



## Issue 4 | April 2026



## From the Chair

**Kia ora, koutou katoa**

### Golden Jubilee Symposium – Save the Date

Join us in celebrating 50 years of nursing research in Aotearoa New Zealand.

**Date:** Week of 9 November 2026

**Venue:** Online via NZNO Section Webpage

**Theme:** "Sustainability: Treasuring Our Past, Protecting Our Future"

This milestone event will bring together nursing leaders, emerging voices, and practitioners to explore the evolving role of nursing in a rapidly changing world.

We have chosen to use our NZNO section webpage to highlight evidence-based research across nursing, education, and quality. This innovative online format allows for wider participation and accessibility.

Stay tuned for more information, as each and every one of you will be able to interact with content and showcase work across Aotearoa. Details about abstract submissions, presentation formats, and participation guidelines will be shared soon.

Save the date to celebrate this important milestone with us!

**Nga mihi nui**  
**Dr Stacey Wilson NRS Chair**

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## Contact Us

- Have questions or ideas to share? Reach out to us at [nzno.nrs@gmail.com](mailto:nzno.nrs@gmail.com)
- Connect with Us on Social Media
- Facebook:  
NZNO Nursing Research Section  
– Te Wāhanga Rangahau Tapuhi

## Help us grow!

We have **390** members and aim to have **500** by the end of 2026.

Scan the QR code and complete your details.



## Section Updates

### Growth and Changes

- **Welcoming New Leadership to the Committee**

Dr Stacey Wilson joins the committee as Chair, and Grace Wang, joins as Secretary.

- **Section Advocacy**

In February, our committee provided feedback to the Nursing Council of New Zealand on the draft Code of Conduct.

- **Expanding Our Impact**

Our section is poised for significant growth in both capacity and expertise. Stay tuned as we expand our focus to include education and quality.

- **Our Core Mission**

**Connect:** Promote research collaboration nationally & internationally.

**Advocate:** Liaise with authorities on health & education.

**Unite:** Build links with other NZNO sections.

**Advance:** Enhance evidence-based practice through knowledge sharing.

- **Member Feedback – Survey 2025**

Thank you to everyone who completed our survey. You've told us you're ready to help take the committee to the next level, with strong support for expanding into education and quality. We've heard your feedback on what you need, and we're already hard at work turning those ideas into reality.

### Your committee

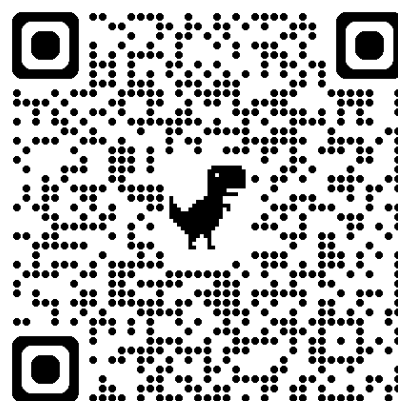
- **Dr Stacey Wilson**, Chair
- **Sandie Bayliss**, Professional Nursing Advisor (Central)
- **Grace Wang**, Secretary
- **Kim Monteiro**, Treasurer
- **Dr Isaac Amakwa**
- **Nerissa Warbrick**
- **Maria Tutahi**, Te Poari & Te Ao Representative
- **Dr Patricia McClunie-Trust**
- **Jon Gullidge**

### Nursing Research Section Grants:

These grants support your growth through workshops, conferences, study days, seminars, postgraduate study, or publications.

**Application Deadlines:** March 31, 2027.

Scan the QR code to apply for a section grant.



## The Next Generation: Rising Stars in General and Forensic Mental Health – Research Revelations

### When Mental Illness Gets in the Way of Physical Care: Understanding Diagnostic Overshadowing in Emergency Departments



RN Hareesh Rajan

People living with documented mental health conditions deserve the same standard of physical healthcare as anyone else. Yet growing evidence — and the experiences of many nurses — tells a different story. My research examined a phenomenon known as diagnostic overshadowing: when a patient's physical symptoms are wrongly attributed to their mental illness rather than being properly investigated. In emergency department (ED) settings, this can have serious and sometimes fatal consequences.

Using a two-stage review design, I examined how stigma — at individual, professional, and institutional levels — influences triage decisions for people

presenting with physical health concerns. The findings were sobering. Stigma consistently led to under-triage, delayed assessments, incomplete physical examinations, and missed diagnoses of conditions such as cardiovascular disease and sepsis. People with mental illness face a 15–20-year mortality gap compared to the general population, and diagnostic overshadowing is a significant, preventable contributor to that gap.

