

Attendance at New Zealand Nurses Organisation (NZNO) AGM and Conference 17 September 2025

Due to MO:	11 September 2025	Reference	HNZ00096427
To:	Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Health		
From:	Robyn Shearer, Interim Chief Human Resources Officer		
Copy to:	N/A		
Security level:	In Confidence	Priority	Routine
Consulted:	N/A		
Proactive Release:	This title is proposed by Health NZ for proactive release		

Contact for phone discussion (if required)

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Attachments

Appendix 1: Runsheet and location map

Appendix 2: Speech notes

Appendix 3: Attendee biographies

Appendix 2 has been withheld in full

About the event

Purpose	This briefing provides you with background information ahead of your opening address at the New Zealand Nurses Organisation Tōpūtanga Tapuhi Kaitiaki o Aotearoa AGM (which is followed by their conference). The theme for 2025 is <i>Karanga Atū, Maranga Mai!</i>
Date	Wednesday 17 September 2025
Time	9.30am to 10am
Venue	Amokura Room, Level 4, Te Papa
Expected attendees	Kerri Nuku, Kaiwhakahaere, NZNO Anne Daniels, President, NZNO Paul Goulter, CEO, NZNO Approx 200 NZNO members and employees [Note, biographies are attached as Appendix 3]
Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora representatives	Not required
Media	None
Talking points	Speech attached as Appendix 2 – no Q&A session

Background

1. The New Zealand Nurses Organisation | Toputanga Tapuhi Kaitiaki o Aotearoa (NZNO) Conference is the largest annual national forum for nurses in the country.
2. The Conference runs over two days with the Annual General Meeting on the morning of Wednesday 17 September, and the Conference Programme running over Wednesday afternoon and Thursday.
3. NZNO is New Zealand's largest industrial and professional nursing organisation representing nurses, midwives, students, healthcare assistants and some allied health professionals. The organisation has over 55,000 members, of whom the majority are nurses (approximately 35,000).
4. The AGM is a key event for NZNO, at which its annual report and financial statements are presented and at which the membership is informed of the results of elections to its Board of Directors.
5. The governance, supervision of the management and control of the affairs of NZNO are vested in the Board of Directors (in addition to any other powers and authorities expressly conferred upon the Board by the Constitution).
6. The joint heads of the organisation are its President and Kaiwhakahaere.

Key areas of interest for NZNO

7. Maranga Mai is a nationwide NZNO campaign urging nurses to demand political and resourcing commitments. It's driven by NZNO's charter of 'Five Fixes', reflecting members' solutions to workforce challenges:
 - i. Ensure Te Tiriti is actualised within and across the health system;
 - ii. Fix the number of trained and qualified nurses across the health system;
 - iii. Fix the pay and conditions that are equal across the health system;
 - iv. Fix the number of people in nursing training to meet current and future needs;
 - v. Fix the number of Māori and Pasifika nurses to meet the need.
8. NZNO has actively advocated for nurses by urging the Minister of Health to resolve the pay equity claim and improve pay, terms, and conditions.

Discussion

Industrial relations

Nursing Council of New Zealand (NCNZ) review of the three scopes of nursing practice

12. The Nursing Council has undertaken recent work to revise scopes of practice for enrolled and registered nurses and nurse practitioners, as well as other reviews relating to nurse prescribing and education standards.
13. This work is an area of potential high interest for the attending delegates. Background is provided below.

Revised scope of practice for Enrolled Nurses (ENs)

14. Effective since January 2025, the revised scope focuses on enabling more independent practice by moving away from Registered Nurses (RNs) direction and delegation to a model emphasizing partnership and access to support from RNs or other health practitioners.
15. The updated scope is more flexible, linked to education and experience, incorporates Te Ao Māori and enables ENs to take a greater role in [nursing assessment](#), [care planning](#), implementation, and evaluation.

16. These changes present an opportunity to reinvigorate the EN role, increase employment opportunities and career pathways.

Revised scope of practice for Registered Nurses

17. Effective since January 2025, the revised scope emphasizes Te Ao Māori and cultural safety, shifts focus from tasks to the flexible application of complex clinical judgment, and mandates RNs provide guidance and support to ENs rather than delegation and direction.
18. The changes also incorporate differential diagnosis, acknowledging the expertise RNs bring to the interprofessional team, and aligns with a commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and equitable care across all settings.
19. The scope review presents the opportunity to develop multiple career pathways for RNs. Including RN prescribing and Nurse Practitioner (NP).

NCNZ review of the scope and education standards for Nurse Practitioners

20. A current NCNZ review of Nurse Practitioner (NP) preparation and transition to practice.

NCNZ review of RN prescribing

21. A current NCNZ review of RN prescribing is streamlining the education standards for PG Diploma RN prescribing.

NCNZ review of education standards

22. NCNZ is undertaking a consultation and review of nursing education to determine a future vision for nursing education in New Zealand.
23. The review aims to enhance flexibility for providers, allowing innovation to flourish.
24. The review will focus on the relevance of the current models, while also considering how nursing education is shaped and delivered, to ensure ongoing relevance and preparation of safe and competent nurses in the future.
25. Health NZ views this as an opportunity for national consistency for undergraduate education, linked or stacked qualifications leading to clearer career pathways, from HCA/Kaiawhina to EN to RN to NP.

Graduate RN employment

26. Managing the entry of graduate RNs is a normal part of the cycle of recruiting into the nursing workforce. While the Accord agreed with nursing unions does not guarantee employment in the sector, Health NZ is obligated to facilitate access to training and employment opportunities.
27. Under the Safe Staffing Accord, signed on 30 July 2018, Health NZ is committed to supporting the employment of domestic graduate RNs who apply via the Advanced Choice of Employment (ACE) nursing process.
28. ACE is a single Health NZ application tool that enables graduate RNs to submit one application for employment, which is then distributed to employers registered with ACE. This is not the only mechanism for graduate RNs to find employment.
29. As of 3 September 2025, 1,777 graduate RNs had applied through the ACE process for

the 2025 year-end recruitment round. This number may reduce depending on pass rates for the final registration examination. Health NZ is committed to enabling the employment of as many graduate RNs as possible.

