

CENNZ Co-Chair Annual Report for 2026 AGM

In March, we held our annual conference in Auckland under the theme 'Te Pae Tawhiti | Pursue Distant Horizons'. This whakataukī reminds us to set our sights on distant horizons while holding fast to the values and accomplishments already achieved. For emergency nurses, it speaks to our resilience amidst social and political change, as well as our ongoing commitment to clinical and cultural excellence. This theme has truly underpinned CENNZ's work throughout 2026.

This year, our committee revised its leadership structure to ensure decision-making aligns with the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. In practice, we established a Co-Chair model to foster collaborative leadership and embed Te Tiriti as the foundation of our governance and strategic direction.

Natasha published the CENNZ Māori Health Strategy-Te Pae Tawhiti, which strongly influenced and underpinned our conference themes. This strategy aims to give direction to our professional College to uplift Māori who continue to experience health inequities, including a nursing workforce inequity.

Our committee continues to advocate for our members and profession by making Media appearances and challenging the status quo. Speaking up on radio appearances, the Paddy Gower show, and the New Zealand Herald. Advocating for our profession and the communities for which we serve.

We have been working in close collaboration with Te Whatu Ora on key initiatives including intentional rounding within Emergency Department waiting rooms, acute flow, and safe staffing across our EDs nationwide.

Over the past year, we reviewed and updated several position statements. Priorities for development over the coming year include working with Mental health nurses and Police to ensure the handover process expected to happen at Triage is safe for all involved.

A new Position Statement regarding Care of patients in the Waiting Areas is also in progress; this is largely as a result of the increasing pressures occurring in the Waiting Areas.

CENNZ supported a Nurse Practitioner (NP) working group to develop an NP Knowledge and Skills Framework, which will be released for consultation in early 2027. This is a large piece of

work that aims to set the standards for our Advanced Nursing teams. We would like to thank Julie Manning and Rick Forster for their work in this space.

We have delivered 15 triage courses in the last year reaching 313 participants nationwide. This initiative promotes a standardised triage process, ensuring safe, consistent assessment methods are applied when patients arrive at our EDs. We want to acknowledge Rochelle, who has brought valuable skills in managing the Triage Portfolio over the past year, and wish her well in her next endeavors. We welcome Emma and Amanda to take on the Triage portfolio moving forward and wish to acknowledge and thank all the Triage Instructors who have continued to deliver a world-class course and set the gold standard for Triage nursing in New Zealand.

CENNZ continues to strengthen networking and collaboration among nurse managers, educators, and senior nurses through regular in-person and online hui.

CENNZ remains dedicated to supporting emergency nurses across the motu to attend professional courses and postgraduate studies. To further enable nurses to advance their practice, CENNZ has expanded both the total number and monetary value of education grants available for 2027.

As in previous years, we will request a meeting with the incoming Minister of Health following the 2026 general election. Maintaining direct dialogue with the Ministry is vital to advocate for emergency nursing and highlight pressing issues within our healthcare system and EDs. This is also an opportunity to maintain our political allies with the ministerial bodies.

Looking ahead to 2027, we remain dedicated to advancing nursing excellence in Emergency Departments. We will achieve this by continuing our strategic partnership with Te Whatu Ora, advocating for safe staffing and improved acute flow.

As we enter 2027, we look forward to continuously fostering clinical and cultural excellence across Aotearoa.

Nga mihi
Vicki Bijl-Boon and Natasha Hemopo
Co-Chairs CENNZ 2026