



General Practice Owners Association
of Aotearoa New Zealand

The mandated voice of general practice and urgent care providers.
By general practice, for general practice.

GenPro For You
March 2024 Update



Working unashamedly to support sustainability and viability on behalf of general practice and urgent care
business owners - and ultimately the New Zealand population they serve.

In this Newsletter:

- [Message from the Chief Executive](#)
- [Position on Data Request](#)
- [Member Survey Update](#)
- [Childhood Immunisation](#)
- [Meso - Level Design Process](#)
- [PSAAP Update](#)
- [Death Certification 'out of hours'](#)
- [Equity and Insights in Cognitive Impairment Webinar](#)
- [GenPro Regional Meeting - Waikato](#)
- [Why would you join GenPro?](#)
- [Te Whatu Ora Updates](#)
- [The Final Word](#)



Message from the Chief Executive

Kia ora koutou,

March has been a short month for me, with the combination of a long weekend and what felt like a very long week in isolation!

Luckily, with online meetings and remote working progress was still made.

Significantly we saw the reconvening of PSAAP. After years of lobbying and advocacy Contracted Providers now have the same rights of representation as do other parties to PSAAP. This was initiated and consistently pushed by GenPro.

As the right to appoint your own agent has been secured, GenPro are now leading the process to make this happen. Currently we are drafting the communications, creating the process for nomination and working with system partners to try to secure the data we need to ensure this process is robust.

It is vital that GenPro continue to represent GenPro Members interests at PSAAP, as a fragmented provider caucus is likely to weaken General Practice's bargaining position. We will be seeking the ongoing support and mandate of our members as part of this process. When members sign up to GenPro they give us their mandate at PSAAP, and we will be seeking confirmation that this will continue.

We also welcome the opportunity to represent non-members and will be offering options as part of the process.

On a sadder note, we have recently seen a few practices close or consolidate due to financial and workforce pressures. Our survey released in August last year demonstrated the growing concern of practice owners over the sustainability of their businesses. It seems that a lack of action and investment from the government is resulting in owners being forced to make some very difficult decisions. We will continue to raise the plight of General Practice in our ongoing advocacy efforts and have our next meeting with Minister of Health confirmed for early April.

And GenPro managed to get the spotlight on the pressure on after hours and urgent care, with TVNZ covering the story on Sunday evening. Please click the link below if you want to see the coverage.

<https://www.1news.co.nz/2024/03/31/napier-medical-centre-issues-warning-as-sector-hits-breaking-point/>

Next week I will be attending the National Rural Health conference. If you see me there, please don't hesitate to come and say hello.

Finally, I would like to welcome the four new members (bringing a further 22,500 enrolled patients) that have joined GenPro this month.

Ngā mihi maioha,

Mark



Mark Liddle
Chief Executive

[Position on Data Request](#)

Many of you will have received an email from your PHO asking you to allow a data extract to refresh the data in the Sapere report.

Martin Hefford, Director - Living Well at Te Whatu Ora, contacted GenPro seeking our thoughts on this.

The rationale for the request is to ensure that this report contains contemporary data that better reflects the situation today. Martin also wants to ensure that the report is ready to be adopted as required.

GenPro supports this approach as the risk to GP owners is that the report is either used with 'out of date' or inadequate data, or that the lack of contemporary data is used as a reason not to make changes to funding and capitation. While there is no guarantee that the report will be adopted, it seems prudent to ensure that it is at least up to date and ready to be used.

[Member Survey Update](#)

The team are currently working through the responses to the member-only survey that closed in February this year. This will take a while to pull into themes as we were seeking members thoughts and views, and as a result have a huge amount of free text to review. We will share the findings via a member-only bulletin once the results are analysed.

Thank you to the circa 200 members that responded.

[Childhood Immunisations](#)

GenPro remains disappointed at the decision to lift the Pharm X restriction to allow childhood immunisations to be given in Pharmacy.

While the decision has been made, we are still pursuing responses to the OIA requests that we made ahead of the decision.

