

# An Exploration of Social Work Intervention in cases of Child Sexual Abuse in a Multidisciplinary Context in New Zealand

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## Preliminary Conclusion and Implications

### Systematic-level Challenges

- Different levels of authority granted by policy and law
- Organizations have separate disconnected management structures
- Varying conceptual frameworks, goals, and practices across agencies
- Variances in information-sharing mechanisms and permissions
- Lack of organizational support documents for collaboration
- Different levels of trust between agencies, leading to potential communication issues
- Inconsistent working schedules across agencies

### Practitioner-level Challenges

- Lack of understanding between practitioners (OT and health).
- Vary professional terminology
- Priority conflicts (child-centered vs. family-centered approaches)
- Lack of training related to collaboration

### Implication for Practices

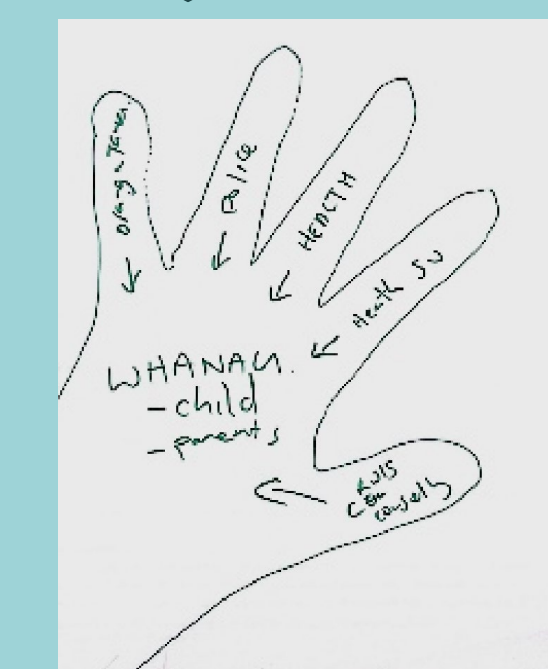
- OT social work co-locate with other professionals is essential
- Trainings about multidisciplinary collaboration are needed
- Improve the contact procedures about client follow-up
- Improve information sharing system between OT and health

### Social Worker Role

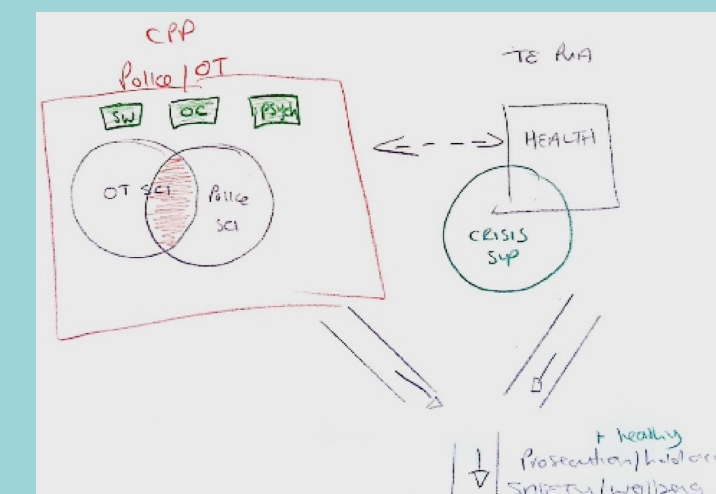
- Lack of clear consensus on practice shifts among professionals, leading to varying expectations of Statutory (OT) social workers' responsibilities;
- Health social workers facing challenges due to weak professional capital, often assuming passive roles

### Creative art samples

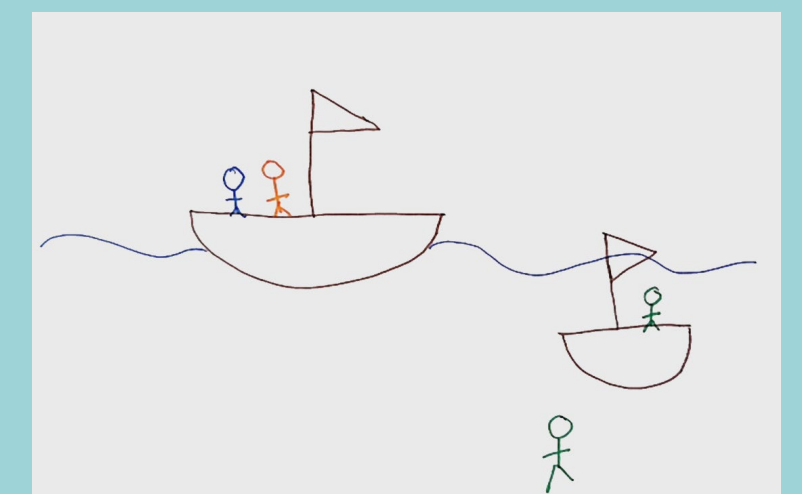
(SW 1) I think we all play a part...health might take the lead at that point. OT might not take an active role. But still there.



