



## Big year ahead in 2020 Year of the Midwife

February 2020

2020 is promising to be a big year for MERAS. The World Health Organisation has designated 2020 as the Year of the Midwife to acknowledge the vital role midwives play in providing essential and effective health services worldwide.

International Midwives Day (5 May) is an opportunity to organise workplace activities or activities planned as part of the College of Midwives #backmidwives campaign.

During the year, we will be completing work on the Midwifery Accord and the Midwifery Pay Equity claim. We will be developing our bargaining strategy for the DHBs MECA, which will be underway by the end of the year.

It will be 30 years in August since the passing of the Nurses Amendment Act which recognised midwifery as an autonomous profession, so it is time that was recognised in our pay.

On 12 August we will hold the inaugural MERAS national forum at the Quality Inn in Parnell, Auckland. The forum is open to all workplace representatives.

Election 2020 will be one month later on 19 September, Suffrage Day. MERAS is actively involved in the Council of Trade Unions' campaign to re-elect a progressive Government.

The MERAS website is currently undergoing development of a Campaigns section where we will house election resources. We are also looking at materials you can display on your workplace noticeboards.

### Put these dates in your diary

International Women's Day (8 March)

International Midwives Day (5 May)

MERAS Workplace Reps Forum (12 August)

Advance voting opens (7 September)

Election Day / Suffrage Day (19 September)



**Members vote YES:** Shelley Sjaarda counts MERAS members' votes to ratify the proposed settlement of the Hamilton-based River Ridge and Waterford Multi-employer Collective Agreement. Shelley was on the negotiating team along with Cathy Verner and Wendy Fache (River Ridge) and Talei Cummins (Waterford).

### DHB to manage Te Papaioea Birthing Centre

MERAS has been engaging with the MidCentral DHB over its plans to manage Te Papaioea Birthing Centre in Palmerston North from 1 April.

The announcement came just before Christmas. Since then MERAS has met with Te Papaioea members and meetings have been held with the DHB. Members have contributed to MERAS submissions on the DHB proposal.

Te Papaioea is a modern facility that has been providing women with an environment and standard of care that ensures positive measurable outcomes such as excellent breastfeeding rates.

MDHB is offering employment to Te Papaioea members who are currently employed at the Centre. As the midwives are MERAS members, they will be covered by the MERAS DHBs MECA.

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