To date we have received one response from Pharmac and we have another OIA request in with Pharmac and expect a response in the next few weeks.

We also lodged an OIA with the Ministry of Health in January which was passed onto Te Whatu Ora, then passed onto Pharmac and we are still yet to receive the response. This has been forwarded to the Ombudsman and a formal complaint has been lodged as they have failed to meet the requirements of the act.

This is not the first time Te Whatu Ora have been found wanting, with a previous complaint by GenPro being upheld, and Te Whatu Ora found to have acted unreasonably by the Chief Ombudsman.

Once we have received all responses, we will consider our options and share this with our members.

[Meso - Level Design Process](#)

GenPro Board members and CEO have been invited into a series of cross system design groups looking at the future functions of meso - level organisations. These groups will help shape what the PHOs of today become in the health system of the future.

We will be sure to provide the GP owner perspective in these discussions.

[PSAAP Update](#)

As mentioned in the CEO update, we have finally achieved equal rights of representation at PSAAP for Contracted Providers.

All Contracted Providers will receive communications over the coming weeks that will outline the following:

- What has changed and what does it mean for you as a Contracted Provider.
- A list of organisations/entities that are willing to represent you at PSAAP with details of their purpose, their position statement and costs (if any). This is not an exhaustive list.
- The nomination process.

We are currently working with members of the Contracted Provider caucus and PHO representatives to collate the list of entities that are willing to represent Contracted Providers at PSAAP.

We will also hold an evening webinar in the next few weeks, which is open to members and non-members alike - details to follow.

Of course, it is vital that GenPro continue to represent our members as part of the membership benefits. We need a strong and coordinated General Practice voice to be as effective as we can be, and this requires your mandate. The more Contracted Providers that we represent, the stronger the voice of General Practice owners.

Death Certification 'out of hours'

GenPro's CEO has commenced meetings with the recently appointed Detective Inspector in charge of Coronial Investigations.

The first meeting outlined the challenges on both sides, and we have committed to share data then look at potential options. DI Felicity Cato has welcomed the opportunity to engage with GenPro and has expressed a willingness to work with us to try and mitigate the impact on both GPs and her officers.

It is a complex issue with legal constraints so we are currently working through the facts and requirements to see what solutions may be available. There are no promises of a quick solution, but the commitment from DI Cato is a great start.

Further updates to follow as we progress the discussions.

NZNO Primary Practice Pay Equity Claim

GenPro continues to work with NZNO to be as informed as possible as the Primary Pay Equity Claim process slowly evolves.

The latest information from a meeting on March 27th is that there has been little tangible progress.

The NZNO are still working on a schedule of employers that were not subject to the first claim but should expect to be part of the second claim. There is no date yet for when the second claim will be lodged. We have also been receiving questions around who this claim applies to and what does it mean if you are not part of the claim. We will be sending out a member-only bulletin with advice from our professional HR advisors on what to expect and past pay equity claim experiences.

And this is a reminder to members that have not notified us that they want GenPro to represent them.

Please ensure that you have contacted us at membership@genpro.org.nz – the more employers that we represent, the greater the influence we will have.

If you are not a GenPro member but would like support, please see more detailed information here: [Equity Support for Non-Members](#)

[Equity and Insights in Cognitive Impairment Webinar](#)

HealthPathways teams across Aotearoa have been working with clinical experts on a nationally aligned cognitive impairment pathway which outlines agreed best practice and supports local service provision.

Explore why it's important to assess and provide a diagnosis for patients with cognitive impairment and how to guide patients and their whānau to get the support they need.

This webinar will reflect the updated and nationally aligned Cognitive Impairment pathway which is in the process of being rolled out across the motu.

Empowering GP Teams

Equity and Insights in Cognitive Impairment

Wednesday 3 April | 7.00 pm – 8.00 pm *(registration required)*

[Register here](#)

This education session is suitable for general practitioners, nurse practitioners, practice nurses, and other practice team members engaged in supporting people and their families/whānau affected by dementia mate wareware.

