

# The NUPE Magazine

(News and Views from NUPE)

Summer 2023/24



**nupe**

*national union of  
public employees*

*co-operation without compromise*

The magazine of the National Union of Public Employees (NUPE/uniana motu o nga kaimahi a te iwi)



# NUPE Staff

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# The Front Cover

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## The Front Cover

The front cover shows NUPE delegates from the 2020 delegate training held in the Helen Kelly room, Trade Union Centre, Papanui, Christchurch.



## Season's Greetings to all NUPE Members

The NUPE office will be closing at mid-day on Thursday 21 December. The office will be open again on Wednesday 10 January 2024. NUPE wants to ensure that all staff have this opportunity for a good annual leave break.

There will be an on-call organiser over this period who will be available for emergency matters only. All non -urgent matters will be dealt with on the office reopening. The on-call cell phone number for emergencies will be available on 03 3773582. The number will change over the Christmas period.

# From the Secretary

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Kia Ora everyone,

We started 2023 hoping we would be able to focus proactively across our membership. The PSPA offer last year meant some of the bargaining in the Public sector was more straight forward. We soon became captured with critical health and safety issues, staff shortages, HR processes for members and the stress and pressure that creates, and bargaining for our members in the NGO sector where getting a decent pay increase was much more of a challenge. We have been able to achieve some individually tailored bargaining outcomes for NGOs that has seen some new penal rates, some movements and special individual benefits such as birthday leave.

We are now rolling out the NUPE APP this is for NUPE members only. This App is to enable easier access for members to information about NUPE and to allow us to connect with members with brief notifications that act as alerts for members.

The NUPE Executive has again been elected after the AGM. We have executive members from across membership groups and across Aotearoa. Al (AVSEC), Stephen and Jeana (Corrections) Luke, Donna, and Lynette (Oranga Tamariki) Marjon (CDHB), Angela (Stepping Stone Trust) – WE really appreciate the executive who provide governance oversight to the Union. We farewelled Sue Newman (COMCARE) who passed away after a short illness – we loved Sue and appreciated everything she did for NUPE.

We now have the election results. I am very aware our membership will have their own political views and as you know NUPE is not affiliated to any political party. I am sure some of you are happy and others are not. NUPE will focus on representing you in your workplace issues irrespective of whatever government is in. Our hope is that this government will work for everyone in our society as was promised by Chris Luxon on election night. NUPE is also very hopeful that there will be more emphasis in frontline areas to ensure safety and best safe practice for our members. We shall see!!!!

On a personal note, my mother passed away in September, which was a sad time, but it had also been a huge privilege to help look after mum and enable her to stay in her own home. It is a reminder to make sure we are all working towards really good work life balance, and we have time and energy for what is and who is most important.

The NUPE staff, Quentin, Luke, Matt, Vic, Andrew, and Noah (APP Developer) continue to work hard to support you and be available – like you we are all tired and looking forward to some holiday break.

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## Remember to Download the NUPE App



It's finally here. Keep up to date with news and views from NUPE.

The NUPE App is available for free download to your phone from either the google or apple stores.

Go to the stores and simply download it onto your phones. It's free, as easy as making a sandwich and a great way to keep in touch with NUPE, and to contact us if you need to. If you need more details or help please contact NUPE ([mathew@nupe.org.nz](mailto:mathew@nupe.org.nz)).



# Who's Who at NUPE



**Janice Gemmell – Secretary and Organizer**

Janice has been an organiser at NUPE since 1998. Prior to her employment with NUPE she completed a BA in Social Policy with Industrial Relations being a major component of the degree. Janice is NUPE's secretary and is responsible for running of NUPE.

**Luke Stenton – Organizer**

Luke joined NUPE in January 2022. Luke has always had a passion for advocacy and ensuring workers voices are heard and respected in the workplace. Luke has been active in the Union movement for most of his adult life



**Quentin Findlay – Organizer**



Quentin was employed by NUPE as its Wellington Regional Organiser from 2002-2004 and has been employed for the second time since 2013. He was previously employed by the Dept of Courts, Parliament, NZEI and was the Education Coordinator for the Lincoln University Students' Association. He has nearly two decades of advocacy and representation experience.

