



New Zealand College of Primary Healthcare Nurses (NZNO)
NZNO Professional Nursing Adviser's report for 2024 AGM
Cathy Leigh PNA

Tēnā koutou katoa, greetings to you all. Thank you for the opportunity to present the NZNO Professional Nursing Advisor report at this AGM.

I would like to thank Tracey and the committees for the dedication and hard work they have put in over the last year, to promote the College and work on important projects, which Tracey has highlighted in her report. Including the very successful conference in Rotorua last March!

We all know the last two years have been particularly trying. Nurses have been hit with many challenges - the ongoing effects of Covid 19, staffing shortages, extreme weather events to name a few. It's clear that 2024 is going to be another year where we deal with change, both at a political level and inevitably in our workplaces.

It has been good to see some positive changes, such as the government funding for those nurses returning to nursing and for internationally qualified nurses; also the changes to the immigration settings to put nursing on the fast track to residency. There has been a huge influx of overseas trained nurses since that time, which is now posing new issues – we are hearing anecdotal evidence that some overseas trained nurses are having difficulty securing employment in NZ. We are also aware of the impact on workplaces of having large numbers of new graduates entering the workforce.

I want to highlight in this report some of the work NZNO has been undertaking to address issues. NZNO has now grown to around 60000 members. CE Paul Goulter has been actively involved meeting members in all sectors as well as meeting with health leaders, including Te Whatu Ora, the Minister of Health and the Chief Nurse. I will briefly highlight a few of the most recent activities and future projects.

NZNO 'Maranga Mai!' campaign remains central to our strategic planning. Maranga Mai! means 'Rise Up!' and is a call for NZNO members, whatever sector they work in, to come together and take united action to win the political and resourcing commitments needed to address the nursing shortage crisis permanently. There have been a number of rallies in different sectors throughout the motu, to highlight this campaign. In July 2023, NZNO also launched **The Nurse We Need campaign**, which aims to raise awareness of the nursing workforce shortages. Please continue to share this online and get involved in local actions to support this campaign. https://maranga-mai.nzno.org.nz/why_we_support_maranga_mai

NZNO is currently finalising the 2024/2025 strategic plan. Strategies are being developed for the four sector groups: Te Whatu Ora; Primary Healthcare; Aged care and Private/Hospice.

NZNO College and Section committee members, delegates and other member leaders, have been invited to attend online workshops to input into these. The final plans have been presented to the Board and Te Poari earlier in March.

Pay equity - Finally a Pay Equity settlement was achieved in Te Whatu Ora, after a long and complicated process. Next steps are addressing the **senior nurse salaries**. NZNO has brought together a team of senior nurses, to look at development of a job scoping tool and a new pay scale. It is expected that this work will be completed before collective bargaining later in the year, with the result likely to be a key NZNO claim. Reaching agreement with Te Whatu Ora on a payscale which will attract and retain skilled nurses is crucial to the sustainability of our health system.

Preparations have begun for the renegotiation of the **Te Whatu Ora collective agreement** (which expires in October) with key issues being pay, just ratios and health and safety. We will be running a series of meetings in April to ensure we have a clear and widely supported set of bargaining claims.

NZNO is now working to achieve pay equity across non- Te Whatu Ora sites. There are currently a number of live claims in process – Primary practices, Urgent Care, Plunket, Hospice and Care & Support workers. Future work is planned for other areas (including aged care and rural hospitals). Regarding the widening pay gap between Te Whatu Ora nurses and those in primary healthcare, NZNO has been active in the media about this, been involved in GP Leadership Groups and raised issues around funding with the Minister of Health. NZNO messaging is that the Pay Equity claim was designed to put pressure on the Government (not GP practices) and that most practices support the claim and really do want Pay Parity for their nursing staff.

Holidays act remediation - This has been an excruciatingly slow process with hold ups at Te Whatu Ora end, despite promise after promise for timeframes to resolve this. NZNO recently put out a media release highlighting these delays and our members' frustrations. NZNO CE Paul Goulter will be lodging a complaint about this with Minister of Health Dr Shane Reti.

Staffing Ratios: NZNO is exploring what a nurse: patient model could look like in various nursing sectors. It is not intended to replace CCDM where this is in place. The focus is on whether mandated ratios have potential to provide a safe minimum staffing level to underpin CCDM, and the feasibility of implementing mandated ratios in other sectors.

There will be further communications coming out about "Ratio Justice Action" day and also a ratios conference is to be held in July, providing a platform for expert speakers and discussion around what ratios could look like in New Zealand.

Future role of the nurse project – the aim is to develop a future-facing document outlining what nursing will look like in the next 10-15 years in the ever-evolving society and health system; what skills we will need to continue to meet the needs of our patients; and where we need to focus our work to improve health outcomes in our communities. We are also working with HCAs regarding their concerns and career pathways.

NZNO National Student Unit Survey 2023: More than 1400 students participated in this survey, with results highlighting the significant barriers students are facing – including financial stresses and the need for better cultural support for Māori and Pacific nursing taura. The cost of clinical placements during training (petrol, parking, travel and accommodation) were identified as pressure points, with hardship issues particularly intense for Māori. Many students question whether nursing is right for them, with a 30% dropout rate. 84 % of respondents said students should receive some form of financial compensation during clinical placements. The NSU are continuing to lobby for more support for nursing students.

News from the Professional team:

Professional Nursing Advisors were involved in giving feedback on NCNZ proposals, such as the review of the overseas registration process; and the review of the EN & RN Scopes of practice and competencies.

We Continue to engage with members in worksites, providing support, advice, education and workshops – these can be tailored according to the issues or changes occurring at your worksite. If you would like a PNA to meet with you or your team please do contact NZNO to be put in touch with the PNA for your region.

Professional Forums were held in the three main centres late last year, with the key theme being how we maintain professional standards as we face unprecedented challenges.

Professional Supervision – we have now compiled a list of professional supervisors across the motu, which can be found on the NZNO website. https://www.nzno.org.nz/support/nursing_supervision

NZNO Colleges and Sections Day will be held in Wellington on 19th March, providing the opportunity for committee members from the 20 specialty groups (including this College) to come together, network and share ideas. A key focus of the day will be how to grow Colleges & Sections and increase their influence, and how NZNO can support their mahi.

In summary – it has been a busy year, and I would like to extend my appreciation to all of you working under pressure in our health system. It has been a year of trauma, change and frustration but I hope also one where you have felt the reward of standing firm for what you believe in and the power of a collective voice.

I would like to thank the committee again for their hard work and dedication to the CPHCN. This committee is always positive, enthusiastic and full of ideas about how to improve conditions for both healthcare workers and patients in primary healthcare. It has been a pleasure to continue to work with such a dedicated team and I look forward to what the next year holds.

Ngā mihi

Cathy Leigh, Professional Nursing Advisor