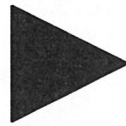


New Zealand Nurses Organisation 'very happy' announces new pay parity deal

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[William Hewett](#)



Watch: New Zealand Nurses Organisation CEO "very happy" after Government announces new pay parity deal Credits: Video - AM; Images - AM

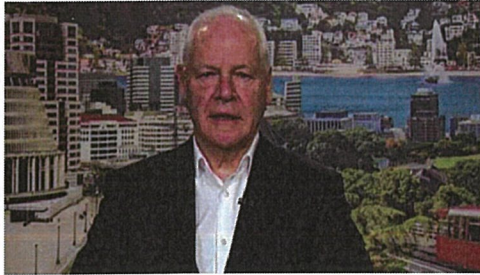
The New Zealand Nurses Organisation has welcomed an increase in funding with open arms as the Government promises a step towards pay parity.

The Government announced on Monday morning a new \$200 million annual fund to bring pay parity to parts of the health sector.

It's estimated 20,000 community health and aged-care facility workers will be paid at rates comparable to nurses employed by Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand.



Nurses hopeful Government's upcoming primary healthcare pay parity announcement will help sector issues



'Pushed everyone to the brink': Thousands of nurses to refuse overtime, tired of 'bearing the brunt' of lack of staff

Health Minister Andrew Little said taking action on pay parity for healthcare workers was the "right thing to do" and expects the changes to occur in the early part of next year.

"I am pleased that on our watch, this year 10,000 public hospital administration and clerical workers got a historic pay equity deal that saw some with pay rises of as much as 40 percent," Little said.

"We are also negotiating pay-equity agreements with midwives, allied health workers and homecare and support workers, and have boosted the pay of nurses working for Te Whatu Ora by an average of 20 percent and have put aside \$540 million a year for a pay equity settlement for them."

The New Zealand Nurses Organisation (NZNO) was consulted heavily on the new package and chief executive Paul Goulter told AM on Monday they're "very happy" with the Government's announcement.

"The Minister's been promising it for a long time and we've now finally seen it being delivered," Goulter told AM co-host Ryan Bridge. "So we've got some work to do, but [it's] long overdue and I think the Government needs to be acknowledged for that."