Topics include:

- how to develop a comprehensive primary care management plan
- supporting Māori and whānau - introducing the Kaupapa Māori assessment tool (MANA)
- when to refer
- involving the wider practice team

Local HealthPathways teams and colleagues will be available off-camera to help answer questions on local services and requirements.

Presenters:

- **Matthew Croucher**
Psychiatrist of Old Age, Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora, Waitaha Canterbury
- **Oliver Menzies**
Rongowhakaata, Aitanga-a-māhaki, Geriatrician & General Physician, Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora, Te Toka Tumai Auckland,
- **Jen Abernethy**
GP Registrar, Clinical Editor HealthPathways, Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora, Waitaha Canterbury

Format

A presentation followed by moderated Q&A. The session will be recorded for those unable to attend, and the recording shared on HealthPathways.

Attendees over 1000 will be directed to a live stream on YouTube. Those on the live stream will not be able to engage in the Q&A. Submit questions prior to the webinar via the Comments & Questions field in the registration form.

Education

Certificate of attendance and/or 1 RNZCGP CME point.

Questions - email: education@healthpathwayscommunity.org

[GenPro Regional Meeting - Waikato](#)

A date has been confirmed in May and an invite will be sent out shortly for our Regional Meeting in Hamilton. If you are interested in attending please email enquiries@genpro.org.nz for more details.

**[Why would you join GenPro?](#)**

- To add to GenPro's collective national voice and growing mandate and therefore its ability to make a difference

- To work towards having a single voice representing General Practice Owners in Aotearoa
- To have a strong voice in national negotiations and discussions
- To have access to GenPro's exclusive range of member-only resources and briefings

Further information on the benefits of joining GenPro can be found [on our website](#) or by contacting membership@genpro.org.nz

Download the GenPro membership application

Remember to follow us on Facebook and LinkedIn for current updates



[New COVID Vaccine available](#)

Pharmac has approved the updated COVID vaccine for the XBB1.5 strain, to be used in NZ from 7 March 2024. The XBB vaccine is more effective against more recent subvariants of COVID in NZ.

For more information on getting a vaccine visit [here](#)

Update on recommended COVID-19 Testing Advice

From 4 March 2024, recommended COVID-19 testing advice for household contacts of a positive COVID-19 case is changing.

- Household contacts of a positive COVID-19 case who **do not** have COVID-19 symptoms are no longer recommended to test daily with a rapid antigen test (RAT) for 5 days following a positive COVID-19 case in the household.
- If a household contact of a positive COVID-19 case develops one or more COVID-19 symptoms, they are recommended to stay at home and test for COVID-19 using a RAT.

This change aligns with public health guidance that advises RAT testing is generally not recommended when a person does not have any COVID-19 symptoms.

Testing for COVID-19 with RATs remains an important tool to support effective ongoing management of COVID-19 outbreaks in high-risk facilities, help reduce

the impact of COVID-19 on hospital admission rates and enable eligible people to access antiviral medications.

Recommended COVID-19 testing advice continues to support:

- RAT testing if symptomatic.
- PCR testing if a result can influence treatment options.

Please find links below to the summary of the recommended COVID-19 testing advice and guidance documents as of 4 March 2024.

[Summary of recommended COVID-19 testing advice](#)

[Summary of COVID-19 Testing Plan and Guidance changes](#)

Stakeholder virtual hui

These regular hui are an opportunity to hear updates from Health NZ and Te Aka Whai Ora and ask questions of Margie, Riana and special guests and experts. If you would like to register or receive an invitation for future events, click here [Invitation](#).

If you missed the previous hui, including responses to questions and feedback, you can access the recording and presentation through [here](#).

Invitation - Flu Immunisation Webinar - Māori & Pacific

The National flu campaign aims to drive early vaccination amongst priority groups through increasing awareness and building on community outreach efforts.

The first webinar was held on Tuesday, 26 March 2024.

Future dates for the remaining flu webinar Hui's are:

- Tuesday, 9 April – Pregnancy
- Tuesday, 23 April – Pēpi and Tamariki
- Tuesday, 7 May – Mental Health and Addiction
- Tuesday, 21 May – 65 and over

Where can I get more information?

