

Position statement and Guideline: NZNO and its international relationships and affiliations, 2016

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline NZNO's position on international relationships and affiliations and provide guidance for members and staff on establishing and maintaining these.

Introduction

As Aotearoa New Zealand's largest organisation representing the professional and industrial interests of nurses, NZNO has much to offer – and learn – at an international level. Our strategic plan includes a commitment to "*Build strategic relationships nationally and internationally with nursing, union and other agencies in order to advance the professional/industrial interests of nursing*". Membership of various international nursing and other health-care organisations, particularly the International Council of Nurses (ICN), allows NZNO to play an important role in supporting and participating in the international community of nurses. While local and national relationships will always be a priority, such international relationships enable NZNO to promote the fundamental contribution nurses and nursing make to health care and social and cultural policy development and action worldwide.

Wherever it is practised in the world, there are important common factors affecting nursing:

- > changes in policy, regulation, legislation, funding and the role of the government in health;
- > changes in models of care and the need for ongoing nursing workforce development;
- > demographic influences that lead to change in demand for and access to health care and social services, including increasing expectations for universal health coverage;
- > rapid development of health technology; and
- > dramatically changing social, cultural, political, economic and environmental climates.

Through its international work, NZNO ensures a nursing voice is expressed on matters that transcend national boundaries. One example is NZNO's commitment to raising the issue of cultural safety internationally, and in addressing the health needs of tāngata whenua and other indigenous people locally and globally.

International involvement also exposes NZNO to the experiences of nurses from other countries that can benefit nursing and nurses in Aotearoa New Zealand. Results of this involvement are continually fed back to NZNO and play an important role in shaping policy on the delivery of culturally relevant nursing care and issues of race, ethnicity, social and health equity, and equal opportunities for women in particular.

Current situation

NZNO, as an organisation, has an extensive range of existing international relationships and one significant international affiliation. Colleges and sections and Te Rūnanga o Aotearoa, NZNO (Te Rūnanga) have a number of relationships, and affiliate with many organisations relevant to them and of a specialist nature. Some relationships are formal and others informal. NZNO staff also maintain relationships with a wide range of national and international organisations. Such affiliations, relationships and wider engagement with international organisations already make a significant contribution to NZNO's work. However, NZNO may not be making full use of the potential value of these relationships and affiliations.

A review of NZNO's international relationships and affiliations undertaken in 2016 identified the following attributes that contribute to ensuring international relationships and affiliations provide the greatest value to NZNO and its members:

- > a deliberate approach taken to building and maintaining the relationships;
- > a clear purpose for the affiliation;
- > a similar context/approach to nursing and/or staffing for the relevant countries;
- > joint projects;
- > opportunities for Aotearoa New Zealand to also contribute.

International aims

NZNO believes the following aims should guide international involvement:

- > to share its experiences and journey in developing a relationship with Te Rūnanga and Te Poari o Te Rūnanga o Aotearoa, NZNO (Te Poari) through a bicultural relationship model on the international stage;
- > to build members' awareness of nurses, nursing and health care, indigenous and social issues in other countries;
- > to develop, together with other national nurses' associations (NNAs), strategies for appropriate nursing policy, nursing clinical practice, nursing education, nursing regulation and legislation, standards of care for all people in all countries of the world, and the socio-economic welfare of nurses;
- > to optimise its membership of the ICN and the international nursing community, by participating fully in, and learning from, other associations and providing assistance and leadership where appropriate;
- > to encourage the exchange of knowledge and expertise between nurses and nursing students in the South Pacific and other countries, through appropriate agencies and by all available means, including promoting professional contacts and exchanges;
- > to support and assist other NNAs, especially those whose economic, political or professional circumstances disadvantage them;
- > to increase NZNO's ability to influence nursing and health care internationally through policy, research and practice;
- > to identify and open up opportunities for development, including access to international resources and research partnerships; and
- > to identify upcoming global issues and international trends (eg, emerging novel disease) and learn from other countries' experiences.

Criteria for reviewing NZNO international affiliations

It is essential NZNO has a clear set of guidelines for determining which strategic partnerships and affiliations should be pursued. Formal affiliations and relationships are important for those who are working on specific issues to make contact with the relevant people in international organisations. Much of the value of international affiliations and relationships comes from the interactions and the exchange of information that occurs outside formal meetings. It is the conversations, the connections, the exchange of information and the building of relationships that offers the most value. All the different parts of NZNO could benefit from being more deliberate in identifying the key international affiliations that would be of value to them, how they will build and maintain the relationships with those organisations and how they will actively use the value these affiliations can bring.

The following criteria provide guidance for members and staff as they assess and prioritise potential international affiliations and relationships:

1. Relevance

- > Does this organisation have a clear constituency that is relevant to our work?
- > Does their approach fit with ours?
- > Would our affiliation with this organisation advance our work and our strategic goals?

2. Credibility

- > Does this organisation have the skills and competency in their leadership and operations to ensure their work is credible?
- > Does this organisation have a track record of performance?

3. Legitimacy

- > Does this organisation have a sound and sustainable legal status, governance structure(s), leadership and relationship with their members?
- > Can NZNO be represented or have a voice either directly or indirectly?
- > Is it an independent organisation and not tied to a particular commercial entity?
- > Does it genuinely engage with and represent indigenous people?