(SW 2) we're doing two separate paths to actually get to the same outcome. But not quite know how it accountable.



(SW 3) you're trying to road to the same destination. But yeah, it's trying to get everyone on the same boat really. I definitely think the police are on the same boat • other times you can have other agencies kind of fall off the boat.



## Introduction

The concept of a multidisciplinary approach has been widely accepted and adopted by child protection systems worldwide, with social workers playing a pivotal role in the services that support child victims and their families. New Zealand has implemented a series of policies to promote multidisciplinary collaboration in child protection. In this field of practice, the establishment of the multi-agency organization Puawaitahi (in 2002) aimed to enhance professional collaboration and expedite investigation and treatment processes in child protection services. However, there is a lack of research focusing on professional collaboration within the New Zealand child protection system, particularly from a social work practice perspective (Stevenson, 2017; Mossman et al., 2017; Wehipeihana, 2019; Mossman, 2019).

## Study Purpose

- To explore the practical and conceptual challenges of multidisciplinary collaboration in child protection practice from professional's perspectives.
- To explore how social workers' role in child sexual abuse interventions is shaped by the collaboration practice context (guidelines and environment).

## Methods

### Thematic analysis

The center of qualitative research is crystal-like, reflecting reality around various central themes (Richardson, 1996).

Field research was conducted in the following two organizations in New Zealand

Puawaitahi (Child Protection Multidisciplinary Centre)	Oranga Tamariki (Ministry of Children)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Non-participant observation of 31 multidisciplinary team (MDT) meetings (May 2023 to December 2023)</li> <li>➢ In-depth Interview (15 multidisciplinary professionals)</li> <li>➢ Creative art question</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ In-depth Interview (9 social workers from three sites)</li> <li>➢ Creative art question</li> <li>➢ One focus group discussion</li> </ul>