If there is anything you need help on with your vaccination promotion activity, or if you need any comms assistance, please reach out to the Te Whatu Ora team:

Health sector Comms and Engagement

Sandy.thambiah@tewhātuora.govt.nz

Māori and Pacific Comms and Engagement

Eddie.sykes@tewhātuora.govt.nz

Media issues

hnzmedia@health.govt.nz

Te Whatu Ora's [Immunisation Update Pānui](#) is also available on their website

2024 Influenza Season

This year, the flu vaccine is available from 2 April at local pharmacies, doctor, nurse or healthcare providers.

We encourage vaccinators to check that all whānau are up to date with all immunisations (including measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) and COVID-19) when they attend for a flu vaccination. Having vaccination conversations, offering opportunistic vaccinations and taking a whānau-centred approach to vaccination will help increase vaccination coverage.

Flu vaccines can be booked for individuals, family members or groups:

- at bookmyvaccine.health.nz
- calling [080028 29 26](tel:0800282926) – 8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday
- contacting healthcare providers, pharmacies or GPs.

[Click here](#) if you are offering the flu vaccine and want more information about Book My Vaccine.

Pharmacist able to offer childhood immunisations

On 13 March 2024, [Health NZ and Pharmac announced a decision to enable pharmacies to offer childhood immunisations](#) to help increase opportunities for whānau to access free immunisations in their communities. From late March, funded training will be available on the Immunisation Advisory Centre website for pharmacist vaccinators who wish to upskill to authorised vaccinators. Participating pharmacies will be able to order childhood immunisations from 1 April.

This decision is intended to provide another option for those who aren't enrolled or cannot access their GP, as general practice will remain the preferred place to receive childhood immunisations. After providing the immunisation, pharmacists will be asked to support referral of parents and caregivers to general practice, to support continuity of care and help ensure pēpi receive important medical checks.

More information about the decision, including key themes from the consultation, can be found on the [Pharmac website](#).

Access barriers to PET0CT scans removed

On 29 February, Health Minister Dr Shane Reti announced that Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora has approved funding an updated national set of criteria that will mean New Zealanders have the same access to PET-CT scans no matter where they live.

You can read the full announcement [here](#).

Bool Services lifts "mad cow" restriction

From Thursday 29 February 2024, people who lived in the United Kingdom, France or the Republic of Ireland between 1980 and 1996 for six months or more during the 'mad cow' disease outbreak will finally be able to book to donate blood or plasma in New Zealand.

Read the full NZBS media release [here](#)

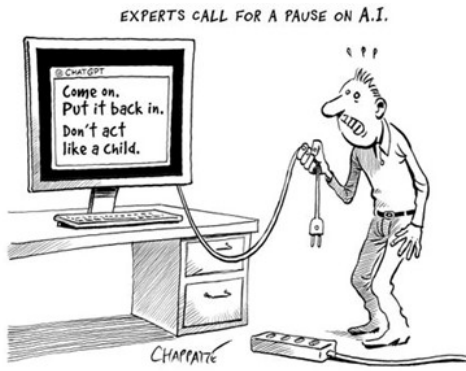
Downloadable Immunisation resources

Don't forget all immunisation collateral is available on Dropbox for health care providers to use when promoting vaccinations.

Please feel free to share this link and the collateral widely with your other healthcare colleagues: [Dropbox – National Immunisation Programme –vaccine resources](#)

For a full list of Te Whatu Ora updates visit : [News and updates – Te Whatu Ora - Health New Zealand](#)

The Final Word...



**As always, member
feedback and
membership enquiries
are always welcomed -
email
enquiries@genpro.org.nz**

By General Practice, for General Practice

- Membership enquiries/updates membership@genpro.org.nz
- MECA enquiries meca@genpro.org.nz
- Accounts enquiries accounts@genpro.org.nz
- All other enquiries enquiries@genpro.org.nz

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