**Mathew Glanville – Advisor (and Adventurer)**

Mathew has been involved with NUPE since 2009 and he was NUPE Convenor in 2014. Matt has been working in the office as an Advisor Support person since 2017. Matt provides support and advice to NUPE staff and members on Oranga Tamariki. Matt has a history of social and youth advocacy for a number of organisations and was a former CYF's employee. He also runs his own business (Acadia) and enjoys sailing the seven seas ...

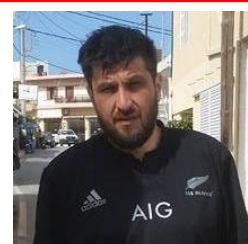


**Vic Blair – Administrator**

Vic is responsible for Office Administration at NUPE. She works for NUPE on a part-time basis and has been undertaking this role since 2018. The Admin Officer undertakes general administration duties, processes memberships, ensures that the NUPE data base is kept up to date and helps organise the office.

**Andrew McKenzie – Legal Advisor**

Andrew has been involved with NUPE since 1995 when he was a law student. He is now a fully qualified Barrister specialising in Criminal and Employment law. The Legal Officer provides legal input to the Secretary and Organisers as well as legal representation for members when resolving employment issues where necessary.





# Uniform(ity) - OT and the uniform issue



## NUPE Feedback on Proposal for Uniforms at Oranga Tamariki Residences.

NUPE has been busy with submissions on a range of issues. The following has been abridged and edited from a longer submission by NUPE on a uniform proposal suggested by Oranga Tamariki (OT).. The submission was written by Mat Glanville (OT Advisor)

In early 2023 Oranga Tamariki proposed that kaimahi who work in Youth Justice Residences would be provided with a uniform. This was to be worn while at work, or on residential business.

While, a uniform, which would be supplied by Oranga Tamariki would address concerns that some kaimahi have raised with NUPE around damage to their own personal clothing, the need for it has not been universally accepted. Subsequently, it caused considerable comment from members.

As a result, NUPE received a range of feedback from members both strongly in favour and strongly against mandatory uniforms.

### What did OT want to achieve by issuing Uniforms?

Oranga Tamariki put forward several reasons as to why the wearing of uniforms would be desirable. These were that damage or loss occurred to member's personal clothing, and that common uniforms created the image of a 'team' and team identity amongst staff.

*"OT now have an opportunity to provide all kaimahi with a uniform that reduces wear and tear on their own clothing, supports a culture and team identity within the residence and across the organisation, and enables kaimahi to project a professional, consistent image that is recognisable in the residences and the community."*

The employer also said that some Residences had chosen to develop their own uniform for staff members in administration, escorting or in the kitchens, and had applied the Oranga Tamariki logo to them. However, the style of these uniforms and their use was not consistent across all residences and teams. This was felt to be undesirable as it created a mismatch and looked unprofessional.

Consequently, OT proposed that it would implement a standard uniform for all Residential staff and develop policy and guidelines to help kaimahi understand when and how uniform would be worn. This policy would also include rules as to what can be, and what cannot be, worn with the uniform. The proposed uniform would incorporate practical considerations that already existed in the current clothing



guidelines. This included the wearing of closed shoes for safety, not wearing jewellery or drapery, and not wearing revealing or inappropriate clothing (such as gang colours, or clothing that is too tight or short).

A replacement uniform policy would also be introduced. This would ensure that kaimahi could replace damaged clothing as needed with the costs of replacement managed by Oranga Tamariki.

### Views and Opinions from members

Responses from members were mixed. Concerns had been raised about the wear and tear on clothing for years. Subsequently, NUPE had claimed a clothing allowance in previous bargaining negotiations. Some members made it clear that they would prefer a clothing allowance would be preferred by many members.

Those in favour of a uniform talked about the cost of clothing, which could be ripped, defaced, or lost while at work. This was an expense that members currently had to bear. Submitters also mentioned that a uniform would create a professional image which was lacking currently.

*“Staff are presented tidy and professional making them easily identifiable. It may lift the staff in the way they portray themselves in a more professional manner rather than a “bro approach”.*

Subsequently, a the wearing of a uniform would generate a team spirit and sense of identity amongst staff which was lacking currently.