30. In 2025 we delivered the ACE 200 initiative through which funding was allocated to support the employment of up to 200 Graduate RNs in primary and community healthcare settings.
31. We have made an online preceptorship course available with open access to all employers. We also required that the Graduate RNs had access to a supported first year of practice.

Primary Care Tactical Action Plan (PCTAP)

32. In March the Government announced the PCTAP initiatives, including the following initiatives for primary and community RNs:
 - a. Funding to incentivise primary care and community health to employ up to 400 graduate RNs;
 - b. Funding for 120 RNs in primary care and community health to undertake postgraduate advanced practice education; and
 - c. Funding for 120 RNs primary care and community health to complete their Master's and register in the nurse practitioner (NP) scope.

Supporting 400 graduate RNs

33. To provide additional support for employers, we have developed the Supported First Year of Practice (SFYP) guidelines. SFYP is based on international peer-reviewed research on graduate transition to practice. This has been warmly received across the primary and community sector, enabling primary and community nurse leaders to develop SFYP experiences tailored to their practice setting.
34. The SFYP has been reflected in Health NZ specifications, and enables year-round employment, tailored education and individualised support for graduate RNs.

Postgraduate RN scholarship funding

35. PCTAP funding will support 120 primary and community healthcare RNs to complete a Postgraduate Diploma in RN Prescribing or start a Master's leading to registration as a nurse practitioner.
36. The aim is to significantly increase the availability of RN prescribers in primary and community healthcare services and to build the number of RNs ready to enter the NP pathway.
37. District funding is still available to Health NZ and primary and community healthcare RNs for postgraduate education.
38. Applications opened on 29 August 2025 and will close on 30 September 2025
39. The aim of the funding is to provide financial support to RNs with payment of education fees, travel, supervision, clinical placement and completion of the qualification, alongside backfill and other related costs for the employer.

Nurse Practitioners (NPs)

40. Health NZ highly values NPs and the number of RNs we have supported through the NP pathway has been growing annually. In 2025 we are already supporting 121 RNs to become NPs.
41. PCTAP funding is now available for 180 places to start in 2026:
 - a. 120 places via PCTAP funding for RNs in primary and community healthcare;
 - b. 60 places via Health NZ District funding for other practice settings.
42. The funding and new specifications will deliver tailored, wraparound support to RNs and their employers throughout their practicum year and additional post-registration transition. Support will include mentoring, pastoral care, clinical placement coordination, employer engagement and structured support to safely embed the NP role into primary and community healthcare settings.
43. The level of investment through PCTAP will bring about significant growth in this advanced practice workforce and service delivery, especially in primary and community healthcare settings.

Voluntary Bonding Scheme

44. The Health NZ Voluntary Bonding Scheme aims to encourage graduate RNs to work in communities and specialties which need them most, to retain them in New Zealand.
45. Those accepted to the Scheme can become eligible for payments after the first three to five years of their career, to help repay their student loan, or as top-up income.
46. Analysis of workforce data indicates that the retention rate after five years for RNs is up to 27% higher than for those who did not register for the Scheme. The eligible professions for the 2025/26 and 2026/27 intakes have not yet been finalised.

National clinical placement and access agreement for pre-registration nursing and other health professions

47. The agreement has been in place since January 2025 and replaces over 400 variable contracts between the former DHBs and tertiary education providers.
48. The agreement establishes a consistent approach to quality, safety, screening, onboarding and enables operational efficiencies, business processes, documentation and equity.

Health care assistants/ Kāiawhina

49. Health care assistants (HCA)/ kāiawhina refers to workforce roles that typically involve direct caregiving, support, or health-related services. Essentially the care and support workforce. This group is sometimes referred to as the unregulated workforce directly involved in patient care.
50. HCA/kāiawhina is a key workforce, contributing to delivery of health services as part of a multi-disciplinary team. This is a foundational role, and kamahi have the potential to staircase into regulated professions as part of their career planning.

Appendix 1: Runsheet and location map, NZNO conference & AGM Amokura Rm, Lvl 4, Te Papa, 17 September

Time	Details	Minister's Office notes
9.30am	Arrival at the venue, greeted by Kerri Nuku, NZNO Kaiwhakahaere	
9.40am	Introduced by Anne Daniels, NZNO President The Minister's speech follows	
10.00am	Speech finishes. The Minister is thanked by Kerri Nuku	



Appendix 3: Attendee list and biographies

The NZNO Executive team is comprised as follows:

- Paul Goulter, Chief Executive: Mr Goulter commenced his role in February 2022. He has an extensive career in the trade union movement (FinSec and NZEI) and since commencing his employment with NZNO has adopted a strong and vocal position on pay equity issues and the perceived health system crisis.
- Kerri Nuku, Kaiwhakahaere: Ms Nuku is of Ngati Kahungunu and Tainui descent, has a background in clinical nursing and midwifery, and has been active in the role as NZNO's Kaiwhakahaere since 2008.
- Anne Daniels, President: Ms Daniels was elected to the role in September 2022. She is a Senior Nurse in the Emergency Department at Dunedin Hospital.
- Kaiwhakahaere Kerri Nuku and President Anne Daniels are the NZNO joint leadership positions based on partnership, with shared oversight responsibilities. This includes such areas as policy and strategy, NZNO's external relationships, membership groups and networks, co-chairing meetings and being the public face of the board and members.