If all of these three criteria are met, then:

4. Value

- > Can this organisation provide us with useful information, knowledge, networking and relationships?
- > Does this organisation have policy, research or evidence that would benefit our work and our members?
- > Does this organisation share information in a way NZNO can access, eg, reports?
- > Could this organisation assist us to strategise and problem solve on common issues?

5. Influence

- > Does this organisation have international influence on issues important to NZNO, our members and the health of New Zealanders?
- > Does this organisation have global reach?

6. Leadership

- > Does this organisation work in the sphere of nursing, industrial issues and/or women's issues?
- > Is this an area where NZNO should be making a leadership contribution?

Examples of international participation and strategy

Building national and international awareness

Promoting International Nurses' Day, celebrated in the week of May 12 each year and using the theme selected each year by ICN.

Collaboration with the ICN

NZNO is affiliated to the ICN. ICN is an independent, non-governmental federation of NNAs with 135 affiliated countries worldwide. Individual nurses cannot join ICN but the members of NNAs are members of ICN by virtue of the affiliation of their NNA (NZNO). As the NNA representing Aotearoa New Zealand, NZNO members gain membership of ICN. ICN employs staff and runs programmes in professional and workplace development in support of affiliates. ICN is also recognised by the World Health Organization as the nursing representative body for nurses internationally.

NZNO has successfully taken the opportunity to put forward resolutions for debate on issues concerning nurses worldwide at ICN quadrennial congresses. Many NZNO members and staff have presented papers at ICN congresses and, in addition, student representatives have participated in the quadrennial student assembly.

NZNO is committed to participating in the biennial ICN Council of National Representatives (CNR) and strengthening its engagement with ICN through greater dialogue, written submissions and other opportunities that may arise. NZNO has the right, as the NNA for Aotearoa New Zealand, to speak and vote as part of the CNR.

Networking in the South Pacific

NZNO is an affiliate of the South Pacific Nurses' Forum (SPNF) and contributes to policy development and raising issues specific to this region. In addition, NZNO is able to access other indigenous nursing groups, network with other nursing groups throughout the Pacific region and share experiences and advice.

NZNO has a strong and collaborative relationship with the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation and the Australian College of Nursing.

Co-operation with international health organisations

NZNO supports the attendance of the chief nursing officer (Ministry of Health) at the World Health Assembly.

Te Rūnanga and a number of NZNO colleges and sections are committed to the affiliations they have with their respective professional colleagues and associated organisations around the world.

Encouraging exchanges

Nurses and midwives in New Zealand have traditionally looked to other developed countries for innovation and good practice in nursing. NZNO is also aware it can learn useful lessons from developing countries on delivering appropriate, culturally safe and cost-effective care, particularly in primary health care.

Developing strategies

NZNO is positioned to influence policy making at the international level through its active membership of organisations such as the ICN and the SPNF.

Attending forums

Attendance at international forums and conferences enables members and staff to network, develop relationships with their international counterparts, and learn about the policies, strategies and practices of other countries. Presentations on work being done in Aotearoa New Zealand can reciprocally influence those from other countries.

Communication

NZNO needs to communicate clearly to its members how it is using the various affiliations and relationships that are held including the value to NZNO, to nursing and to the individual member. In addition to regular reports at the annual general meeting and hui ā-tau, NZNO recommend those attending conferences and forums, whether staff, members or governance, commit to preparing and reporting back on international visits. This should involve:

Going with a plan

- > reviewing programmes and participation lists before attending any conference or meeting to identify what information might be most useful to seek and what contacts would be most useful to make;
- > ensuring the travelling delegate is up to date on what NZNO is doing, thinking or asking about the relevant issues;
- > sending the conference programme to others to get their input on which workshops would be most useful to attend;
- > ensuring the traveling delegation have culturally appropriate koha or gifts for the hosting country; and
- > liaising with other staff or governance representatives who are not attending, as to what issues they would like to get information back on, what questions they would like asked and which people they would like the travelling delegate to connect with if possible.

Sharing the information on their return

How this would be done would depend on the issue. It may involve:

- > a short response to some key questions to be included in a relevant magazine or newsletter. This would not be a detailed report, but rather a way to help people process what they have learnt and disseminate it in a way that it will prompt conversations. Questions such as;
 - What were the three key ideas that you have come back with?

- What was one thing that Aotearoa New Zealand could learn from what is happening elsewhere?
 - What did it show that Aotearoa New Zealand is doing well?
- > setting up a debrief session with the people who had identified the issues and questions before the visit;
- > running lunch time seminars or video conference; and/or
- > preparing a report.

It may also be appropriate to consider making use of international conferences and meetings by doing things outside the formal programme. This could include hosting events (eg, lunch, breakfast), with a focus on a specific issue of importance to Aotearoa New Zealand - this could involve a mix of networking, gathering ideas, seeking consensus on an issue or sharing Aotearoa New Zealand's progress.

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Mission statement

NZNO is committed to the representation of members and the promotion of nursing and midwifery. NZNO embraces te Tiriti o Waitangi and works to improve the health status of all peoples of Aotearoa/ New Zealand through participation in health and social policy development.

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