

Professional Nursing Adviser report:

Aotearoa College of Diabetes Nurses May 2024

Tēnā koutou katoa.

As a member lead organisation, the New Zealand Nurses Organisation Tōpūtanga Tapuhi Kaitiaki o Aotearoa (NZNO), relies on members volunteering their time to make the professional colleges and sections possible. As such leading the way for their colleagues. Your ACDN national committee work tirelessly to advocate for members, RNs and NPs, across all health sectors and for equity in access to diabetes care for Māori and Pacific peoples. They continually advocate for Nurse Prescribers and for a more flexible and responsive prescribing list to improve access to diabetes medications. ACDN have asked for a delegate to represent the voice of the diabetes nurse and for all NZNO national committee members have paid release time as a claim in employment contracts as workplace delegates do.

I would like to acknowledge the huge commitment and mahi Amanda and the committee contribute in addition to their senior roles in diabetes nursing. Aroha, mai, Aroha atu. Thank you.

Since 1889, the 1st of May has been commemorated by workers, unions and progressive groups around the world. It is an opportunity to celebrate our past victories as part of NZNO and plan our future wins.

I have included here just some of the mahi NZNO pursued to support nursing in the last year.

Maranga Mai! We demand:

1. Te Tiriti firmly being upheld in all health settings so Māori have equal access to a health system that works for them
2. 4000 more nurses in place as quickly as possible and fair and culturally safe nurse-to-patient ratios
3. Pay and conditions that value nurses right across the health sector and keep them in the job. This includes sustainable funding for Pay Parity
4. Training that is affordable and accessible so more people study and stay on to become nurses
5. More Māori and Pasifika nurses so people receive health care that fits with their culture.

NZNO College and Section committee members, delegates and other member leaders, took part in online workshops to feedback on the NZNO strategic plans. These have been signed off by the Board and Te Poari and now guide our mahi through the year.

NZNO has begun a project titled Lifting the focus of the colleges and sections (C&S). Part of this mahi is understanding how we can market the Colleges and Sections to members and non-members. Paul Goulter has asked each college how NZNO can support them better to raise their influence as experts in their fields.

Pay equity - Finally a Pay Equity settlement was achieved in Te Whatu Ora, after a long and complicated process. 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.

Next steps for Te Whatu Ora is to address the senior nurse salaries. NZNO has brought together a team of senior nurses, to choose an appropriate 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 and is crucial to the sustainability of our health system. Success in Te Whatu Ora will lead the way for other sectors.

Te Whatu Ora - 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. Delegates ran a series of meetings in April to ensure we have a clear and widely supported set of bargaining claims.

Holidays act remediation - This has been an excruciatingly slow process with hold ups at the 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 - Nursing unions have won enforceable staffing ratios as a result of campaigning in the US, Australia, Canada and elsewhere. Nurse-to-patient ratio legislation has markedly improved recruitment and retention in these countries. Our goal is to win culturally safe nurse to patient ratios across the health system in Aotearoa. This will provide the focus of campaign activity over the next few months. It is not intended to replace CCDM where this is in place. Please join the National Day of Action May 9th in your area. See website for more details https://maranga-mai.nzno.org.nz/ratio_justice

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 our 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. Members are being consulted through workshops at the regional conventions.

National health care assistants (HCA) oversight committee - We are working with HCAs regarding their concerns about inconsistent training and career pathways. Their aim is to have consistent training for all HCAs wherever they work and national stepping stones for HCAs who may want to become enrolled nurses or registered nurses and where all HCAs are remunerated appropriately for the work they do.

NZNO National Student Unit Survey 2023 - More than 1,400 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 & 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 three main centres late last year, with the key theme being how we maintain professional standards as we face unprecedented challenges.

Professional Supervision – there is now a list of professional supervisors from across the motu, available on the NZNO website. https://www.nzno.org.nz/support/nursing_supervision

NZNO Colleges and Sections day was held in Wellington on 19th March, providing the opportunity for committee members from the 20 specialty groups (including ACDN) to come together, network and share ideas.

In summary – We are in unpredictable times, with climate emergencies more common, a health system struggling to provide equitable health care, and financial constraints. But, we know if we stand together, the force of 60,000 nurses and healthcare workers is a force to be reckoned with and the voice of the nurse will be heard. It took time to win Pay Equity for Te Whatu Ora nurses, together we will win it, and more, for all nurses across all areas of health. Maranga Mai!

Thank you for the opportunity to present the PNA report. It has been a pleasure to continue to work with such a passionate and dedicated committee. No matter what barriers they face they find a way to surmount them.

“Kāhore taku toa I te toa takitahi, he toa takitini”

We cannot succeed without the support around us