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MERAS Conference 2022

Pay Equity: Worth fighting for



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Introduction

Bargaining started in December 2021 after Cabinet appointed a Crown negotiator with a mandate informed by the evidence from the pay equity investigation.

Parties have met 14 times in 2022 on Zoom, mostly for only 2-3 hours. Last met face-to-face with Te Whatu Ora representatives on 11 August.

The Crown tabled their first offer at the 11 August bargaining session. The proposed pay rates would come into force on 4 April 2022. Implementation of the settlement rates would occur as soon as possible once the settlement has been ratified.



The offer

- ❖ Phased in with 25% as of 1 January 2020, 50% as of 1 January 2021, 75% as of 1 January 2022, 100% as of 4 April 2022
- ❖ Core midwives range: \$72,236 -- \$95,572
- ❖ Community midwives range: \$72,236 -- \$102,452
- ❖ Senior midwives range: \$94,707 -- \$142,412
- ❖ MCAs range: \$51,770 -- \$61,540





Previous employer proposals:

	Core RM	Community	Caseloadi ng	Senior	MCAs
8 February	27.8%	17.4%	17.4%	5.7%	-
12 April	27.1%	16.7%	16.7%	7.7%	-
4 May	22.6%	22.6%	22.6%	8.5%	-
11 August	23.5%	23.5%	23.5%	9%	12%- 14%



Unions' proposals

- ❖ Latest proposal tabled in May; rejected as being “too radical”
- ❖ Based on total remuneration (i.e. includes 15% superannuation paid to Detectives)
- ❖ Reduces number of overlapping steps in senior midwives' scale to two Bands A and B with 5 steps each
- ❖ Applies same percentage adjustment for core, community and caseloading midwives (37.6%), and same percentage adjustment to senior midwives (30.1%)





Unions' proposal, May 2022

	Start rate	Top of scale
Core midwives	\$80,484	\$106,483
Community midwives	\$80,484	\$114,149
Caseloading midwives	\$134,269	\$136,069
Senior midwives		
Band A--Clinical co-ordinators; clinical coaches; educators; specialist midwives	\$116,795	\$129,297
Band B—Clinical midwife managers	\$147,433	\$174,446



Maintaining pay equity

Collective agreement bargaining for the members under coverage of the Midwifery Pay Equity claim in 2022 (NZNO) and 2023 (MERAS) provides an opportunity to review the remuneration to ensure pay equity is maintained.

However, MERAS is seeking a review of movement in the comparators' pay between 2020 and 2022 so we can establish the undervaluation as it exists today. Up till now Te Whatu Ora has rejected this.





Ratification and approval

Any agreed settlement will be subject to:

- ❖ approval by the relevant monitoring agencies,
- ❖ confirmation from the Central Agencies Governance Group that the proposed settlement (Milestone 6 report) will implement pay equity and is in line with the pay equity principles,
- ❖ approval of the settlement by the Director-General of Health and confirmation that the proposed settlement is consistent with the mandate appointed to the Crown negotiator,
- ❖ review by Crown Law Office,
- ❖ Cabinet approval of the proposed settlement agreement and release of the appropriation, and
- ❖ ratification by Te Whatu Ora employees covered by the settlement agreement in accordance with s13ZF of the Equal Pay Act.



NZNO and PSA legal action

- ❖ Filed a compliance order in relation to the backpay for the Nurses Pay Equity being heard in the Employment Court. MERAS has the same backpay clauses.
- ❖ Seeking a determination in the Employment Relations Authority to “fix” the pay equity rates for RNs, ENs, HCAs and Nurse Practitioners.
- ❖ Impacts on the Midwifery Pay Equity bargaining as NZNO is also a party.





MERAS legal action

- ❖ Seeking to be heard and to support the Nurses Pay Equity argument in relation to the backpay being heard in the Employment Court.
- ❖ Filing in the Employment Relations Authority to address four issues
 - ❖ Failure to include all appropriate comparators
 - ❖ Cost of meeting the claim has wrongly influenced the bargaining
 - ❖ Failure to update comparators' remuneration
 - ❖ Not taking into account employer contributions to superannuation