Two cognitive biases emerged as key drivers: anchoring bias, where clinicians use a psychiatric label to interpret all presenting symptoms, and premature closure, where the diagnostic process stops too early once a psychiatric explanation seems plausible. These tendencies are amplified by the pressures of crowded, time-pressured EDs and inadequate mental health training.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, these inequities are compounded for Māori, who face a "double burden" — navigating both mental health stigma and institutional racism. Local data confirm that ED settings rate the lowest for respectful, person-centred care among people with mental health and substance use conditions, and that Māori are significantly more likely to experience unfair treatment.

Despite this, the research offers reason for optimism. ED nurses are uniquely positioned to make a difference. As the clinicians responsible for triage and ongoing monitoring, nurses can disrupt

diagnostic overshadowing through rigorous physiological assessment, therapeutic communication, patient advocacy, and the professional courage to challenge premature diagnostic decisions. Incorporating culturally safe practices — including te Whare Tapa Whā frameworks and whānau-centred approaches — is essential for equitable care in our context.

The call to action is clear: targeted education, equity audits of triage data, and integrated care pathways are needed system-wide. As nurses, we are the safety net. Let's make sure it holds.

**Hareesh Rajan, RN**, has 15 years of experience in mental health nursing. Since 2022, Hareesh has worked in Crisis Resolution Services at Midcentral Health. He recently completed his Master of Nursing at Massey University, where his research focused on **diagnostic overshadowing** and its impact on emergency department triage for people with mental health conditions. Hareesh's research was supported by Health Workforce New Zealand. Hareesh can be contacted at: [hareesh.rajana@midcentraldhb.govt.nz](mailto:hareesh.rajana@midcentraldhb.govt.nz)

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### Hareesh's Top Three Pointers for Surviving Research in a Master's Programme

1. **Break It Down & Prioritise Self-Care:** Tackle research in small, manageable tasks. Plan daily and weekly goals, and don't neglect your well-being—research is a marathon, not a sprint.
2. **Protect Your Writing Time:** Schedule at least one dedicated hour for writing each week. Treat it like a non-negotiable appointment; consistency builds momentum.
3. **Leverage Your Experience, But Stay Evidence-Based:** Use your clinical background to inform your research, but remain open to findings that challenge your assumptions. That's where true learning occurs.

## NURSING RESEARCH

DRIVING INNOVATION AND EXCELLENCE



**EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE**  
Informed decisions



**EQUITY**  
Improving health



**KAUPAPA MĀORI**  
Enhancing well-being



**QUALITY EXCELLENCE**  
Advancing nursing

## Equitable outcomes for imprisoned tāngata whaiora: Nursing implications

RN Emily Pike



Expanding prison populations highlight the critical need for equitable mental health care for imprisoned tāngata whaiora (persons seeking health). Nursing implications, developed from an integrative literature review, address the barriers and facilitators to providing equitable care from the perspective of both professional nursing staff and service-users.

**Research:** Internationally, there is a dearth of primary and secondary research regarding mental health nursing in prisons. In Aotearoa New Zealand, such paucity may reflect ethical barriers to conducting research in the prison, and additionally, restrictions around tāngata whaiora participants receiving mental health care. However, these challenges present an opportunity to contribute to nursing research for a vulnerable, under-represented cohort – in a domain where nursing advocacy is a catalyst for change. Through collaboration with individuals who have lived-experience, researchers can

elevate the voices of individuals from carceral settings, providing a platform for first-person perspective outside the constraints of the prison environment (Reagan et al., 2024).

**Practice:** Both imprisoned individuals and nurses identify the centrality of trust in achieving effective therapeutic relationships. Nursing practice prioritises this trust through activities such as gaining informed consent to foster autonomy, demonstrating respect in each interaction, and acting with resolute integrity (Lehrer, 2021; Reeder, 2023). While these are fundamentals of nursing care in Aotearoa New Zealand, they are particularly essential to achieving equitable health outcomes in prisons. To enact these values in the prison settings, nurses can utilise trauma-informed care models, such as the 4 E's Model of Trauma Informed Care (Mollard & Brage Hudson, 2016). This approach supports therapeutic engagement and reduces re-traumatisation; when practiced by prison staff, it can shift the use of punitive responses to compassionate care for managing disordered behaviour.

Commitment to dignity is further demonstrated through the intentional use of language. As an extension of culture, nurses recognise te reo Māori as taonga and use it to build partnerships and support collaboration (Nursing Council of New Zealand, 2025). Furthermore, as an avenue for challenging stigma, nurses use

appropriate pronouns to uphold the dignity of tangata whaiora.

Respectful language extends to inter-professional settings with prison staff and clinical meetings. Person-first language, such as tāngata whaiora instead of 'prisoner' or 'offender', identifies the person and not their temporary position in society (Willis & Letourneau, 2018). Collectively, the nurse's role extends beyond clinical care, it is a commitment to culturally safe leadership championing compassion and equity interprofessionally and across clinical settings.

