



Update 8 – February 2020

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Welcome to the latest pay equity update. It's a complex process so we have included a lot of information for those wanting a more in-depth understanding.

Those wanting a quick update may just want to read the "issue in brief" summary and the frequently asked questions at the end.

This issue in brief:

- Claimant interviews (interviews defining the roles of nurses and midwives) are complete.
- The Pay Equity Bipartite Group (representatives from the nursing and midwifery professions) will be trained in how to use the 12 factor gender neutral evaluation tool.
- Interviews with people in comparator professions should commence shortly.
- Next will come evaluation of the data and establishing proof that undervaluation of nursing work is gender-based.
- The final phase will be negotiating with the Government how this undervaluation will be addressed.
- Issues addressed such as the delay, implications for the DHB/NZNO MECA negotiations and other frequently asked questions.

General progress update

Steady progress is being made on our pay equity claim. The claimant interviews have been completed, generating 19 nursing and seven midwifery summary role profiles that have been verified and validated.

The next step is for our Pay Equity Bipartite Group to be trained in the assessment process which is where the jobs are assessed using the 12 factor gender neutral evaluation tool. A similar number of comparator roles will be required to be assessed given the diversity of nursing roles, and skill levels, and the complexity of roles across senior nursing and midwifery jobs.

Progress is also being made with reaching agreement with potential comparators for their participation in this process. We expect comparator interviews to be underway in the next two weeks.

Once the assessment process of both the claimant (us) and the comparator (other male dominated occupations) roles is completed the next phase will be analysis of the information, research, and remuneration data. This "evidence" will inform and provide the proof that there has been undervaluation of nursing work based on gender.

The final phase is the negotiation or bargaining about how the established undervaluation is to be addressed.

Timeframe and delays

We know members are concerned about the timeframe. As we have explained, this is a huge and complex process that has never been done before. We have just one shot at getting it right so

"This 'evidence' will provide proof there has been undervaluation of nursing work based on gender."



we need to take the time that is necessary. None of the parties to this process are causing delays and the effective date of 31 December 2019 remains the date from which the settlement will apply.

Implications for the DHB/NZNO MECA negotiations

We also know there are concerns about the impact of this process on the DHB/NZNO MECA bargaining that will soon be underway.

It's important to understand that these two processes are separate. There has been some misunderstanding about this because the "winning" of our pay equity claim was achieved as part of the last DHB/NZNO MECA bargaining. That has led some to mistakenly believe that the pay equity settlement will be part of the MECA bargaining settlement. It is really important that this does not become the case.

The MECA bargaining is about the setting of terms and conditions, such as pay increases and staff recruitment/retention. Pay increases via this mechanism to not reflect the value of the work, and

can be influenced by external factors such as politics and the economy.

The pay equity settlement will establish whether nursing (and midwifery) work has been undervalued based on gender. On this basis the pay equity settlement will need to stand alone. It can't be subject to challenge and there must be mechanisms put in place so that the outcome is maintained. If this doesn't happen it will lose its value.

We have addressed some of the other frequently asked questions (e.g. coming through on Facebook) below. Please let us know if you have other questions. Your delegates working with us on this project are doing a great job, and we are hopeful that the outcome is not too far away now. Thanks for your ongoing support.

More information about the Pay Equity claim is available on the [Pay Equity page](#) of the NZNO website. Please keep your questions coming to dhbpayequity@nzno.org.nz.

Read our [Pay Equity FAQ](#) document.

Frequently asked questions

Can we say for certain when pay equity will be sorted?

Unfortunately no. We are now at a stage in the process where we are entirely dependent on whether and when employees and employers from the comparator professions agree to work with us.

We have worked very hard to stick to the planned timeframe but there is a formal process to follow and this cannot be rushed. It has to be done properly and precisely so that the results cannot be legitimately challenged and we can prove that the only reason we are paid differently is because of gender, not training, qualifications, tasks, etc.

Are the DHBs dragging their feet and should they be penalised?

Actually, no one is dragging their feet and, technically, this process has little to do with the DHBs. The Government will be the funder of pay equity, and agreement to the proposal has to come from the Government, not the DHBs.

And this is not an adversarial process. The three unions (NZNO, MERAS and the PSA) and the DHBs are working in partnership to achieve pay equity as per the agreement made in the 2018 DHB/NZNO MECA.

Will our members be back-paid to 31 December?

Yes, once a settlement is agreed then any benefits will be back-dated to 31 December 2019.

Could the DHBs try to negotiate pay equity out of the next DHB/NZNO MECA?

Pay equity and the DHB/NZNO MECA are separate things, and it is not possible for the DHBs to remove the pay equity settlement through bargaining.

Is it essential that we get this sorted before DHB/NZNO MECA negotiations start so it can't be used in bargaining against us?

As we're actually negotiating this with the Government, and not the DHBs, it shouldn't matter if those negotiations are still underway by the time the DHB/NZNO MECA expires. However, it is our preference



that the pay equity settlement is reached as soon as possible.

How could the pay equity settlement affect any wages negotiated in the next DHB/NZNO MECA and vice versa?

Pay equity will bring nurses wages and benefits (it isn't just about salaries) into line with similar professions that are male-dominated. This will happen regardless of what new salaries are negotiated in the DHB/NZNO MECA.

Why aren't we being told what the male-dominated comparator professions are?

This is extremely sensitive information that can't be released until after comparator interviews are done. We are entirely dependent on the goodwill of the comparator professions. They don't have to co-operate with us so we don't want to put that co-operation at risk.

For example, one risk of identifying them early could be unfair or uninformed discussion in the media (or on social media) that could put goodwill and co-operation at risk.

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