

11 October 2021

Committee Secretariat  
Health Committee  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington



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Tēnā koe

## **COVID-19 Public Health Response Amendment Bill (No 2)**

Tōpūtanga Tapuhi Kaitiaki o Aotearoa, New Zealand Nurses Organisation (NZNO) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the COVID-19 Public Health Response Amendment Bill (No 2).

NZNO is the leading professional nursing association and union for nurses in Aotearoa New Zealand, representing 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 the health status and outcomes of 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 equally applies to NZNO work across professional, industrial and member activities.

NZNO has consulted with members and staff in the preparation of this response.

NZNO supports:

- Extending the term of the Act from May 2022 to May 2023
- Strengthening the infringement regime by increasing the maximum fines and fees, and enabling new regulations to set a sliding scale of infringement offences
- Refining the powers of COVID-19 orders, including by broadening their purpose
- Incorporating material by reference, and improving delegations
- Empowering the creation of orders for the purpose of requisitioning testing consumables and requiring labs doing COVID-19 testing to do so for the national public health response, with appropriate compensation and a disputes appeal process
- Recognising the ability of the Chief Executive of the agency responsible for Managed Isolation and Quarantine (MIQ), currently the Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment (MBIE), to impose room restrictions on people undertaking isolation or quarantine

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- Shifting provisions regarding the allocation and prioritisation of spaces in MIQ from COVID-19 orders to primary legislation
- Recognising the complaints process of MIQ
- Enabling the Chief Executive of the responsible agency to make rules for the day to-day operation of MIQ facilities
- Reversing the default liability for MIQ charges, so that people are liable unless exempt (rather than only liable if members of a prescribed class)
- Enabling MIQ to collect contact details from people undertaking isolation or quarantine to support invoicing for MIQ charges.

NZNO acknowledges and supports the existing safeguards of the Act, such as (but not limited to) the requirements for the House to pass resolutions to continue the Act on a periodic basis, the prerequisites for COVID-19 orders, or the requirement that all COVID-19 orders be consistent with the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990.

Please note that we do not wish to make an oral submission.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the consultation process.

Nāku noa nā



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