



2020 General Election Draft Campaign Plan

Introduction

2020 is a significant year for MERAS. 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.

The World Health Organisation has designated 2020 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 being held as part of the College of Midwives #backmidwives campaign.

It will be 30 years in August 2020 since the passing of the Nurses Amendment Act which recognised midwifery as an autonomous profession in its own right with direct entry midwifery training.

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. MERAS is actively involved in the Council of Trade Unions' campaign to re-elect a progressive Government and this forum will be an opportunity to inspire workplace reps to maximise our members' participation in the campaign.

Objectives of the MERAS Election Campaign

- 1 To campaign for the election of a Labour-Greens Government, and in doing so, create a public groundswell that will see the incoming Government prioritise progressive change for women, their babies, and their whanau.
- 2 To celebrate the gains for employed midwives in 2020, including the Accord and Pay Equity, and to elect a Government that will ensure these gains continue.
- 3 To make the resourcing of midwives an Election issue in collaboration with the College of Midwives.
- 4 To provide opportunities for our members to participate in campaign activities (i.e. MERAS, the College and cross-union campaign activities).

Policy Priorities

The MERAS campaign will have a wellbeing/equality focus with a broad emphasis on issues that impact on better health outcomes, such as accessible health services, living wages, housing, and social security, and with a particular emphasis on issues that directly impact on women, their babies and their whanau.

To this end, we have been contributing to CTU development of the following policy areas:

- Public service reforms
- Health sector priorities
- Equal Pay and Pay Equity
- Parental Leave

Campaign Approach

Our approach will be to utilise social and mainstream media with members telling stories that highlight the issues we have identified as being important to progress. A key date in this will be International Midwives Day on 5 May.

We are part of a CTU cross-union campaigning group where we will share resources and expertise, and extend our reach, particularly in terms of social media. We also have access to media through our association with the College of Midwives.

The MERAS website is currently undergoing development of a Campaigns section where we will house Election resources which can be used on workplace noticeboards. We will also include Election Campaign information in our monthly MERAS Updates, also displayed on workplace noticeboards.

MERAS has a strong emphasis on workplace representative education. We will emphasise our key policy areas and campaign approach in our introductory courses for new workplace reps: “Midwives Getting Organised” and “Midwives Standing Up”.

We are planning to use the CTU approved EREL course “Leading in Campaigns: Course 725” for our Workplace Reps Forum. The course outcomes below are flexible enough for us to use it in the context of pay equity, collective bargaining campaigns, campaigning around midwifery issues, and will have immediate relevance to the Election Campaign.

By the end of the course, participants will be able to:

- describe the reasons why members may wish to take a campaigning approach to addressing workplace issues
- describe the key skills required for campaign planning and development
- explain the role of workplace leadership in the running of successful campaigns

MERAS has shown that we have the ability to mobilise our members around key issues and that we can achieve a very high level of member participation when it counts. Our workplace reps have been critical in this, as has social media.

Proposed timeline

February 2020

- Participate in CTU policy development in key priority areas for MERAS
- Meet with CTU on election strategy (Tuesday, 11 February)
- CTU National Affiliates Council meeting (Wednesday, 26 February) to confirm member survey distribution and campaign policy asks

March 2020

- International Women's Day (8 March)
- MERAS NRC – endorse Election Campaign Plan (9-10 March)
- CTU member election survey distributed
- Central North Island and South Island "Midwives Getting Organised" courses, Palmerston North (24 March) and Christchurch (31 March)

April 2020

- Upper North Island "Midwives Getting Organised" course, Auckland (7 April)
- Media around CTU election surveys overall result

May 2020

- CTU media/social media on key issues
- International Midwives Day activities (5 May)
- Central North Island "Midwives Standing Up" course, Palmerston North (26 May)
- Confirm attendance for Workplace Reps Forum (31 May)
- Post-Budget media release (date unknown at this stage)

June 2020

- South Island and Upper North Island "Midwives Standing Up" courses, Christchurch (2 June) and Auckland (4 June)
- MERAS NRC meeting – finalise Workplace Reps Forum programme (9-10 June)
- CTU National Affiliates Council meeting (11 June)

July 2020

- Community and Unions Local joint election planning (outreach)
- CTU candidate survey finalised and launched
- Electoral Commission to launch its enrolment update campaign (6 July)

August 2020

- MERAS Workplace Reps Forum (12 August)
- Parliament dissolves (12 August)
- CTU National Affiliates Council meeting (27 August)

September 2020

- Advance voting (opens 7 September)
- Suffrage Day Election (19 September)