



# NZNO/DHB PAY EQUITY



Equal pay for work of equal worth



## Pay Equity Frequently Asked Questions

### What is pay equity?

When we talk about 'pay equity' we are talking about having the same or similar pay for different jobs where the work is of equal worth or value. If one occupation has the same challenges and required skills and educational level as another occupation, then they should be paid the same.

Pay equity differs from 'equal pay'. Equal pay means two people who are doing the *same* job should be paid the same regardless of their gender (or any other factor).

### Why is pay equity now an issue for nurses, midwives and health care assistants?

Many jobs where women make up the majority of the workforce have been historically undervalued and given less pay than similar professions where the workforce is mainly male. There are lots of reasons why that has occurred, but there is widespread agreement now that this is unfair. Being part of a female-dominated profession, nurses, midwives and health care assistants do not yet enjoy pay equity with similar professions or occupations.

### Why is NZNO working on a pay equity process with the DHBs?

Pay equity arose as part of the 2017/18 NZNO/DHB multi-employer collective agreement (MECA) negotiations. In those negotiations NZNO won acceptance of our pay equity claim and an agreement that the DHBs and NZNO would work in partnership to assess the pay of all members covered by that MECA against the pay of agreed (male dominated) comparator occupations and to agree to a pay equity settlement for those members. This is the work we are currently engaging in.

### How does this affect me?

If you work in a DHB and are covered by the NZNO/DHB MECA you can expect to benefit from the pay equity settlement once it is achieved.

However, NZNO sees this as a first step towards achieving pay equity for all its members who are nurses, midwives or health care assistants, including those outside DHBs. If you do not work in a DHB, you will not benefit immediately by the settlement from this process, but NZNO will be working to achieve pay equity for all members in the future. NZNO does have a strategy for this.

### How will the process work?

This is a very simple explanation of what is a very complicated process. Those wanting a more detailed understanding should read the Terms of Reference for DHB / Nurses Pay Equity Claim – Bargaining Process Terms of Reference (link will be provided later this week).

Basically, the unions (NZNO, MERAS and the PSA) have met with the DHBs (through the DHB agency TAS) to agree on the Terms of Reference by which they will work together to achieve pay equity for

nurses, midwives and health care assistants. These Terms of Reference describe the bargaining process to be used so the unions can settle on a final claim.

Next, interviews of job holders (members whose work is covered by the DHB / NZNO MECA) will be conducted using the pay equity assessment tool. The interviewers will be a DHB representative and a union representative.

The comparators will be identified and agreed between the parties and then they too will be interviewed. Comparing our work with that of the comparators work is how we find why the pay of other male dominated occupations is higher even though the work requires the same level of challenges, training and work complexity.

All the data gathered in through these interviews will be jointly analysed by researchers from both the DHBs and the unions and the remuneration levels for these professions will be assessed. Once that has occurred, undervaluation will be established. In other words, the parties will agree on just how much nurses, midwives and health care assistants have been underpaid.

Based on the outcome the negotiations will commence to settle on the final amounts or pay levels required to bridge the gap.

#### [Will members get to vote whether or not to accept the pay equity settlement claim?](#)

Yes. Once the claim is concluded and agreed to, it will be put to the members for ratification. However the pay equity process is a bit different to the usual MECA bargaining process.

In the MECA bargaining process, if members reject an offer, the negotiators can go back and ask for more. In this process the unions and the DHBs will have agreed based on evidence (proof) gathered on what is just and fair in terms of pay equity between nursing, midwifery and health care assistance and similar professions.

At this stage because we do not yet know what that settlement might look like it could be that pay structures and other gender based bias needs to be incorporated into how the settlement is achieved.

Members will have the opportunity to vote on the outcome.

#### [Why are there different Terms of reference for nurses and caregivers, and midwives?](#)

The terms of reference are very similar. Because NZNO does not represent the majority of DHB employed midwives the MERAS union will be taking the lead on this pay equity claim assessment process and the settlement of the claim. NZNO is directly involved in this process too. It may be a shorter process due to there being fewer members and roles involved. NZNO midwifery members will have a separate vote on the outcome.

#### [When will settlement payments occur?](#)

As part of the 2017/18NZNO/DHB MECA negotiations DHBs agreed that all pay equity claims should be settled by 31 December 2019.

#### [What will settlement payments consist of?](#)

We can't be specific about settlement payments until the settlement is reached or until we are at that stage of the process. We don't want to speculate yet about what the settlement might look like. There are other examples of settlements we can consider, but it is too early in the process for that to be helpful.

This FAQ document will be updated as we work through the pay equity process.