### Participants

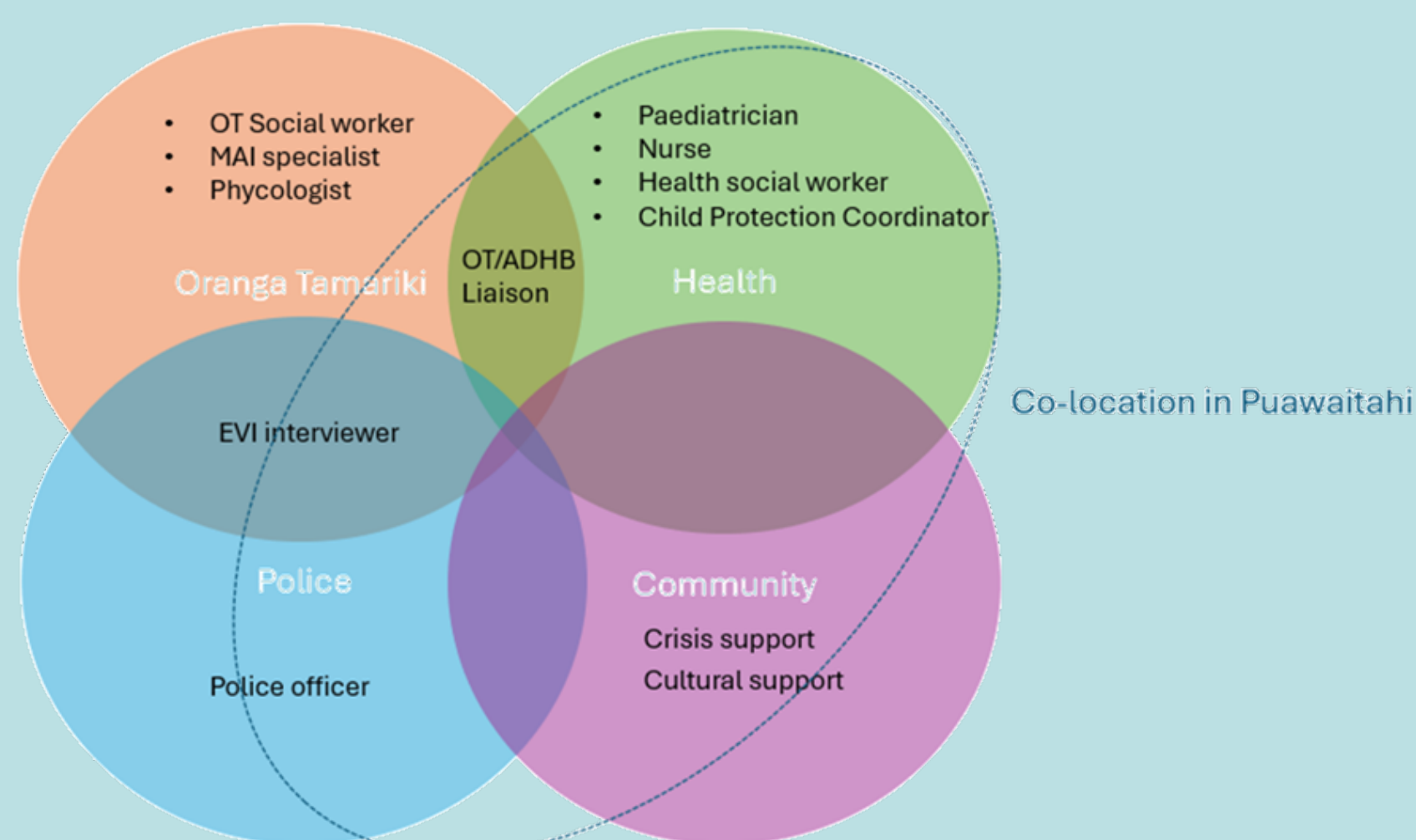


Figure 3: The image above shows professional participants interviewed in this study

