



Pay equity interviewer training completed

6 July 2019

MERAS midwives have been trained to conduct structured work assessment interviews at selected DHBs as part of the midwives pay equity process. We have been told the proposed DHB locations should be confirmed by the end of next week.

From MERAS, Victoria Christian, Helenmary Walker, Sabine Weil, Kath Boyle, Caroline Conroy and Jill Ovens attended the training on 1st and 2nd July.

The aim of the interviews is to assess the work of DHB-employed midwives, including core midwives, community midwives, associate and charge midwives. There will also be interviews with Maori and Pacific midwives.

Midwives being interviewed will be questioned in relation to 12 work assessment factors to detail the skills, responsibilities and demands (physical and emotional) of midwifery in hospital settings, including tertiary, secondary and primary units.

The interviews will be in a mix of small, medium and large DHBs across the country with rural and urban areas included. Around 55 midwives in total will be interviewed separately or in pairs.

The interviews will be used to develop “summary profiles” which will then be compared with the same assessment process undertaken with occupations or professions dominated by men or historically dominated by men. Our goal is to produce evidence that midwifery, as a women-dominated profession has been undervalued and therefore underpaid.

Jill and Caroline are on the co-ordinating team that meets weekly by Zoom to progress the plan.

In addition, we have established an oversight group that includes MERAS workplace reps Leila Sparrow, Elizabeth Winterbee and Karen Gray. The DHBs’ team includes Midwifery Leaders Norma Campbell and Emma Farmer and HR rep Hannes Schoeman. There are also NZNO reps on the group. We met on 26 June and will continue to meet monthly.

NOTICE OF MERAS AGM

11am, Thursday, 15 August

Yarnton Lounge,

14 Erson Ave, Royal Oak, Auckland

The National Representatives Council invites you to attend the MERAS Annual General Meeting.

The NRC will be electing a new Chair and Deputy Chair. We will also be endorsing new NRC reps.

At the AGM we report to members on the activities over the past year, and how your fees were spent.

We will have a MERAS reference group with pay equity reps in each DHB. This follows courses we held in May and June with 70 workplace reps where we outlined the pay equity process and sought input into criteria for interviewers, those being interviewed, and comparator occupations.

The final stage will be settlement of the pay equity claim. Any new pay rates will be negotiated into the MERAS MECA at the time, effective 31 December 2019.

Private sector negotiations

MERAS is negotiating a new Collective Agreement for the Warkworth Birthing Centre. A claims meeting has been held and bargaining will start shortly.

We are meeting with Chloe Wright next week to get the negotiations back on track for a Collective Agreement that covers midwives in her four birthing centres in Tauranga, Mangere, Palmerston North and Petone.

The Waitaki District Health Services (Oamaru) Collective Agreement is currently being renewed. A members’ meeting has been held ahead of the renewal of the River Ridge and Waterford Collective Agreement which is up for renewal in September.

Jill Ovens, Co-leader (Industrial)

Caroline Conroy, Co-leader (Midwifery)