**Education:** Through education and advanced advocacy, mental health nursing addresses systemic inequities. Precepting undergraduate students in prisons challenges stereotypes often attached to mental illness and imprisonment (Butler & Mallet-Boucher, 2020). This exposure can reduce the stigma tāngata whaiora often faces when receiving care in the community, whether during or following imprisonment (Reagan et al., 2024). Beyond clinical tasks, nurses must act as leaders who advocate for individuals across all levels—from interprofessional meetings with corrections staff to creating high-level systemic change through the development of evidence-based research (Mollard & Brage Hudson, 2016). Through strengthening leadership and advocacy skills, nurses can navigate, often rigid, hierarchical environments to effect necessary

change and ensure more equitable health outcomes.

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### **Emily's Top Three Pointers for Surviving Research in a Master's Programme**

1. **Document Your Process:** Keep a detailed record of your search strategies, insights, and findings using a journal, Word document, or notes app. This log will be invaluable.
2. **Set Mini-Deadlines:** Break the project into smaller goals with specific deadlines to maintain steady progress and avoid feeling overwhelmed.
3. **Format for Submission:** Choose a target research journal early and use its submission guidelines as a template for your paper's formatting and structure.

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*Emily Pike, RN is a mental health and addictions nurse with 10 years of experience in forensic mental health in Aotearoa New Zealand. Originally from the United States, Emily brings a unique bicultural perspective to their practice, integrating American educational foundations with New Zealand's healthcare framework, including Te Whare Tapa Whā and the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Their research focuses on addressing health inequities in forensic mental health settings, particularly for Māori who are disproportionately represented in the corrections*

environment. Emily is committed to strengthening the nursing role to deliver culturally safe, person-centered care that promotes equitable outcomes for tāngata whaiora. You can contact Emily at [Emily.Pike@mhaids.health.nz](mailto:Emily.Pike@mhaids.health.nz)

- Lehrer, D. (2021). Compassion in corrections: The struggle between security and health care. *Journal of Correctional Health Care*, 27(2), 81-84. <https://doi.org/10.1089/jchc.20.07.0061>
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- Reeder, A. L. (2023). The experiences of people who are incarcerated in accessing mental health care: A qualitative meta-ethnography. *Journal of Forensic Nursing*, 19(2), 131-139. <https://doi.org/10.1097/jfn.0000000000000405>
- Willis, G. M. & Letourneau, E. J. (2018). Promoting accurate and respectful language to describe individuals and groups. *Sexual Abuse*, 30(5), 480-483. <https://doi.org/10.29158/jaapl.003740-18>

## Your Experience Matters: Nursing Research Participants Wanted

### Advanced Practice Pathways for Graduate Entry Nursing graduates.

We are seeking to recruit the following participants:

- GEN Graduates employed as an RN within Australia and NZ
- Members of professional nursing organisations within Australia and NZ and organisations involved in legislating, credentialing or accrediting NP and or Designated Nurse Prescribers e.g., Australian Primary Health Care Nurses Association; Australian College of Nursing; Australian Nursing Midwifery Board; Nursing Council of New Zealand; NZNO, College of Nurses Aotearoa.
- Faculty within tertiary education institutions within Australia and NZ who teach into advanced practice programmes.

The study has ethical approval from the University of Otago. People who want to participate can contact Associate Professor Virginia Jones at [virginia.jones@otago.ac.nz](mailto:virginia.jones@otago.ac.nz)

**Click on this link for more information:**

[Category B - Information sheet for participants](#)

## As shared by Kai Tiaki Nursing Journal...

### Strengthen your career; reveal the significance of nursing

Your work project or thesis may be helpful, informative and interesting to other nurses in New Zealand and internationally

NZNO's research journal, **Kaitiaki Nursing Research**, is looking for research papers relevant to New Zealand nurses. They can be on clinical, educational, management or health policy topics.

Getting your research published in a peer-reviewed journal can inspire and influence the practice of other nurses.

At a time when the practice and role of the nurse is so important, the Journal showcases excellence in New Zealand nursing research. It is essential reading for the nurse who wants research to inform their practice. Articles are all subject to international standards/criteria double-blind peer review and are relevant to New Zealand nursing practice.

#### Writing your article

1. Pull out one clear story from your thesis or project to frame your key findings.
2. Original research papers should be 5000-7000 words in length for the main text, excluding abstract, tables and references

Go to [About Kaitiaki Nursing Research Annual Journal](#) to find out how to submit your article.

Submission guidelines can be found at [Kaitiaki Nursing Research Information – Kaitiaki Nursing New Zealand](#).



