

**pay parity** The same pay for the same job across different employers/workplaces

**pay relativity** the relationship between pay rates for various roles/work

Gap between the average earnings of women compared with men  
**gender pay gap**

Same pay for the same job (no differential based on gender) **equal pay**

**pay equity** The same pay for work of equal value

The same rights and opportunities **gender equality**

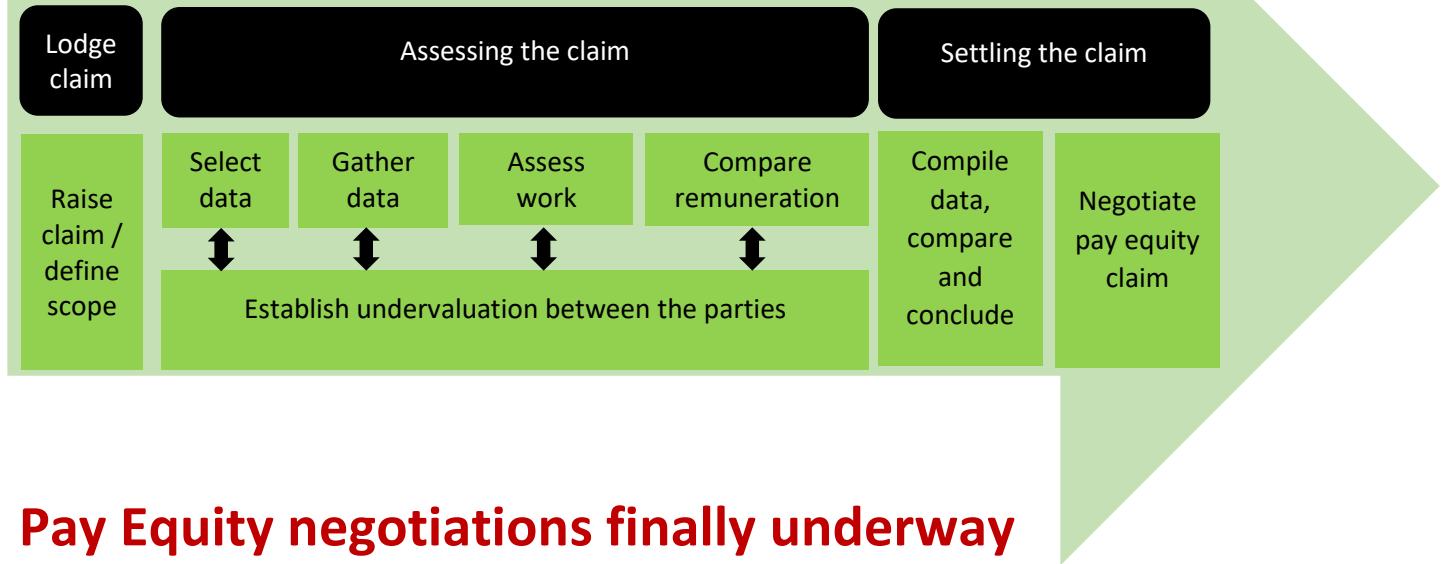
**Pay and employment equity**

Pay, conditions, experiences in the workplace and access to jobs at all levels are not affected by gender

**M E R A S**

Midwifery Employee Representation & Advisory Services

**January 2022**



## Pay Equity negotiations finally underway

We are now at the pointy end of the pay equity process and we are expecting the DHBs to at least start putting “money on the table” from next week, having obtained a mandate from Cabinet just before Christmas.

Our negotiations this week reiterated the extensive process that DHBs have to go through after they have reached a settlement in principle with the unions.

The Nurses Pay Equity settlement is currently in this phase. The NZNO and PSA settled with the DHBs in principle as of 22 December, but this agreement is now going through five layers of bureaucracy to get sign off.

First a Central Agencies Governance Group signs off that the proposed settlement will implement pay equity and meets the pay equity principles of the legislation.

This is endorsed by the Employment Relations Governance Group and the Director-General of Health before it is reviewed by the Crown Law Office and sent to Cabinet for approval and release of the funds.

This is then ratified or endorsed by all employees covered by the claim. In the case of the Midwifery Pay Equity claim, MERAS, NZNO, and non-union midwives will all get to vote and this will be done electronically.

Now that we know that settling the claim is not the end of the process, we can see why there have yet to be any pay equity settlements under the new legislation.

However, DHB members have received an increase in your pay rates and a lump sum as partial payment of the pay equity backpay in the DHBs MECA settlement.

We also negotiated a commitment into the MECA settlement to start negotiations for the Midwifery Pay Equity claim in September/October 2021, and then had to go to mediation to secure a further lump sum when this didn’t happen. This is currently being paid out.

On Wednesday we set down nine days in February and March for further bargaining, and we agreed to hire an outside facilitator to keep us all focussed. The aim is to complete a settlement by July.

Following that we will be lodging a claim for the non-DHB facilities using the same evidence and pay rates.

As well as Jill and Caroline, the MERAS team includes Karen Gray, Victoria Christian and Michelle Archer (our MERAS NRC chair and deputy chair).

**Jill Ovens, Co-leader (Industrial)**  
**Caroline Conroy Co-leader (Midwifery)**