

Media Release

Friday 22 May 2020

Rejection of nurses pay offer comes as “no surprise”

The impasse in negotiations around primary care nursing pay cannot be resolved through what are seen as pointless talks between general practice and nursing representatives according to GenPro, the General Practice Owners Association, whose objectives include improving the health of the population of New Zealand and advocating for high-quality, accessible and equitable patient care.

The New Zealand Nurses Organisation announced yesterday, 21 May 2020, that after prolonged negotiations primary health care nurses had voted down a final offer from employers of 2.5 and 2 percent



pay increases over two years. That was a predictable outcome in the opinion of the Chair of GenPro, Dr Tim Malloy (pictured), who said “It’s no surprise whatsoever that this pay offer has been rejected. Why should we expect a well-qualified and experienced nurse to work in primary care for typically 10% less pay than their District Health Board counterparts? This inequity is simply insulting to our nurses and the vital front-line service they are directly providing for our communities.”

GenPro believes that the solution to the impasse is in the hands of those who negotiate the broader contractual terms for primary care and general practice services. “This is symptomatic of a wider issue and a fragmented health system that fails to appropriately consider or value the role of primary health care teams. When the DHB nursing MECA was settled, it was presumably settled at a level that was affordable for DHBs, but I have to question why the implications for primary care were not taken into account at the same time. It is time to change the underpinning principles and formulae that drive the range of separate discussions across the health system – discussions which simply do not match the rhetoric of supporting a primary care sector that has faced increased costs as the first line of attack against COVID-19 and is deemed a priority in letters of ministerial expectations.”

As a newly established representative association GenPro has not been directly involved in either negotiations to date, but with the significant impact that such negotiations have on each and every general practice business owner, Dr Malloy says that the process has to change “..and GenPro is keen to work in collaboration with the Government to ensure that future generations can rely on the availability of a sustainable, viable and high quality general practice service.”

ENDS

Further information can be obtained from:

Philip Grant, Interim Chief Executive – philip@genpro.org.nz Telephone 022 131 8393

Note to editors:

Further information is available on GenPro's website at www.genpro.org.nz

Membership applications are now being invited in readiness for the election of the Association's inaugural governance Board which will take place between July and September 2020.

GenPro's Vision

Sustainable, viable and high quality General Practice for all New Zealanders

GenPro's Mission

To promote and advocate for sustainable, responsive and high quality general practice services for the population of New Zealand.

GenPro's Objectives

- a. To promote, protect and improve the collective interests of Members.
- b. To advocate for and support the sustainability and viability of Members businesses and the services they provide in order to ultimately ensure the continuity of locally accessible and high-quality, patient-centric care.
- c. To provide strong, credible and effective national representation for New Zealand's network of General Practice and Urgent Care business owners, including, but not limited to, the country's network of smaller, owner-operated providers.
- d. To improve the health of the population of New Zealand and advocate for high-quality, accessible and equitable patient care.
- e. To support the productivity and efficiency of the New Zealand Health and Disability System.
- f. To promote, protect and support the innovation capability of Members.
- g. To help Members promote and improve the efficiency of their businesses.
- h. To uphold the professional reputation of Members collectively, and the value of the quality branding conferred by membership of the Association.
- i. To provide sector leadership on issues affecting Members by:
 1. Providing effective representation of Association members on and to bodies with influence on General Practice and Urgent Care services or associated professions.
 2. Influencing and promoting legislation, regulations and policy for the betterment of the interests of the Members or for the accomplishment of any of the Association's objectives.
 3. Liaising and co-operating with Government and other bodies and agencies for the accomplishment of any of the Association's objects
 4. To act as agent for the Members (either individually or collectively) in negotiation or consultation with Crown Agents or other funding bodies regarding contractual service arrangements and associated funding.