*“Wearing of a uniform is a good idea. It promotes a sense of team spirit and a sense of belonging. It can improve work productivity. Saves wear and tear on your normal clothes.”*

Those opposed to the idea of uniforms wrote that it would detract people from their OT roles and make staff look like Corrections Officers and, by default, the Residences would look like Correctional facilities. As one member stated;

*“We are not prison officers. We are not police officers. We are youth workers / Night attendants.*

Uniforms would have the effect of alienating and isolating tamariki. This was the opposite of what staff wanted to achieve.

*“I don’t like the idea of wearing uniforms it makes us as an organisation look as if we are all the same when we are not and we lose relatability with our rangatahi, we end up becoming another uniformed working class that fails our rangatahi and our rangatahi should be able to tell the difference between those of us who are trying to support them and those that are not.”*

### What came out of the submission

Many members are not convinced that the provision of uniforms will contribute to their safety, ensure professionalism, and provide an explicit practice framework / purpose for residential services. Members argue that uniforms





may, in fact, be detrimental to the therapeutic relationship and engagement of young people and be re-traumatising for them.

However, in opposition to this point of view is the opinion of other members who believe that the uniform will have the effect of bringing staff together and may actually be therapeutic for youth.

Much of the rationale in favour of the proposal that is around professionalism/team with benefits to staff of personal cost saving on clothing. The cost factor is important to a number of members, with people pointing out the amount of money that they spend on replacing their own clothing. This situation would be rectified with the introduction of a uniform provided by the employer.

However, the uniform submission process also indicated a number of wider concerns that members had. These became connected with the uniform issue. Utmost among these was the future role and direction of OT Residences. Specifically, that Residences were being turned into *de facto* Correctional facilities, and that the introduction of uniforms was the 'thin edge of the wedge' in that change.



"No, he can't go home. Not until the green in his face turns two shades darker."

of health and safety, and professionalism. These urgently need to be dealt with regardless of the implementation or not of a uniform.

**Matt Glanville**  
Advocate

## NUPE Delegate Training 2023

Delegate training will be held for NUPE delegates early next year.



The date for the training is Friday 23 February 2024 and it will be held in the Helen Kelly room, the Trade union Centre, Papanui, Christchurch.

Training is for 1 day and it paid for under the EREL of the Employment Contracts Act 2000.

There will also be training for experienced delegates as well. Spaces for this course are strictly limited. Please contact Quentin if you want to attend.

**If you are a NUPE delegate and want to attend then please contact NUPE at: [quentin@nupe.org.nz](mailto:quentin@nupe.org.nz)**

NUPE does not want the Residential staff to be treated as or to operate as *de facto* Correctional officers. This is the antithesis of the role that Residences should be undertaking, which is to offer support and provide wellbeing to children and young people in care. While we understand that some of this work is underway with the discussions around risk classification, there are other areas that need to be prioritised to achieve a goal of safety in Residences.

There was also the argument that the time and money spent on this issue would be better spent dealing with issues around resourcing, training, and rostering issues. These issues detrimentally affect all staff and yet OT has done little to resolve them. It is NUPE's strong belief that the uniform proposal should not be confused or used to avoid other issues such as cooperation between staff, the promotion

# Non-Government Organisations (NGOs)



NUPE is very involved in the representation of a number of local NGO's in Christchurch. These community based social care providers play an important part in the local Christchurch community providing help, support and shelter for the community's less privileged. Quite often the important and challenging work our members carry out on a 24/7 365 days a year basis goes unnoticed.

NUPE recognises and values the hard yards our members put in on daily basis working with their clients in the Disability and Mental Health sector.

It has been positive to see continued growth in membership across our key NGO groups at Stepping Stone Trust, Pukeko Blue, Brackenridge and Comcare Trust over the last 12 months. NUPE will continue to organise in those groups and support our members in achieving better pay and conditions.

## Pay equity for NGOs

One of the principal means that better pay was achieved was through the introduction of pay equity. Across the sector at the moment, it remains the hot topic. Back in 2017, the Care and Support Pay Equity settlement was life changing for workers in the sector. As a result care and support workers received much needed increases in pay that were badly needed. However, as we all know those pay rates have lost their effectiveness in this current economic environment. As people will be aware inflation and interest rates have eaten into worker's pay and effectively lower the ability to be able to



afford the necessities. The current Care and Support pay equity package expired last year, but it was extended after both Unions and the Employers lobbied the Government. However, while the

Government decided to extend the agreement, it did not increase the amounts that both unions and employers were asking for. Further, the Government said that it did not intend to further extend the agreement which effectively placed ongoing pay increases at risk.

