

Professional Nursing Advisor Report for Pacific Nurses Section (PNS) AGM

Wednesday 4th November 2026

Mālō e lelei, Talofa lava, Ni sa bula, Bula Vinaka, Taloha ni, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Kia orana and warm Pacific greetings to you all. Thank you for the opportunity to present the NZNO Professional Nursing Advisor report to the Pacific Nurses Symposium – “Pacific Nurses: Empowered Nurses Save Lives.”

As we come to the final AGM of the Pacific Nurses Section, I want to sincerely acknowledge and thank all those who have contributed to its remarkable legacy. For many years, the Section has been a powerful and respected voice for Pacific nurses, consistently advocating for nurses, nursing, and the health of Pacific communities. The Section has never been afraid to challenge the status quo, to push boundaries, and to champion change where change was needed. Through its leadership, courage, and unwavering commitment, it has influenced conversations both within NZNO and across the wider health sector. The impact of that work will continue long after today. Thank you for your determination, your wisdom, and your willingness to advocate boldly when it mattered most. The foundations you have built will continue to guide and inspire those who follow.

The following is a snapshot of NZNO activities for 2025/2026:

Collective bargaining activity continues across Aged Care, Primary Health and community services, with NZNO supporting members through active negotiations, pay equity work, change proposals, and ongoing issues such as staffing, overtime consistency and employer engagement. NZNO is strengthening visibility and advocacy, with Age Safe training being rolled out, and new tools such as Age care understaffing and whanaū impact online reporting. Because bargaining environments are shifting quickly, members are encouraged to follow the CEO's fortnightly updates for the most current information.

The Ministry of Health released a document called "Putting Patients First – modernising the health workforce." This document undermines the nurse's role, prioritising political mandates over public safety and replacing the profession's core values with government priorities. NZNO objected to this attack on health workforce regulation. The Ministry of Health's analysis of this document revealed political overreach in regulating health practitioners. The Minister introduced the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act Amendment Bill to the House of Parliament before the House closed for this election cycle. There are potential issues that may emerge from the amended legislation regulating nurses. Again, please keep an eye on the fortnightly CEO to keep informed about any proposed changes following the election and how NZNO members can be involved.

I appreciate the national committee's responsiveness in engaging with national issues, including the Nursing Council of NZ's consultation requests, and NZNO activities that have influenced the nursing profession.

Pay Equity

The next phase of NZNO's Pay Equity campaign under Maranga Mai! has been advancing. NZNO is the largest union in health with the largest female dominant workforce and the only union with PE claims being progressed under the amended act (Plunket and Hospice). NZNO's approach is to build national visibility, support organising in worksites, and progress claims in ways that pursue outcomes for members and the operation of the amended law.

NZNO Medico-Legal Forum

The 2026 Medico Legal Forums were held in July in Christchurch and Auckland (which was also hosted online). The forum offered essential legal and professional updates for nurses, featuring NZNO medicolegal experts, the Nursing Council, and the Health and Disability Commissioner. The programme covered unsafe staffing and professional obligations, whistleblowing and advocacy, AI in nursing, Code of Conduct updates, informed consent, and practical workshops led by Professional Nursing Advisors. With recent cases and regulatory insights presented directly by sector leaders, this forum provided a timely and highly relevant, practice-ready guidance.

Student Survey 2025

This occurs every two years, undertaken by the NZNO National Student Unit (NSU).

Key implications and recommendations include:

- Financial hardship and placement poverty -requires system level responses such as paid or financially supported placements, bursaries and flexible pathways.
- Bullying, incivility and unsafe learning environments remain prevalent.
- Preceptor training, clear policy and robust reporting processes are needed.
- Graduates continue to report feeling under prepared, reinforcing the need for strong transition to practice programmes.
- Cultural safety and rainbow/takatāpui competence require consistent, co-designed inclusion across curricula.
- Student mental wellbeing requires urgent attention, including assessment load reform and genuinely accessible support services.
- Engagement with students as co designers of education and workforce solutions is essential.

The NSU is currently highlighting these issues via a social media campaign and NZNO together with NSU has just released a policy position to pay nursing students a weekly allowance while they're on clinical placement.

Please view the annual report for further details from all parts of Tōpūtanga Tapuhi Kaitiaki o Aotearoa NZNO [Annual Report, 2025-2026.pdf](#)

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