

New Zealand Hepatology Nurses Annual Report

New Zealand Society of Gastroenterology Annual Scientific Meeting

Auckland 24 November 2022

Committee: Judith McLaughlin (Chair), Bridget Faire (Secretary), Jessica Southall (NZgNC liaison), Jacqui Stone, Susan Gale

2022 has been a year of re-establishing and re-focusing the New Zealand Hepatology Nurses Group (NZHNG).

May saw the foundation Chair Nancy Carey and Co-Chair Jo De Lisle step down from their positions and committee after three years of disruption from Covid to cyber-attacks. Elections were held and I was elected Chair. We also welcomed new members Susan Gale and Jessica Southall. Jessica is also a member of the New Zealand Gastro Nurses College (NZgNC) committee so has been the NZgNC liaison person. This has enabled seamless communication between the groups which has been very beneficial with a new Chair and committee.

The Group has focused on three main projects this year.

- 1) The first has been membership. Membership has been reviewed and updated with more than 20 new members enrolled after raising awareness of the NZHNG at a nurses' education meeting in August. This list has been circulated to all members to enable networking throughout NZ and includes nurses from primary and secondary care settings.
- 2) We updated the Terms of Reference to more accurately reflect the roles and responsibilities of the group and these have been uploaded to the NZgNC website.
- 3) We have contributed articles to the Tube magazine each edition, and these have focused on updated guidelines and best practice. While intended primarily for the benefit of hepatology nurses, we are also wanting to raise awareness of hepatology nursing in NZ.

In addition to these projects, we submitted a response to Medsafe regarding an application to increase access to Maviret, a drug used to treat hepatitis C, through exemption to prescription status for specific nurses. This response was developed following consultation with members via online meetings. As a group, we had previously investigated the possibility of standing orders for Maviret but this had not been progressed once Maviret was added to the list of drugs nurse prescribers can prescribe. Our response to Medsafe was that we support the Nurse Prescribing of Maviret but with better access and support to those educational pathways already established. We do not support another means of an educational nursing pathway as proposed in the application to re-classify Maviret.

We are slowly getting things uploaded to the NZgNC website and plan to share as much as possible here in the not too distant future. With the establishment of Te Whatu Ora Health NZ, we are



looking forward to national guidelines and working with the NZ Society of Gastroenterology to establish these.

Going forward, we are refocusing our efforts on writing guidelines which focus on key skills and competencies for nurses working with patients with liver disease. These are intended to be used by nurses working in a variety of settings from primary care to prisons to the transplant unit.