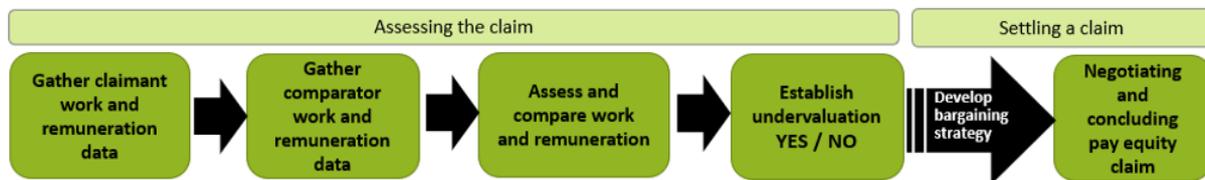




UPDATE 15 – October 2021

Kia ora Tatou members

We are here



We are pleased to report that we entered the *settling a claim* phase of the Pay Equity process “*negotiation and concluding pay equity claim*” on 7 September while the whole country was in lockdown Level 4. Since then we have had 5 further days where we have met to progress this work. It would be an under-statement to say that having to conduct this process by Zoom has added another layer of complexity to an already very complex problem because most of this phase of the process relies on constant reference back to spreadsheets containing line by line data on pay rates and *EJE points and performing calculations remotely while screen sharing becomes literally eye watering by the end of a day.

To begin, we have looked at the remuneration differences between the comparable roles. The process requires the parties to agree on what method will be used for the calculations. For example, whether it is average base pay, total remuneration, or median or mean base salary. If for example the total remuneration model is used, it must be agreed what is meant by *total remuneration*, i.e. penal rates, overtime, superannuation, allowances. And or if you take the highest rates, medium or lowest rates of the respective pay scales. All these methods (and numerous other methods that could be used) are being explored to check which delivers the most equitable outcome. We also must look at the impact of translating this onto current pay scales or if new scales need to be developed. We are considering, while maintaining the integrity of the PE process what may happen to the current relativities of the current pay scales. Some roles have been undervalued to a lesser or greater extent, so that is why there will not be a standard % increase applied across the scale. The degree of undervaluation may be different for each group of members. The difference is determined by the closest comparators to each nursing role according to EJE scores and the comparators pay.

What we are doing now is using the *EJE points or scores arrived at through the work assessment process for both the claimants and the comparators by the factor groupings of skills, responsibilities and demands, to identify the comparability of the closest male-dominated comparators. We have agreed to use comparators that fall within 5% - 10% of the respective EJE points. To ensure a consistent, repeatable, and fair approach, the calculations assign a value to the EJE points to create a clear relationship between skill level and what the role is paid. **For example:** comparators median base pay divided by the EJE points = EJE point value. Average EJE point value x RN EJE points = Equitable pay.

To help expedite the process we have established a “sub” working group of the bargaining teams to focus on modelling how the translations to the pay scales might look. This will be reviewed by the whole team when we resume the bargaining on 19 and 20 October and this will move us ever closer in the direction of a settlement.

While we are very conscious that members want “certainty” on what their pay equity rate will be, as you can tell from above, we are not able to provide that concretely at this point. We remain confident though on the evidence that we can see that the pay rates across our **pay scales will be lifted for all**.

The bargaining for the midwifery part of our claim got underway yesterday (7 October). It is a parallel process, a little behind the nursing claim but will possibly catch up given there are fewer roles that have been assessed. We look forward to celebrating the outcome of this process within the timeframe agreed. There will be information provided closer to the settlement being reached about how members will vote on the acceptability of the outcome. We are aware that there have been lots of questions about how those members who have moved DHBs, retired or resigned, claim their backpay once the claim is settled. We will develop a template letter that may assist those members claiming their pay equity settlement. For members who continue to be employed, how the back pay and new rates will be applied will be described in the processes around the ratification. It does need to be remembered that non-members who have not opted out of the pay equity claim, will also be communicated with by NZNO / PSA and MERAS because the Equal Pay Amendment Act 2020 requires that to be a role of the unions who have raised the claim.

*EJE = Equitable Job Evaluation work assessment tool.

Please remain patient and supportive **the goal is in sight now**, along with the deadline that is keeping everyone focussed. We will do this. We are addressing generations of inequity base on sex discrimination; our work must be absolutely watertight so that it cannot be challenged on the basis of lack of proof of this injustice.

Remember the Minister of Health Hon Andrew Little in his speech to NZNO Conference on 15 September 2021 said, “... *the Government is committed to paying nurses fairly through pay equity. Recognising the skills and responsibilities of your jobs and the fact you have never been paid what you are worth – largely because traditionally, nursing was a female profession*”.

Glenda Alexander and Lesley Harry
NZNO Pay Equity Claim – Leads
8 October 2021