As a result of this decision by Government, last year Unions lodged a pay equity claim against 15 employers across the sector, the claim is progressing well as both parties want payrates to increase in the sector. The picture shows where the current discussions around pay equity are. The most recent updates we have received indicate an outcome is likely before the election in October.

Aside from pay equity there are other challenges in this sector such as overtime payments, on-call rates, sleepovers/ wake overs etc that need to be dealt with. NUPE remains committed to supporting workers to achieve these. (May have to flesh this out with some grandiose wording/phrasing).

Luke Stenton

NGO Organiser





# Care and Support Workers Pay Equity Claim

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NUPE, along with its sister Unions (ETU, NZNO and PSA) is part of a new pay equity claim on behalf of community based care and support workers.



As Luke said previously in his column the original claim had recently been settled some years ago and care and support workers, whose pay was amongst the lowest in the country at the time received substantial yearly increases under law. However, the regulations governing these workers expired and the outgoing Government was not prepared to offer any substantial money to workers in these areas despite both employers and unions demanding that they needed to do so.

As a result of the decision by Government not to increase funding (or include the funded sector in the recent PSPA) last year, the Unions filed a claim against 15 employers that covered 30% of the sector) to try and force the Government's hand. Unfortunately, this did not succeed. As a result, another pay equity claim has been launched that covers all employers in the care and Support sector who have collective agreements with unions. The intention is for all care and support workers to receive pay equity at the same time, which would be achieved by using a tool (Funded Framework) created by the last Labour Government to enable a settlement that would be extended to everyone in the sector.

NUPE has agreements with the following Christchurch employers in this sector:

- Brackenridge
- Comcare Trust
- Pukeko Blue
- Stepping Stone Trust
- St John of God (Waipuni)

At the time of writing this article we don't know if the new National-led Government will keep the Funded Framework or not. That's why we have filed a second claim – to make sure as many people as possible within the sector are covered and that people don't get left behind.

In the interim, the unions will keep advocating – as we have from the beginning – for all care and support workers to receive pay equity at the same time. There are a few ways that this could happen.

1. The Government could decide to keep the Funded Framework.
2. The claims could be amalgamated, or
3. The Government could choose to update the existing legislation.

Sadly the reality is that there are no guarantees in this time consuming process. However, we need our members to stand together and to call on the Government to make pay equity for care and support workers a major priority.

NUPE will be providing more information to you and how you can help achieve pay equity as soon as we have it available.

## **Media Release: Urgent action needed by new Government with critical legislation expiring 31 December**

A second pay equity claim has been filed for care and support workers by their unions – the Public Service Association Te Pūkenga Here Tikanga Mahi, E tū, the National Union of Public Employees and New Zealand Nurses Organisation Tōpūtanga Tapuhi Kaitiaki o Aotearoa.

“We’re raising this claim because 65,000 people providing care and support for the most vulnerable in our communities are being underpaid by the Government and employers who undervalue their work because it has primarily been done by women,” says Melissa Woolley PSA Assistant Secretary.

“This is a skilled workforce taking care of people with professionalism and skill. These are people, many with complex health or support needs who every day rely on the dedicated support these workers provide. These workers make a huge difference to their lives.”

The claim covers those working at over a hundred employers in home-based support services, aged residential care, mental health and addictions, and disability support services. This is the second pay equity claim filed for this group. The original claim was filed with 15 employers covering around a third of the workforce which the unions say has been stalled by delaying tactics from lead funder Te Whatu Ora.

“From the outset, unions and employers in the original claim have called for all care and support workers to receive a settlement at the same time using the funded sector framework extension mechanism put in place by the outgoing Government, and for the Care and Support Settlement Act be extended,” says Glenda Alexander NZNO Manager Industrial Services.

“Every care and support worker in Aotearoa deserves pay equity. Without the assurance the new Government will continue the funded framework, raising a second claim will help make sure no one is left behind.”

It has long been acknowledged that care and support workers are paid less because of gender-based pay discrimination.

“Workers have been left waiting for far too long for that injustice to be rectified, going to work every day knowing they’re paid less than what they’re worth,” says Rachel Mackintosh E tū National Secretary.