## Preliminary Finding

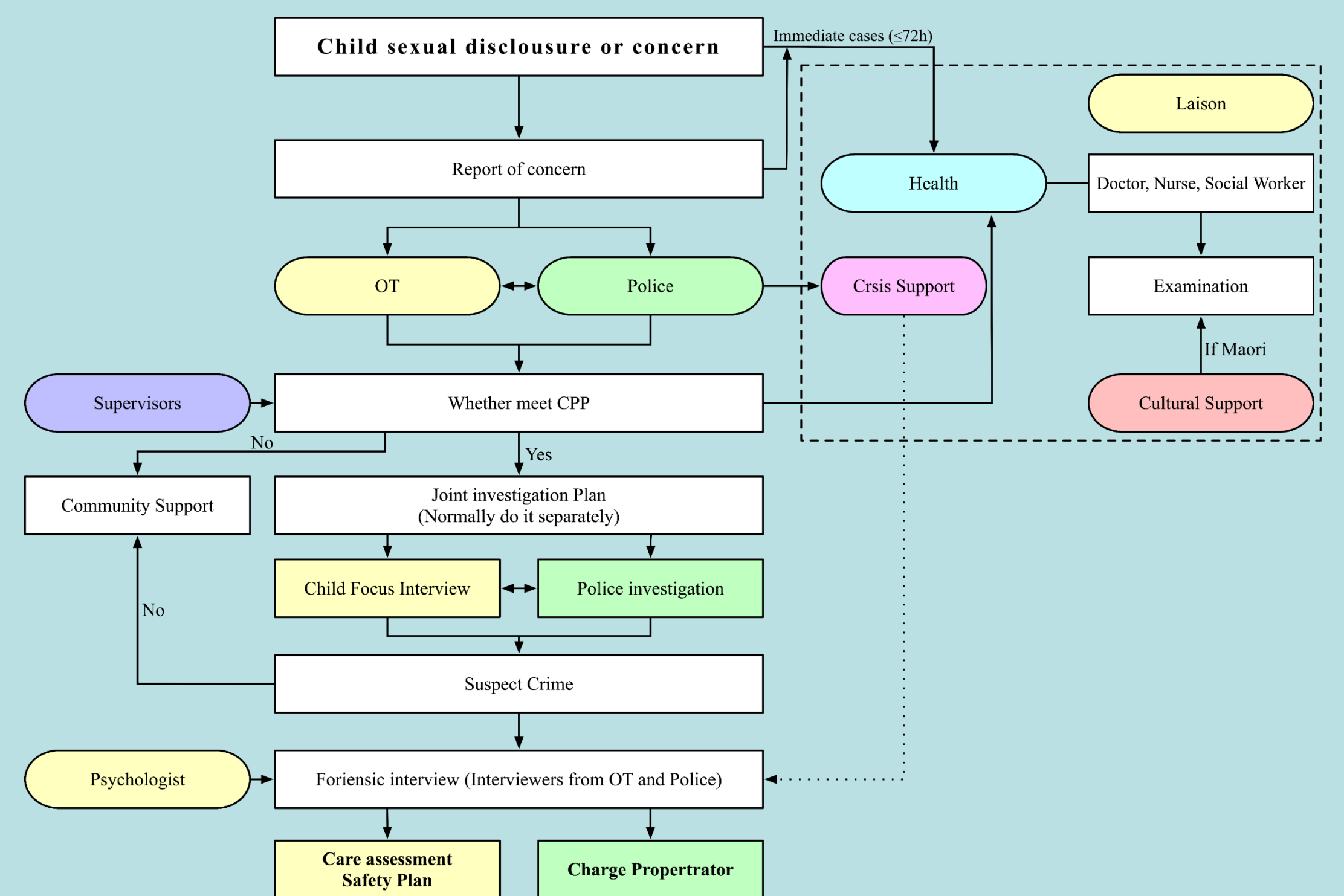


Figure 1: The image above shows a simple multidisciplinary collaboration process for child sexual abuse case in New Zealand (based on observation and interview)

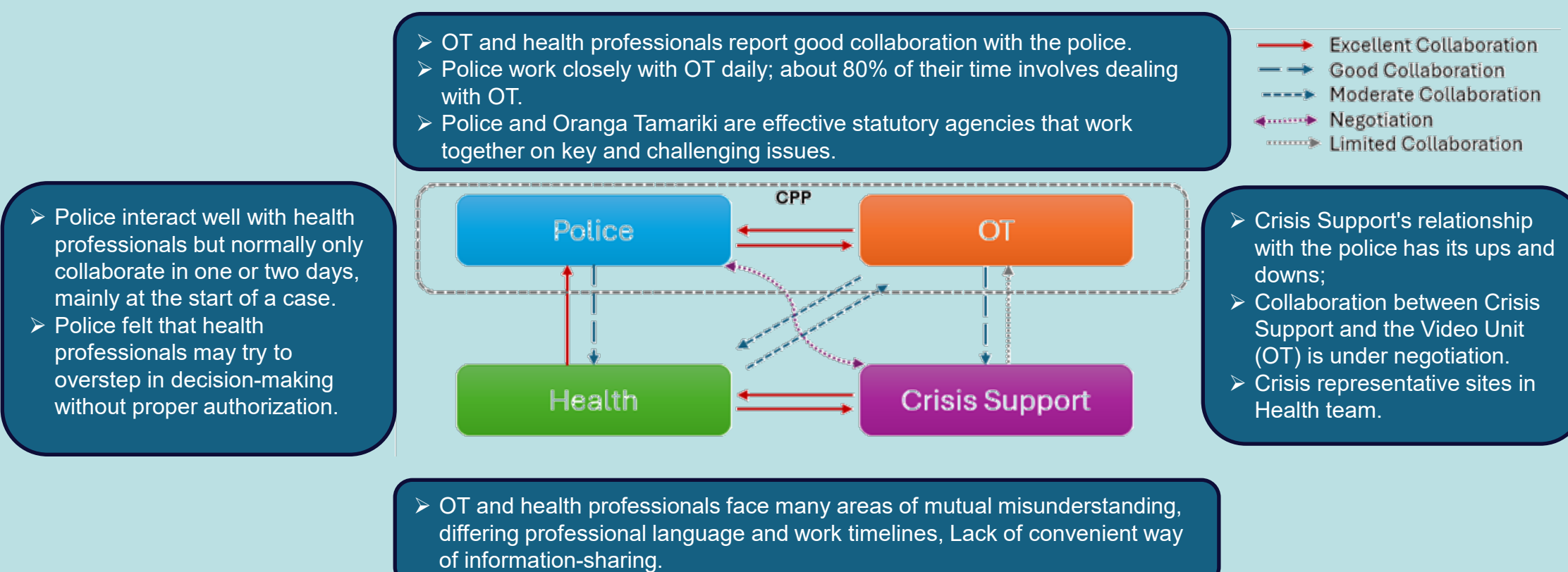


Figure 2: The image above shows the Collaboration situation between OT-Police-Health-Crisis support (Community) in New Zealand

Glossary	
CPP	Child Protection Protocol: Joint Operating Procedures (For OT and Police)
EVI	Evidential Video Interviewer
MAI	mass allegation investigation
OT	Oranga Tamariki (Ministry of Children)
Puawaitahi	"blossoming in unity" or "as one" (Child protection multi-agency centre)

## Future Work

### Focus 1: Multiple and cross-level child protection collaboration policy documents analysis in New Zealand

- The WPR approach (Bacchi's framework) (2009)

### Focus 2: How could the New Zealand experience provide referential value to the development of the social worker's role in the CSA multi-disciplinary approach building in China?

- 2 Focus group discussion with 10 -12 social workers in China

