

New Zealand Hepatology Nurses Annual Report

New Zealand Society of Gastroenterology Annual Scientific Meeting

Palmerston North 28 November 2025

Committee: Judith McLaughlin (Chair), Bridget Faire/Susan Gale (Secretary), Jessica Southall (Treasurer), Nicola Caine (NZgNC liaison), Barry Harrison, Jen Chesbrough

It has been another challenging year for most of us working in healthcare and hepatology nursing has been no exception as we attempt to maintain our standard of care while NZNO continues to negotiate with Te Whatu Ora/Health New Zealand for better pay and conditions. The lack of value demonstrated for senior nurses is demoralising for many hepatology nurses who work in senior nursing roles. This year we surveyed our members and 77% of those who responded are employed as Clinical Nurse Specialists, with 83% of our nurses having post graduate qualifications and a further 2 currently undertaking post graduate study. We are an experienced and highly educated group that deserve better from Te Whatu Ora/Health New Zealand.

Our focus as always has been on providing collegial support to nurses working with patients affected by liver disease and facilitating member education. This year we ran our first in person education meeting in Auckland with the assistance of funding from NZNO and Abbvie Pharmaceutical Company. 27 members attended this meeting for nurses by nurses, and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. We have every intention of doing this again in 2026. We also had our first online education forum which had a presentation from one of our nurses followed by an opportunity for discussion afterwards. We intend to run these 3 monthly initially and topics for discussion will be determined by our members.

We have again supported our members to attend the Australasian Hepatology Association's course on nursing patients with advanced liver disease and have continued to fund our committee member's membership to the Australasian Hepatology Association.

We continue to represent hepatology nurses at a national level. In May we provided feedback to Nursing Council review of medications for Specialty RN Prescribers, advocating for the inclusion of antiviral medications for the treatment of hepatitis B. In October we made a submission to the Ministry of Health for the Inclusion of Entecavir and Tenofovir in the Designated Prescribing List for Registered Nurse Prescribers. Members were also invited to provide feedback as individuals on this and other proposed medications. Many of our members attended New Zealand Hepatology Network meetings throughout the year which provide an opportunity to network with other hepatology nurses and Gastroenterologists while receiving presentations on the latest developments in Hepatology. We remain hopeful of a closer relationship with the New Zealand Society of Gastroenterology Hepatology Group however, they have not been very active this year.

This year we have updated our Terms of Reference to provide greater clarity over the makeup of the committee and executive roles. We are committed to diversity, inclusion and equity being reflected in our work and decision-making processes and are working with NZgNC to incorporate Te Tiriti o Waitangi into our Terms of Reference. We have had some changes to our committee recently with the addition of two new members as we prepare to farewell our Secretary Bridget Faire. Bridget has been the Secretary since the groups formation and done a fantastic job through the challenging formative years. She has been supporting Sue Gale into the role over the past few months and we will miss her presence on the committee but look forward to her continued membership of the group. Jen Chesbrough and Barry Harrison have joined the committee and I plan to mentor someone into the Chairpersons position over the next 12 months before stepping down at the Annual General Meeting in 2026.



Judith McLaughlin
Chairperson