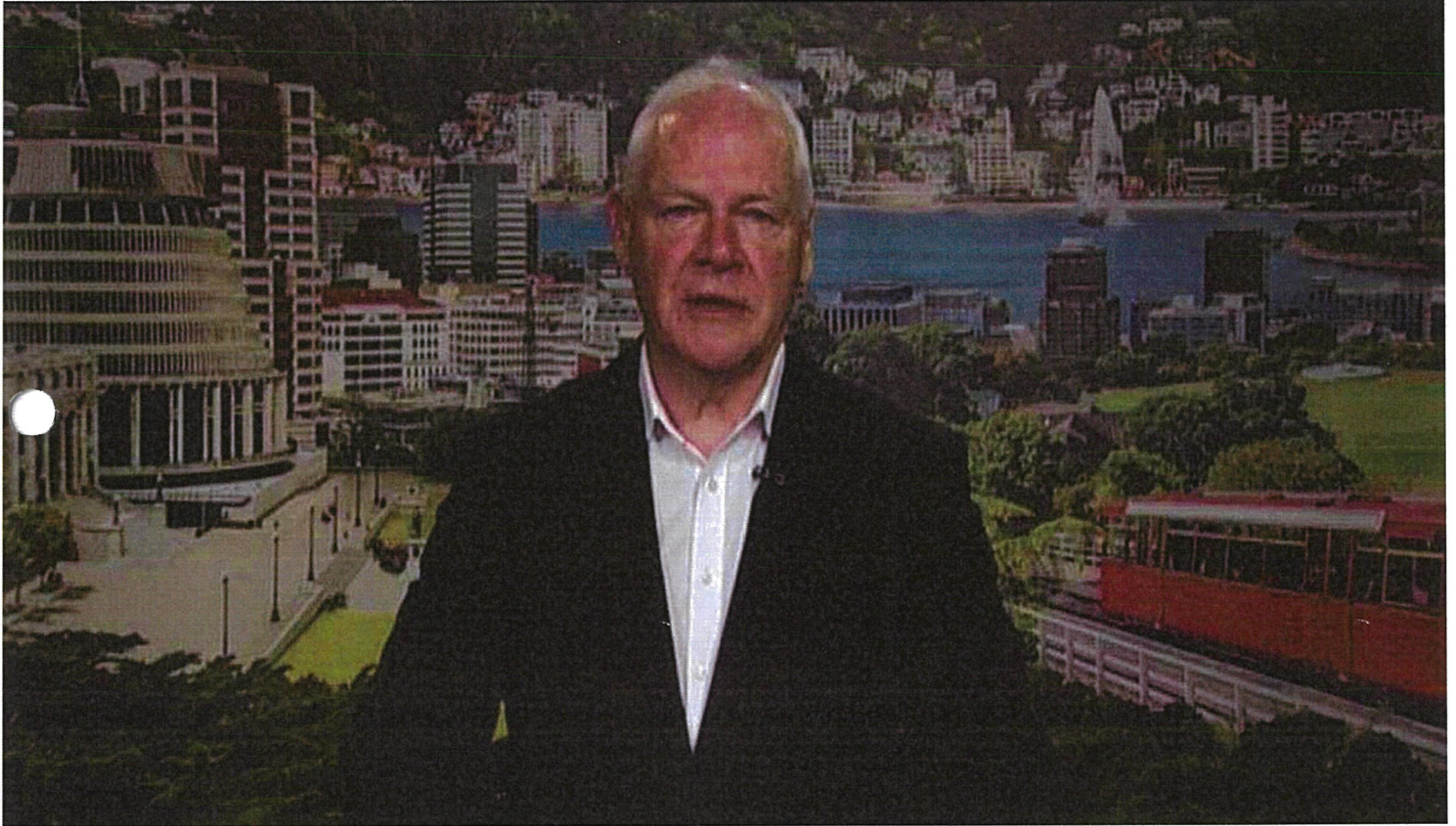
Nurses in Maori and Pacifica health care services will see a big jump in pay because of the Government's announcement.

"If you take aged residential care, for example, those gaps were 10 to 12 percent that we estimated Māori and iwi providers is where the gap's worst and we've we look at that around about a 25 percent wage gap," he said.

"So these are significant figures and we're really pleased that this is recurrent funding, the Government have buckled down to that, which is great."

Goulter said the reason there was a difference between nurses at aged care facilities and hospitals comes down to the size of the different roles.

"I think it probably just goes to affordability and in the hospitals, obviously there's been some fairly bitter pay disputes with strikes and stuff like that and that's probably been accountable for the difference," he said.



New Zealand Nurses Organisation CEO Paul Goulter. Photo credit: AM

Nurses in GP practices won't see a significant change immediately because Little believes more "hard evidence" needs to be provided.

"Decisions about what is paid to whom have to be based on hard evidence, and the data provided to me by both the Nurses Organisation and the GP organisation GenPro for that sector did not show any real evidence of pay difference at this point," Little said.

But this is something Goulter doesn't agree with.

"We don't agree with that. We think the data is way more mixed than what the Government obviously believe it is and that's why we think we need to work more with the Government to make up those gaps," Goulter told AM.

"The Government has said that actually shows there's not a pay parity gap, we believe the reverse, so we're in one of those struggles."

Goulter said a big focus for NZNO now is making sure this pay parity deal actually goes into the pocket of nurses.

"The issue for us is now we need transparency, that funding goes actually into the pockets of the nurses and isn't captured somewhere else," he said.

"So that's going to be a really important conversation we are going to have through our collective bargaining."