

Meeting with STONZ 23 October 2025

Due to MO:	21 October 2025	Reference	HNZ00087174
To:	Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Health		
From:	Robyn Shearer, Interim Chief Human Resources Officer		
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Proactive Release:	This title is proposed by Health NZ for proactive release		

Contact for further discussion

Name	Position	Phone	1st contact
Robyn Shearer	Interim Chief Human Resources Officer		x

Attachments

Appendix 1: Attendee biographies

Appendix 2: Talking points

Appendix 2 has been withheld in full.

About the meeting

Purpose	You are meeting with Specialty Trainees of New Zealand (STONZ) as part of your series of regular quarterly meetings
Date	23 October 2025
Time	10.30am-10.50am
Venue	6.6EW and online
Attendees	Dr Jordan Te Whaiti-Smith, President, Specialty Trainees of New Zealand (in-person attendee); Kate Clapperton-Rees, Executive Director, Specialty Trainees of New Zealand (in-person attendee); Dr Emma Littlehales, Vice President, Specialty Trainees of New Zealand (online attendee); Dr Alastair Hercus, Senior Executive, Specialty Trainees of New Zealand (online attendee) Note, biographies are attached as Appendix 1
Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora officials	Prof Dame Helen Stokes-Lampard, National Chief Medical Officer
Media	No media are expected
Talking points	Refer to Appendix 2

Background and context

1. This meeting briefing supports you in the latest of your regular quarterly meetings with STONZ.
2. STONZ is one of two unions representing RMOs, with the New Zealand Resident Doctors' Association (NZRDA) being the other. STONZ's membership is around 2,150, almost exclusively employed by Health NZ.
3. STONZ was established in 2018 by a group of surgical registrars and was originally named Surgical Trainees of NZ.
4. The catalyst for the establishment of STONZ was concern about the impact of the NZRDA's 2017 Multi-Employer Collective Agreement (MECA) with the former district health boards, which introduced new rostering restrictions. STONZ's founders considered these restrictions would negatively impact patient care, medical teams and RMO training.
5. You last met with STONZ on 15 July 2025.
6. For this meeting, STONZ has indicated that their areas of interest are:
 - a) Outsourcing MOUs with private providers and impact on training;
 - b) Advanced offers to RMOs/Fellows for the transition to SMO positions;

c) Negotiations; and

Matters for discussion

Outsourcing MOUs with private providers and the impact on training

7. Health NZ is collaborating with the private sector to expand Resident Medical Officer (RMO) training capacity in areas where there is a high volume of outsourced clinical services and/or insufficient in-house training capacity.
8. Health NZ is running five pilots (using different training models) with private providers that have been identified as well-suited to formalise shared training agreements across settings. These specialties cover Cardiothoracics, Ear Nose and Throat, Orthopaedics, General Surgery, Dental, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and Urology.
9. Health NZ will review the performance of the pilots by midyear 2026 to test and evaluate different models of private surgical registrar training.
10. A draft MoU is under internal review, following engagement on a set of underlying principles with private providers, medical colleges and unions.

Advanced offers to RMOs/Fellows for the transition to SMO positions

11. Health NZ is implementing a formal process to enable Hospital & Specialist Services' (HSS) regions to make advance offers of future employment to Fellows and RMOs intending to take up fellowships.
12. This process will apply to Fellows domiciled in New Zealand and those who are planning to leave their current Health NZ employment to take up an overseas fellowship.
13. Health NZ is also considering how to connect with New Zealand trained Fellows who are currently overseas.
14. This initiative aims to provide Fellows with certainty about future employment at Health NZ and to provide Health NZ with a future talent pool. It also supports the pathway for RMO to SMO transition.
15. On 1 September 2025, Health NZ held a constructive conversation with the medical unions during which we presented an early draft approach. The unions raised a range of considerations during the discussion, which we will explore as a part of the feedback provided during the consultation process.
16. [REDACTED]
17. Consultation on the proposed guideline and process is underway and will close on 27 October 2025. Health NZ is seeking feedback from multiple stakeholders on the early draft proposed guideline and process to pilot this initiative.

Negotiations

18. [REDACTED]

19.

20.

21.

22.

Appendix 1: Biographies of attendees



Kate Clapperton-Rees – Executive Director

Kate is responsible for the operational management and strategic leadership of STONZ i.e. putting the Executive teams plans into motion. Kate has a background in Business and Human Resources



Emma Littlehales – Vice President

Emma is a plastics trainee and part of the RACS Prevocational and Skills Education Committee, representing surgical non-training registrars. Emma focuses on NZ trainees gaining the required experience to become SMOs in a safe way, whilst being recognised and compensated for their hard work



Jordan Tewhaiti-Smith – President

Jordan is currently an O&G Training Registrar based at Dunedin Hospital. Jordan aligns closely with the goals of STONZ with RMOs and patients at the centre of their work. Jordan looks to facilitate balanced communication with the RMO workforce coming through, supporting them to be trained, competent practitioners.



Alastair Hercus – Senior Executive member

Alastair is an Anaesthetic trainee in the Auckland region who has been part of the STONZ Executive since 2022. He is originally from Christchurch, where he began his career, and maintains strong ties to the region. Fair remuneration and maintaining adequate RMO training are of particular interest to him.