



**August 2023**

## **So much happening.....**

### **update on Pay Equity, Holidays Act remediation and Collective negotiations.**

The interim midwifery pay equity agreement with Te Whatu Ora was ratified at the end of June and members are now starting to receive the back pay, lump sum, and new pay rates. This is scheduled to occur at different times in the districts across the country over the next couple of months. If you have changed the district (DHB) where you work since January 2020 you may need to contact your previous district (DHB) for any monies that will be owed. Best to email your previous line manager and payroll.

#### **Progress to a final pay equity settlement**

MERAS is currently in the process of organising meetings with Te Whatu Ora to recommence negotiations in an attempt to reach a full proposed pay equity settlement for members to vote on without having to wait for the Employment Relations Authority hearing scheduled for later in the year.

#### **Midwifery Pay Equity claim with the maternity funded sector.**

MERAS is working closely with employers of primary maternity services that have contracts with Te Whatu Ora to progress a pay equity claim for midwives working in those services. Both MERAS and employers recognise the urgency of progressing this work. We are still working to try and secure an interim wage adjustment for these midwives.

#### **Holidays Act compliance review remediation**

Te Toka Tumai (Auckland) is the first district to reimburse staff monies owed from the Holidays Act compliance review. The next

districts will be Counties-Manukau and Waitemata and then gradually all other districts. A website is being set up, scheduled to go live on the 20<sup>th</sup> August to provide information for staff and for ex-employees. This will include details on how ex-employees apply for reimbursement.

Current staff will be reimbursed initially, and ex-employees will be paid in 2024.

The reimbursements related to the Holidays Act compliance review go back to 2010.

#### **Collective negotiations with Te Whatu Ora**

The negotiations are continuing, with a focus on key members claims such as a cost-of-living increase on top of any pay equity outcome and a review of the senior midwife pay scale to reflect the midwifery career pathway and respecting and rewarding midwives taking on those roles and responsibilities. The timing of the SECA and Pay Equity discussion need to be carefully managed to ensure cost of living increases are not swallowed by Pay Equity wage corrections.

#### **Collective negotiations with other maternity employers**

MERAS is negotiating renewal of collectives with several maternity employers. We are pushing these employers to keep pace with Te Whatu Ora rates. We will work with these employers to secure funding so that this can be passed onto members.

**Sam Jones MERAS Co-Leader (Industrial)**

**Caroline Conroy MERAS Co-Leader (Midwifery)**