

28 April 2021

Tēnā koe

Contraception, Sterilisation, and Abortion (Safe Areas) Amendment Bill

Tōpūtanga Tapuhi Kaitiaki o Aotearoa, New Zealand Nurses Organisation (NZNO) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Contraception, Sterilisation, and Abortion (Safe Areas) Amendment Bill (the Bill).

NZNO has consulted its members and staff in the preparation of this submission, in particular, professional nursing, and policy advisers. As the largest leading professional nursing association and union for nurses in Aotearoa New Zealand, NZNO represents 51,000 nurses, midwives, students, kaimahi hauora and health workers on professional and employment matters. NZNO embraces te Tiriti o Waitangi and contributes to the improvements of health outcomes for all people of Aotearoa New Zealand through influencing health, employment, and social policy development. Furthermore, we share the intent of the Ministry of Health's definition of equity which applies equally to NZNO's work across professional, industrial, and member activities.

NZNO has been an avid and strong supporter of the establishment of 'safe areas' around facilities offering abortion services. The duty of care of the safe areas should be to protect the safety and wellbeing of the women, their whānau and staff. While respecting the privacy and dignity of those seeking abortion services and the health practitioners. As health professionals, we strongly advocate for non-judgmental, safe, timely, and equitable abortion services that are appropriately funded and administered. NZNO agrees that nurses, nurse practitioners, and midwives are well placed to ensure access to services and health equity outcomes for women, wāhine Māori of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Moreover, we have consistently raised concerns and issues regarding the health and safety of our members working in abortion services and actively protecting, the safety and wellbeing of women accessing abortion services. Particularly protecting women and their whānau from potential threats and or harm to their safety or infringe on their freedom of choice. We are aware of the unintended consequences that the Rahui Covid-19, and the lockdown period impacted greatly on women accessing health and abortion services across Aotearoa. Safeguarding abortion safe areas is vital, to reduce barriers and any psychological and emotional distress.

National Office

Level 3
Crowe Horwath House
57 Willis Street
Wellington 6011

PO Box 2128
Wellington 6140

T 0800 28 38 48

www.nzno.org.nz

We are extremely pleased that the Bill extends to include any psychological emotional distress or communication; intimidation; interference; or obstruction with a protected person in the safe area. We acknowledge that this is the purpose of the Bill, and therefore welcome and support the Bill.

In conclusion, please note our previous submissions on the kaupapa that recommend on ensuring the rights for all women of Aotearoa to safely access abortion services. Please note that we do not wish to make an oral submission at this time.

Nāku noa nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leanne Manson'.

Leanne Manson
Policy Analyst Māori
DDI: 04 4946389
leanne.manson@nzno.org.nz