“The National-led Government has a huge opportunity to continue what they delivered for care and support workers after extensive legal action in 2017. Since that landmark case, care and support workers’ pay rates have been eroded back to the minimum wage for many.”

“We are calling on the Government to prioritise pay equity to stabilise the care and support sector which is in crisis, causing stress and pain to workers and the people and whānau they care for,” says Janice Gemmel NUPE National Secretary.

The current Care and Support Workers (Pay Equity) Settlement Act 2017 expires on 31 December, which will see workers in limbo regarding training and payrates. The incoming government has the opportunity to extend the Act under urgency to maintain the wins of the 2017 deal.

The reality is there are underlying sexist and outdated misconceptions about this work getting in the way of a just settlement for all care and support workers.

ENDS



# Public Sector Updates

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## PSPA Increases

People will be receiving their latest (and last) PSPA increase from the Government on 1 December while others in the public sector will receive their on next year on 1 April. In the first PSPA settlement those employees who were covered received a one off \$500 union only payment and \$4000 increase to their base rate. The second payment will include another \$500 union only payment and either a \$2000 increase on the base rates or a 3 percent increase, which ever is greater.

### 3 December 2023 Increase covers the following agencies:

- Community Corrections
- Inland Revenue
- Oranga Tamariki (General Agreement and Managers).

### 3 April 2024 Increase covers the following agencies:

- Aviation Security
- Ministry of Primary Industries (Fisheries)

Unfortunately, some other public agencies such as NZ Defence and MBIE are outside of the PSPA. NUPE recently settled with NZ Defence Force for a short 12-month document. Both parties are due to go back into bargaining again next year. MBIE bargaining is also due next year.

## Financial Restraint from the new Government.

As people are aware the Government has changed as a result of the October General Election and with that change will also come a change in the outcomes that are expected from state agencies,



Departments and Ministries. The outgoing Labour Government has already signalled to the Public Service Commission and Treasury that it intended to cut down on expenditure, and the incoming National -led administration has committed itself to further reductions.

Currently it is unclear as to what this might all mean, but there will be

clarity once a Government, is formed and a new cabinet has met to consider its options. This will probably occur very quickly once a coalition deal has been struck. Certainly, both Labour and National made it clear that part of the reductions would be focused on the halting of the hiring of consultants and reducing 'back room' costs. Currently, there are no firm indications of what those costs might be. But there is little doubt that this will at some point result in job cuts or the reduction of conditions. As of the date of writing, the recent victims of this cost cutting have been Statistics contractors whose roles have not been extended and are ending in December and an announcement by MBIE that it is cancelling funding for Christmas parties.

From NUPE's perspective we are completely opposed to the reduction of conditions or roles that impact upon the livelihood of members and their ability to undertake their jobs in a safe environment and to deliver high quality public services to the community.

### **Concern about Potential AI Use and its Impact on Conditions**

Increasingly agencies are using AI to undertake various tasks. The latest agency to do so is Inland Revenue which has announced that it will be looking at potentially using AI in various areas. NUPE is aware that a number of other agencies are also having similar discussions about the future of work etc. Currently, these discussions are only in their infancy as no one is sure at this point as to what these changes could mean in a practical sense.

However, NUPE, like other unions needs to be aware of that the use of AI could have upon potential changes to conditions. The most important issue we have is understanding when employers such as IR will identify when their use of AI triggers the management of change process of the collective and how NUPE will be involved? Obviously, collective employment agreements set out the obligations of both parties under a change process, but the danger that NUPE perceives is that projects may start off on a relatively small scale with no intention of there being a change, but then they could grow to the point that members jobs are impacted.

From NUPE's perspective this requires on going attention and continuing and regular communication between the employer and employees.