*Scan me*

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***Whaiwhia te kete mātauranga. Fill the basket of knowledge.***

*This whakatauki speaks to the importance of education and knowledge. It encourages you to share what you have gathered with people to "fill their kete" - their baskets of knowledge.*

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## Did you know...

### Access to Health Information Resources

The Health NZ National Library provides free access to online journals, databases, and eBooks for all health professionals.

#### For Health NZ Employees:

- Access the national library portal for databases, research support, and literature searches.
- Get help with finding information and systematic reviews.
- Use the document request service for articles.

#### For Primary Care & Community Health Professionals:

- Access key resources like BMJ Best Practice, Cochrane Library, and ClinicalKey.
- **To register:** Create a free Open Athens account at the link provided.
- **To access:** Visit the Primary Care portal at the link provided.

#### Need Help?

Contact your local Health NZ library for assistance with resources, registration, or research support.

## NURSING RESEARCH SECTION MISSION

The Nursing Research Section (NRS), Te Wāhanga Rangahau Tapuhi (NZNO), aims to elevate nursing research by inspiring collaboration, facilitating international and national partnerships, and promoting evidence-based practice. We support nurses in their research endeavours, assist with dissemination and publication, and recognise their contributions to the field.



Collaboration



Partnerships



Evidence-Based  
Practice

## Upcoming Events

### Workshops and Seminars – In-person and Online

- **Foundations in Clinical Research and Critical Evaluation (In-Person)**

This series covers essential topics from planning to presenting clinical research, including study designs, statistical concepts, data management, and analysis, culminating in manuscript writing and result presentation. In-person Date: 8 July – 9 July, 2026. Use link:

[Professional development and short courses – University of Auckland](#)

- **Ngā Manukura Training Programme - Clinical Leadership Training**

Ngā Manukura is a Clinical Leadership programme for Māori Nurses and Midwives.

Use this link to enrol for the August (Waikato and Christchurch) cohorts 2026: [Ngā Manukura | Digital Indigenous](#)

- **NZNO Event Calendar:**

For relevant section and committee activities, check out this link: [Event calendar - List View](#)

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## Research Professional Development

### Professional Development

- **Nursing Section Research Grants:**

Due to our planned 50th Jubilee celebration event this year, the September research grant will be deferred until 2027. We encourage all interested applicants to prepare their submissions for next year's cycle.

### Publications and Presentations

- **Journal Submissions:**

Encourage your colleagues to submit their research papers to our annual Kaitiaki Nursing Research journal. For submission information, click on this link: [About Kaitiaki Nursing Research Annual Journal](#)

## Mastering Research Techniques and Strategies



### **NZNO Online Courses**

Develop or refresh your skills with flexible, self-paced online courses covering union and operational areas. These courses help meet PDRP requirements and are accessible via a mobile device or computer with internet access.

Click on this link: [Delegates learn online](#)



### **Ako Aotearoa - National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence**

Ako Aotearoa offers resources and funding for tertiary education research and projects, with a focus on nursing-related initiatives. Explore their programs for more details.

Click on this link: [Knowledge Centre » Ako Aotearoa](#)



### **The Goodfellow Unit**

The Goodfellow Unit, supported by the University of Auckland, provides free online modules emphasising evidence-based practice and research skills.

Click on this link: [e-Learning | Goodfellow Unit](#)



### **National Institute for Health and Care Research - Research skills e-learning**

Free e-learning modules for health and care professionals, developed in collaboration with 8 royal colleges. The modules can help you prepare for a career in research if you have little-to-no experience. Click on this link: [Research skills e-learning | NIHR](#)



Global Research Nurses - eLearning Offers courses on designing, planning, and operationalising health studies, including clinical trials. Available in multiple languages. Follow this link: [Welcome to The Global Health Network Training Centre • Global Health Training Centre](#)

## RCNiLearning

Provides free CPD modules for nurses, including research-related topics.

Follow this link: [Free online learning courses for nurses and student nurses | RCNi Learning](#)

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## Looking Ahead in 2026

Our section is at an exciting point of growth, perfectly aligned with our core mission. By **advocating** for the profession through our NCNZ submission and **uniting** our community for the 50th Jubilee, we are building a strong foundation. The overwhelming support from our recent survey confirms you are ready to take the next step with us. As we **expand** to include education and quality, we will create more opportunities to **connect** researchers and **advance** our practice. Together, we are shaping the future of nursing in Aotearoa.

Mark your calendars for our Golden Jubilee celebration week!

**Date:** Week of 9 November 2026

**Venue:** Online via NZNO Section Webpage

**Theme:** "Sustainability: Treasuring Our Past, Protecting Our Future"

More information coming soon.

**Nga mihi nui**

**Te Wāhanga Rangahau Tapuhi Nursing Research Section**

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