



18 July 2019

S19.17

Submission to the Health Committee on the Support Workers (Pay Equity) Settlements Amendment Bill 137-1

Introduction

- 0.1. The National Council of Women of New Zealand, Te Kaunihera Wahine o Aotearoa (NCWNZ) is an umbrella group representing over 200 organisations affiliated at either national level or to one of our 15 branches. In addition, about 450 people are individual members. Collectively our reach is over 450,000 with many of our membership organisations representing all genders. NCWNZ's vision is a gender equal New Zealand and research shows we will be better off socially and economically if we are gender equal. Through research, discussion and action, NCWNZ in partnership with others, seeks to realise its vision of gender equality because it is a basic human right.
- 0.2. This submission has been prepared by the NCWNZ Employment Standing Committee and the Parliamentary Watch Committee after consultation with the membership of NCWNZ.
- 0.3. NCWNZ welcomes and supports this Bill as it gives effect to the elements of the agreement in respect of vocational and disability support workers, signed by the Crown and the relevant parties on 17 July 2017, and the agreement in respect of mental health, signed by the Crown and relevant parties on 25 July 2018.
- 0.4. NCWNZ earlier supported the Care and Support Worker (Pay Equity) Settlement Billⁱ which resulted from the Kristine Bartlett Terra Nova case for support workers, which produced the Support Workers (Pay Equity) Settlement Act 2017.

1. Summary

- 1.1. However, the principal Act excludes mental health services, and also excludes services that are funded by the Department of Corrections, the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki. The exclusion of MSD and Oranga Tamariki has meant that the Act has excluded services provided by vocational and disability support workers. This Amendment Act proposes that these workers be treated in terms consistent with the Terra Nova settlement and the principal Act.
- 1.2. NCWNZ notes that mental health, vocational and disability support workers have already been awarded the new pay rate and that increase has been backdated to July 2017 so that these valuable, mostly women workers have not been financially disadvantaged in the long term by originally being

excluded. However, we also note that for the time they were excluded the mental health, vocational and disability care sector suffered from recruitment and retention problems and the workforce who remained in the sector felt frustrated and undervalued. We applaud the loyalty these valuable workers showed to their clients and employers by staying on in a lower paid occupation at this time. We also applaud the tenacity of union members who were determined to be paid equitably and who continued to campaign until they achieved that.

2. Conclusion

- 2.1. NCWNZ supports the Support Workers (Pay Equity) Settlements Amendment Bill which will ensure consistency with the Terra Nova settlement and the principal Act.



Pip Jamieson
NCWNZ Board



Gabriel Brett Kelly
Employment Standing Committee

ⁱ S17.08 Submission to Health Committee on the Care and Support Worker (Pay Equity) Settlement Bill
<https://www.ncwnz.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/S17.08-Care-and-Support-Worker-Pay-Equity-Settlement-Bill.pdf>