L, Kuroko S, Rowan M, Meredith-Jones K, Haszard J, Taylor B, Galland B. O053 Exploring the screen-sleep connection in preschoolers using wearable cameras. *SLEEP Adv* 2025;6(Suppl. 1):A20. Oral presentation by B Galland at Sleep DownUnder, October 2025, Adelaide, Australia.  
<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC12492272/>

I look forward to sharing the publications from my PhD in due course.

I have also been part of a research team putting in funding applications to undertake more research on preventing SUDI (Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy). We heard back in late 2025 that we were successful with three grant applications:

- Cure Kids Project Grant (2025) of \$129,919.20 for **Understanding Wahakura and Pēpi-Pod Usage to Prevent SUDI Deaths** (18 months). Co-Principal

Investigators: Dr Charmaine Barber, Prof Barry Taylor; Named Investigators: Ms Sarahmarie Kuroko, Dr Emma Haydon.

- Cure Kids Project Grant (2025) \$129,960.53 for **Vaping During Pregnancy and SUDI Risk: New Zealand Case-Cohort Study** (2 years). Co-Principal Investigators: Glenda Oben, Dr Lisa Daniels & Prof Barry Taylor; Named Investigators: Prof Robin Turner, Dr Emma Haydon, Emeritus Professor Ed Mitchell, Dr Charmaine Barber, Ms Sarahmarie Kuroko.
- Lotteries Health Research Grant (2025) \$119,946.00 for **Vaping During Pregnancy and SUDI Risk: New Zealand Case-Cohort Study** (2 years). Co-Principal Investigators: Glenda Oben, Dr Lisa Daniels & Prof Barry Taylor; Named Investigators: Prof Robin Turner, Dr Emma Haydon, Emeritus Professor Ed Mitchell, Dr Charmaine Barber, Ms Sarahmarie Kuroko.

Over the summer, I have done a little bit of work with the ASPIRE Aotearoa (Smokefree Aotearoa) research team on an HRC-funded project called [Te Hao Hou: Rangatahi Māori experiences and perceptions of smoking and vaping](#). The team have been wonderful to work with, and it was very refreshing to do something more interactive and balance out the thesis writing.

I have also been fortunate to be offered a postdoctoral fellowship with Massey University (Palmerston North), which I will mostly be doing from Dunedin, with the interdisciplinary Health & Aging Research Team. They have been running the longitudinal Health, Work and Retirement study of older adults since 2006, which includes a large Māori cohort. I will be working with the Māori data and Māori steering group, looking for opportunities to improve kaumātua health and wellbeing, as part of the MBIE-funded project [Modifiable pathways to sustainable ageing in Aotearoa](#). I am looking forward to working closely with Māori quantitative researcher Dr Brendan Stevenson and New Zealand Order of Merit recipient Professor Fiona Alpass, learning more about Māori research, and expanding my quantitative skillset into longitudinal and life-course analysis. We have very few Māori quantitative researchers, so working with this team is an amazing opportunity, and I hope that gaining experience here will enable me to support others into this area also.

Thank you again for your support. It is such a privilege to be a recipient of a GWNZ award. Financially, this has been enormously helpful for keeping me financially afloat, and has meant I could focus on finishing off the PhD and applying for future work and research funding opportunities.

Nāku iti noa,

Nā Sarahmarie Kuroko