## **Ministers for those public sector Ministries/Agencies covered by NUPE.**

### **Aviation Security**

**Simeon Brown** - Minister for Energy, Minister of Local Government, Minister of Transport, Minister for Auckland, Deputy Leader of the House

### **Corrections**

**Mark Mitchell** - Minister of Corrections, Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery, Minister of Police

### **Inland Revenue**

**Simon Watts (outside Cabinet)** - Minister of Climate Change, Minister of Revenue

### **Ministry of Justice**

**Paul Goldsmith** - Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, Minister of Justice, Minister for State Owned Enterprises, Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations

### **MBIE**

**Melissa Lee** - Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Ethnic Communities, Minister for Media and Communications, Associate Minister for ACC

### **MPI (Fisheries)**

**Shane Jones** - Minister for Oceans and Fisheries, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Resources, Associate Minister of Finance, Associate Minister for Energy

### **Oranga Tamariki**

**Karen Chhour (outside Cabinet)** - Minister for Children, Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence

### **Minister for the Public Service**

**Nicola Willis** - Minister of Finance, Minister for the Public Service, Minister for Social Investment, Associate Minister of Climate Change

### **Minister for Workplace relations and Health and Safety**

**Brooke van Velden** - Minister of Internal Affairs, Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety

## In Memoriam: The Passing of NUPE Delegate and Executive member, Sue Newman.



NUPE was saddened to learn of the passing of Sue Newman who had been a dedicated NUPE delegate at Comcare and who had served on the NUPE Executive for the past several years.

Sue had come from a trade union background on the West Coast where her father had been active in the Miner's Union at the Strongman's Mine. As a result she was known for her tireless advocacy and representation.

Sue joined NUPE in 2014 and quickly became a delegate at Comcare. The next year she joined the NUPE Executive where she was a forceful advocate for care and support workers.

In accordance with her wishes NUPE donated money to the Mental health Foundation. NUPE passes on its condolences to Sue's family and colleagues. Sue's spirit and courage will be missed.

*Do not stand at my grave and weep  
I am not there. I do not sleep.  
I am a thousand winds that blow.  
I am the diamond glints on snow.  
I am the sunlight on ripened grain.  
I am the gentle autumn rain.  
When you awaken in the morning's hush  
I am the swift uplifting rush  
Of quiet birds in circled flight.  
I am the soft stars that shine at night.  
Do not stand at my grave and cry;  
I am not there. I did not die*

- Mary Elizabeth Frye

## Long Serving NUPE Delegate Retires

Karl Lutterman who has been a long serving AVSEC Delegate for NUPE at Christchurch Airport, recently retired.

Originally hailing from California, Karl has been employed by AVSEC as an Aviation Security Officer (ASO) for 21 years and 7 months. A role that he recently described as really enjoyable and rewarding.

In terms of NUPE, Karl has been involved at most levels of the Union. He has represented members at meetings, attended local management /union meetings and advocated for members at AVSEC bargaining.

Karl has been instrumental in ensuring that NUPE has been active and involved at Christchurch. He was one NUPE's front line people who has been appreciated by NUPE for the amount of work that he has contributed.



The end of an era—Karl with some of the ChCh Delegates (Clockwise from rear – Karl, Mark Nixon, Al Lawrence, Rachel Skelton, Michelle Hintz and Maurice Evans.

His stated aim now is to relax and enjoy life.

NUPE wants to thank Karl for his hard work and dedication over the years of his involvement.

Haere pai, Karl.



## **Unfinished business for nurses, despite pay deal RNZ 8 August 2023**

A last-minute deal between Te Whatu Ora and the New Zealand Nurses Organisation (NZNO) has seen strike action averted across New Zealand, but a local delegate says important issues remain unresolved.

NZNO chief executive Paul Goulter said on



Monday there was a high level of member participation in the ballot on Monday, but that the result was reasonably close.

"While a majority of members accepted the offer, the closeness of the vote shows there remains a serious level of concern and discontent amongst members," he said.

"Many members see the offer as not helping address the shortage of nurses that is severely impacting on the quality of care they can provide for their unwell patients. It is pretty light on important issues such as health and safety at work and minimum staff to patient ratios.

Goulter said members strongly believed a lot needed to change.

NZNO delegate at Wairarapa Hospital Amber Cox agreed.

"There are items in the collective agreement that still need addressing," she said.

Cox listed KiwiSaver contributions, allowances,

and safe staffing levels among the things that needed to be resolved.

"We need to see nurses in charge of shifts getting a higher duties allowance," she said.

"At the moment it's a discretionary payment and the nurses are not always getting what they are entitled to."

Cox said for places without software to assist with monitoring safe staffing levels, minimum staff numbers should be put in on a ratio basis.

"There aren't enough nurses anyway. We still have big gaps in the rosters," she said.

Cox said for places without software to assist with monitoring safe staffing levels, minimum staff numbers should be put in on a ratio basis.

