

Midpoint

Midwifery Council New Zealand Newsletter

Guardians of Professional standards

► May 2020 International Day of the Midwife

2020 | INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE MIDWIFE

Kia ora koutou

The 5th May is [International Day of the Midwife](#). This year has special importance as the General Assembly of the World Health Organisation has designated 2020 as International Year of the Midwife. The purpose of this was to acknowledge the work that these professionals engage in, to highlight the conditions that they work in and to advocate for increased investment in the workforce.

While many plans and celebrations have been postponed or cancelled due to the COVID-19 Global Pandemic, this has also provided an opportunity to acknowledge and highlight the work that New Zealand midwives have undertaken during this time.

*Dr Sue Calvert, CE/Registrar,
Midwifery Council*

Midwives in Aotearoa

New Zealand is one of the few jurisdictions in the world where midwives have their own regulator. The Midwifery Council is this regulator and it ensures that the care midwives provide is safe and effective. The Council does this through the regulatory mechanisms enabled through the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act. The Council can - and does - hold midwives to account if there are issues with their practice. It requires all midwives to engage in professional development and monitors their compliance with this.

Other jurisdictions are currently exploring the introduction of community based care similar to that provided in Aotearoa. However while many midwives work in the community, our midwives are not just experts in the provision of community based maternity care, they also provide high quality care to women who require hospital level treatment or they may have to adapt their community care to provide quality maternity care to women in remote rural areas. Where ever they work, midwives are an essential part of the integrated maternity care team. In keeping the wāhine at the centre of care midwives' work has to

Midwives are essential workers and have continued to provide routine and - not so routine - care to all pregnant wāhine, their pēpi and whānau during this pandemic. When required they have provided care to women with confirmed or suspected COVID-19.

This has meant that the way that midwives work has had to change and to adapt. This is demonstrated through revising the schedule of visits and through the way that care is provided. The use of telehealth to complete bookings or discussions followed by brief interaction where physical care is provided is another adaptation.

Midwives have continued to work in both the hospital facility and also in the community. They have obtained new equipment and have learnt how and when to use PPE effectively in order to reduce the risks to themselves, their family, women and their whanau. Midwives and women have had to adapt.

intersect with many health professions including medicine, pharmacy, physiotherapy and psychology to name a few.

Our midwives are educated to high standards - the pre-registration degree takes four years of full time study to complete. Apart from academic success, there are many regulatory requirements that need to be completed before graduates can enter the register. In addition, New Zealand educators and researchers are recognised internationally and have been involved in providing advice and assisting in the development of curricula for other international areas.

The Midwifery Council acknowledges the work that New Zealand midwives engage in and is confident that its key strategic project for 2020-2021 will reconfirm the safety of practice and enhance the quality of care that is provided to all wāhine and pēpi.



New project launched

The Aotearoa Midwifery Project

To celebrate International Midwives day, the Council is thrilled to announce the launch of the [Aotearoa Midwifery Project](#). This is the review of the scope of practice, the competencies for entry to the register and the standards for approval of pre-registration programmes of education. This work is essential to ensure that the regulatory framework that midwives must adhere to is robust and contemporary and that it reflects the work that midwives engage in within New Zealand.

The Council has established a Collaborative Reference Group with Co-Chairs - Dr Hope Tupara and Dr Judith Meara-Couper leading this work. Acknowledging our country's foundation, the Aotearoa Midwifery Project draws on the intent of the Treaty of Waitangi and is developing a Treaty Partnership Framework to define the future of midwifery practice.

We welcome your contribution and involvement over the course of the project.

[*Karina Kwai*](#)

Project Manager

International Day of the Midwife

International Day of the Midwife (May 5) will occur during Alert Level 3, so there will be no opportunity for midwives to gather.

Visit the [College of Midwives site](#) for activities and ways you can be involved during this time.



Tuesday 12th May is International Nurses Day. While 2020 is International Year of the Midwife it is also International Year of the Nurse. In New Zealand midwifery and nursing are two distinctly different professions with quite different qualifications, professional frameworks and scopes of practice. The Council would like to acknowledge the work that New Zealand nurses engage in and International Nurses Day.

A teal banner with a blurred background of a person. The text 'Guardians of professional standards' is written in white, bold, sans-serif font.

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professional standards

DIARY



5 May

International Day of the Midwife

Council offices

The Council is located on:
Level 5
22-28 Willeston St
Wellington



Midwifery Council of New Zealand
PO Box 9644
Wellington 6141

If you are not a practising midwife and do not wish to receive this newsletter please contact
info@midwiferycouncil.health.nz



Midwifery Council
Te Tatau o te Whare Kahu

www.midwiferycouncil.health.nz

Address:

Level 5 (reception)
22 Willeston Street
Wellington Central
Wellington 6011

PO Box 9644
Marion Square
Wellington 6141

Contact:

Phone: +64 (4) 499 5040

Fax: +64 (4) 499 5045

E-mail: info@midwiferycouncil.health.nz