

NZNO Professional Nursing Advisor report to the Women's Health College April 2026



Thank you for the opportunity to present the NZNO Professional Nursing Advisor report to the NZNO Women's Health College. It continues to be a privilege to work alongside this committee, whose leadership in Women's Health nursing remains essential to safe, high-quality care across Aotearoa.

Maranga Mai! Rise Up!

Over the past year, the College has looked to demonstrate strong strategic intent, particularly in advancing clinical excellence, strengthening the professional voice across Women's Health and advocating strongly for accessible women's health services. The operational plan 2026 continues to lift the influence of the College and contributes meaningfully to NZNO's national direction – Maranga Mai.

Membership

@ 13 March NZNO membership was at 63,421 (Paying members 58,113– excludes students and some honorary members)

Women's Health College membership as at 1/04/2026 696 a modest increase from last year.

2026 Colleges and Sections leadership training

These were highly successful 2-day events, with both the February Induction and March Forum. New committee members reported increased confidence in governance roles, while the Forum strengthened strategic leadership capability across topics such as finance, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and advocacy. Face-to-face networking was repeatedly identified as one of the most valuable outcomes, building confidence, collaboration, and shared purpose across the C&S network. A major improvement this year was the increased use of Employment Related Education Leave (EREL), which many leaders accessed for the first time, significantly improving participation and reducing stress. Overall, the programme strengthened the collective professional voice of Colleges and Sections. Both fora are now events on the NZNO annual calendar.

NZNO Medico-Legal Forum

The 2026 Medico-Legal Forum will be held in Christchurch Tue July 21st and Auckland Wed July 29th. This professional development offers essential legal and professional updates for nurses, featuring NZNO medicolegal experts, the Nursing Council, and the Health and Disability Commissioner. The programme covers unsafe staffing and professional obligations, whistleblowing and advocacy, AI in nursing, Code of Conduct updates, informed consent, and practical workshops led by Professional Nursing Advisors. With recent cases and regulatory insights presented directly by sector leaders, this forum provides timely, practice-ready guidance highly relevant to all nurses and nursing specialties. https://www.nzno.org.nz/get_involved/medico-legal_forum

Annual Student Survey

The annual survey 2025 report has been released and can be found here https://www.nzno.org.nz/resources/nzno_publications Key implications and recommendations include: Financial hardship and placement poverty as structural issues requiring system-level responses such as paid or financially supported placements, and/or bursaries. Bullying, incivility and unsafe learning environments remain prevalent; Graduates continue to report feeling under-prepared, reinforcing the need for strong transition-to-practice programmes; Cultural safety and rainbow/takatāpui competence require consistent, co-designed inclusion across curricula; Student mental wellbeing requires urgent attention, including assessment load reform and

genuinely accessible support services; Engagement with students as co-designers of education and workforce solutions is essential.

Medico-Legal and Competency Advisor Services

Medico-legal files were opened for 332 members, up by 16 from last year. in relation to:

- 64 coronial matters
- 11 Coroner / Police Witness
- 39 Health and Disability Commissioner complaints
- 1 Midwifery Council Competence and 2 Midwifery Council
- Nursing Council - 40 Assessment, 2 Competence, 44 Health, 5 section64, 2 APC
- Professional Conduct Committee – 3 convictions & 39 disciplinary
- Police - 4 enquiries and 56 police witness
- Health Professional Disciplinary Tribunal 3
- And a few other criminal and internal inquiries
- 26 new competency cases were supported by our NZNO Competency Advisor

The themes are in-line with membership support referrals to professional nursing advisors related to medication errors, failure to assess patients, adequate communication, and inadequate documentation. It is imperative members keep up their financial membership and indemnity coverage.

Kaitiaki and Kaitiaki Nursing Research

Over the past several weeks *Kaitiaki* shared a wave of go-purple events supporting pay equity. Stories included [the build-up preparations](#), the [nationwide events for International Women's Day](#), and [the rally at Parliament](#) that drew an inspiring speech by hospice nurse Anna Garton. Meanwhile, the last chairperson of the NZNO membership committee [gave her thoughts on the group's achievements and challenges](#). Nurse and tech system expert Karen Day [talked about the MediMap saga](#) that plagued aged care and hospice members – she says we can expect more hacks. We shared the story of Cynthia Maung, a Myanmar doctor keen [to enlist NZNO's nursing know-how](#) to upskill the health workforce on the border of Myanmar and Thailand. Also, former HNZ chair Rob Campbell spoke about [how nurses should be running the show](#).

Kaitiaki Nursing Research Journal is now an open-access online journal. Articles are uploaded throughout the year as they are completed. <https://kaitiaki.org.nz/kaitiaki-nursing-research-november-2025/>

Pay Equity

In Feb/March we have been advancing the next phase of NZNO's Pay Equity campaign under *Maranga Mai!* The approach is deliberate: building national visibility, supporting organising in worksites, and progressing claims in ways that pursue outcomes for members and test the operation of the amended law. These three strands of work are now moving together.

The Women's Health College committee will have a few changes following 2026 AGM as committee members finish their tenure. I would like to acknowledge Jill Lamb who has been the Chair of the College for the past several years. Alongside her patient, empathetic and passionate leadership she has supported a constructive, collaborative and active committee. I also thank Sandy Hamilton and Jackie Gartell both active and inclusive participants within the committee. We will regretfully let them go knowing they have advocated passionately for ensuring quality in nursing practice and that education is maintained and advanced for nurses in Women's Health.

Nga mihi Nui

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