"There aren't enough nurses anyway. We still have big gaps in the rosters," she said.

"There aren't enough people to put in, which is a bigger problem."

Te Whatu Ora employer KiwiSaver contributions for nurses will go up to 3 percent from the current level of 2 percent. However, the NZNO had asked for 6 percent, which is what some other healthcare workers currently get. That request did not gain traction.

"Why should doctors at Te Whatu Ora get twice as much as nurses?" Cox asked.

"I am disappointed. I know the negotiators and delegates put in a lot of work," she said acknowledging the majority vote.

The new collective agreement will be in place until October 2024, when fresh negotiations will start. At that time, the issues around KiwiSaver, additional payments for nurses with postgraduate qualifications, nurse-in-charge/nurse coordinator allowances and other safety related matters are expected to be discussed.

"I expect a lot of those issues to be on the table next year," Cox said.

"I think everyone is just really tired from a very drawn-out process.

"It feels like the issues haven't been resolved for me personally and for many of my colleagues."

## **The 2023/24 Living Wage Rate is \$26.00**

The new Living Wage rate is \$26.00 per hour

The Living Wage has undergone a full recalculation. From 1 September 2023, thousands of workers will receive a pay increase to ensure they can live with dignity and participate in society.

The 2023/24 New Zealand Living Wage rate is \$26.00 an hour. This is an increase of \$2.35 or 9.9% on the 2022/23 rate.

\$26.00 is the result of a full recalculation of the Living Wage, which happens every five years. In other years, the Living Wage is linked to movement in New Zealand's average hourly wages.

Recent increases in the cost of living are reflected in the new Living Wage rate. The rate also considers what families need to live with dignity and participate in society. This includes the cost of recreation and saving for emergencies.

The rate will see workers at accredited Living Wage Employers earning at least \$3.30 more than the minimum wage.

"With rising costs and pressures on low waged workers, we are seeing increased hardship in the community," says Rev Stephen King, chair of the Living Wage Movement.

"The full recalculation ensures the Living Wage will continue to address in-work poverty, and offer working people greater security and wellbeing," says Stephen.

Rose Kavapalu, a cleaner who is paid the Living Wage, says the increase to \$26.00 per hour will mean she can reconnect with family.

"Since petrol prices have gone up, we've cut down on visits to extended family. Now, I'll be able to

take the grandkids to visit their cousins. We would feel like a family again," says Rose.

"The Living Wage might feel like five cents to some people, but to me and my family, it means finally living a life."

Accredited Living Wage Employers will pay the new Living Wage rate by 1 September 2023.

Environment Canterbury (ECan) is the latest accredited Living Wage Employer. ECan Chair Peter Scott says it is an honour.

"Living Wage accreditation is something we've been working towards for some time," says Peter.

"Being a Living Wage Employer means our people and contracted providers are paid fairly for the great mahi they do."

ECan is the first Regional Council to gain Living Wage Employer accreditation. It joins over 370 Living Wage Employers, who voluntarily pay at least the Living Wage to staff and regular contractors.

"The Living Wage Movement congratulates ECan, and all Living Wage Employers," says Felicia Scherrer, Living Wage Employer Programme Lead.

"These employers have chosen to prioritise paying a Living Wage, and together they have transformed thousands of lives."

"We know that Living Wage Employers reap the benefits too. Research has shown that paying the Living Wage can reduce staff turnover, improve productivity, and boost employee morale," says Felicia.

ENDS

### **Note for media:**

The recalculation of the Living Wage rate is part of the Five Year Measurement Review of the Living Wage. This is an independent review conducted by the NZ Family Social Policy Centre Research Unit.

For more information about the New Zealand Living Wage Movement, please visit [www.livingwage.org.nz](http://www.livingwage.org.nz).

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# HOW TO JOIN

1

Get a membership form. You can get one from our website [www.nupe.org.nz](http://www.nupe.org.nz) or request one to be sent to you by mailing [officeadmin@nupe.org.nz](mailto:officeadmin@nupe.org.nz)

2

Complete the form. Then scan it OR photograph it and send to [officeadmin@nupe.org.nz](mailto:officeadmin@nupe.org.nz) or post to PO Box 13032 Christchurch 8140

3

NUPE will process the application, notify your employer to commence deductions and send you a membership pack

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*co-operation without compromise*