



27 JUL 2018

Mr Memo Musa  
Chief Executive  
New Zealand Nurses' Organisation

Mr Jim Green  
Chief Executive  
Tairāwhiti District Health Board  
(on behalf of District Health Boards)

Dr Ashley Bloomfield  
Director-General of Health

Dear Memo, Jim and Ashley

## **Proposed Accord for the DHB Nursing and Midwifery Workforce**

I would like to thank the NZNO and the DHBs for the hard work that has gone into reaching agreement on the proposal for a new MECA that will be voted on by NZNO members over the coming week. I appreciate that these have been difficult negotiations for both parties. I would also like to thank the Ministry of Health for their support and advice during the negotiations.

The Government is committed to ensuring that we have enough nurses and midwives in our public hospitals to ensure both their own safety and their patients' safety. I recognise that a key reason that the negotiations have been so difficult is that the health system has been underfunded over the past nine years and this has affected the staffing levels and workload of the DHB nursing and midwifery workforce.

I have heard the concerns expressed by nurses and midwives about staffing levels. I also recognise the concern that there have been previous promises to implement CCDM (the agreed safe staffing tool) and employ the additional staff that are identified through that process. I acknowledge that there is a lack of trust amongst nurses and midwives, based on past experience, that the commitments that have been made by DHBs during the recent negotiations will be kept.

To address these concerns I am proposing that the NZNO, the DHBs and the Director-General of Health sign an Accord to ensure that safe staffing levels are achieved through the employment of additional staff in the immediate future and the full implementation of CCDM in all DHBs according to the time-frame agreed by the parties. I understand that the parties have considered the attached draft and support my proposal.

I acknowledge that there are already a number of agreed accountability mechanisms in the proposed new MECA and other documentation. These include mechanisms that relate to the expenditure of the Government funding of \$38 million for the recruitment of additional

staff in 2018/19 and \$10 million for additional expert nursing staff in each DHB and other measures to assist with the implementation of CCDM. I am confident that the Accord will complement these existing mechanisms and provide greater assurance to NZNO members.

In addition to the provisions of the Accord, I will ask the State Services Commissioner to consider including wording that reflects the commitments in the Accord in the performance expectations of the Director-General of Health. I will also ask the Chairs of DHBs to consider including similar wording in the performance expectations of DHB Chief Executives.

I would welcome your attendance at the Beehive at 10.30 am on Monday 31 July to sign the Accord. In order to emphasise the Government's commitment to safe staffing for the DHB nursing and midwifery workforce I intend to sign the Accord as a witness.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'David Clark', written in a cursive style.

Hon Dr David Clark  
**Minister of Health**

# Safe Staffing and Care Capacity Demand Management: Effective Implementation Accord

## Parties to the Accord

New Zealand Nurses' Organisation (NZNO)  
District Health Boards (DHBs)  
Director-General of Health

## Purpose

The purpose of this Accord is to record the commitment and assurance of the Parties to ensuring that staffing levels for nurses and midwives employed by DHBs are safe and to describe the actions that will be taken.

## Preamble

All Parties acknowledge and accept that:

- The workload of the DHB nursing and midwifery workforce and how it is managed is a fundamental issue that must be addressed;
- Commitment is required by all Parties to the Accord to address the issues;
- These issues of safe staffing and workload have developed over a significant period of time and will take time to rectify;
- Both the NZNO (the NZNO Strategy for Nursing 2018-2023) and the DHBs (the DHB Nursing Workforce Strategy 2018) have developed strategies that inform the management of this issue;
- In addition to the successful conclusion of the MECA, the effective implementation and monitoring of Care Capacity Demand Management (CCDM) is required to address workforce issues.

Further, the Parties note:

- The comments by the Independent Panel that “the Panel noted the lack of an effective mechanism to ensure commitments made under the MECA are implemented, particularly related to the implementation of the CCDM programme. This has contributed to the reluctance to ratify the current agreement”.
- The recommendation of the Independent Panel “that a high level commitment needs to be made to improving the nurse workforce planning strategy and to ensuring compliance with commitments agreed in the MECA. It is for the parties to agree to the effectiveness of the existing compliance and accountability procedures”.

## Commitments

The Parties acknowledge and accept that implementation of CCDM is primarily the responsibility of the DHBs, in partnership with the workforce and NZNO. However, the Parties agree that support is required from Government to ensure effective and timely implementation. Therefore, in addition to the commitments in the MECA between the DHBs and NZNO, and in order to give effect to the existing commitment to implement CCDM by June 2021 the parties agree to:

- Explore options for providing employment and training for all New Zealand nursing and midwifery graduates, taking into account the current model for doctors, and report to the Minister of Health by the end of November 2018;
- Develop any accountability mechanisms that the Parties believe are necessary (over and above those already agreed) to ensure DHBs implement the additional staffing needs identified by CCDM within the agreed timeframe and report to the Minister of Health by the end of February 2019;
- Develop a strategy for retention of the existing nursing and midwifery workforce and the re-employment of those who have left the workforce, and report to the Minister of Health by the end of May 2019.

The Parties agree that the development and negotiation of these commitments will be overseen by the Health Sector Relationship Agreement Group which contains representation from the Parties.

The provisions of the Accord come into effect on date of signature.

## Signatures

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Memo Musa  
Chief Executive  
New Zealand Nurses' Organisation

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Jim Green  
Chief Executive  
Tairāwhiti District Health Board  
(on behalf of District Health Boards)

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Ashley Bloomfield  
Director-General of Health

## Witnessed by:

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Hon Dr David Clark  
Minister of Health

**30 July 2018**