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**2022 continues to be busy for Te Tatau o te Whare Kahu | Midwifery Council. After a patchy start to the year with many staff working from home under the red light setting, we are just about at a full complement in the office again. I am proud my team kept up with all the Secretariat workload at a particularly busy time of year.**

The Board met in early May – although numbers in attendance were affected by the pandemic, we were pleased to welcome members of the Aotearoa Midwifery Project Collaborative Reference Group to talk about the progress of the project and to discuss matters rising as a result of their work.

We have two vacancies on the Board at present - for a midwife and a layperson. Te Manatū Hauora | The Ministry of Health is seeking candidates who wish to be considered for appointment as Board members under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCAA).

All members of the Board are appointed by the Minister of Health. Their advertisement can be found [here](#).

The purpose of Responsible Authorities like Te Tatau o te Whare Kahu | Midwifery Council is to protect the health and safety of members of the public and they do this by making sure that health practitioners are competent and fit to practise.

The Board is responsible for the governance of the organisation. They do this through development and sign off of the Strategic Plan which sets the direction of the organisation and midwifery regulation over the short and long term, they also approve policy and have responsibility for financial governance.

As you all know, International Day of the Midwife was on May 5 and marked the 100 year anniversary of the International Confederation of Midwives. Coincidentally, that was the day that Council met so together we recognised the vital role that midwives play as essential workers. Thank you again for all you do to support whānau during their pregnancy and birth journeys.

### Dr Susan Calvert

Tumu Whakahaere me te Pouroki | Chief Executive and Registrar

## What does Te Tatau o te Whare Kahu | Midwifery Council do?

The HPCAA clearly defines the functions of all Responsible Authorities. Our main role is to:

- Set the qualifications needed to become a midwife and accredit pre-registration programmes of education.
- Set standards for clinical competence, cultural competence and conduct of midwives - this includes competencies that will enable effective interaction with Māori.
- Register midwives and maintain the Register.
- Recertify midwives every year and issue Annual Practising Certificates.
- Review and make sure that all midwives are competent and fit to practice.

The policy and strategy of the Council is operationalised through the secretariat with the Chief Executive/ Registrar as the pivot between governance and operations. All responsible authorities are required to have a Registrar, whose role is to perform statutory duties as delegated by the Board. The Chief Executive also works under delegation from the Board to operationalise its decisions. In the Midwifery Council both roles are performed by the same person. However, in some boards the role of Registrar and Chief Executive are separate.



## Audit time

**Now that our financial year has ended, we enter annual audit time when the Council opens its books and processes for the auditors to review.**

**This review includes consideration of not only our financial performance but also our compliance with requirements.**

**Auditors view financial transactions, contracts, policy and a host of materials as part of their due diligence.**

**Up to 5% of midwives can also have their compliance with the recertification programme audited by the Council each year. Midwives are selected at random and will be assessed to make sure to have their compliance with the recertification programme up to date - including continuing education, professional activities and midwifery emergency skills.**

**Midwives are asked to ensure that they have entered all the necessary information on their [MyMCANZ](#) portal.**

## Meet the team

The operational arm of Te Tatau o te Whare Kahu | Midwifery Council is the Secretariat. Primarily located in Wellington, the staff carry out all the day to day functions of the Council. We will be introducing you to members of the operations team – in this issue, we would like you to meet the Deputy Registrar, Jessica Schreiber.



**Jessica Schreiber**, Pouroki Tuarua | Deputy Registrar

Kia ora, I started as the Council's Deputy Registrar in mid-2021, providing policy and legal advice to the Council, particularly around fitness to practice issues (conduct, competence, and health).

I completed my Law and Arts degrees at Victoria University in Wellington, and I was admitted as a barrister and solicitor in 2009. I started practising law in

the Eastern Bay of Plenty, specialising in family, employment, and civil litigation, before moving back to Wellington to work for the Health and Disability Commissioner's Legal Team.

I have worked as a legal advisor for several different professional regulatory authorities since then, including advising professional conduct committees and appearing before Tribunals. I enjoy the variety my role provides and learning about different professions. I live in Wellington with my young family, and I enjoy food and travel. I am looking forward to getting out and connecting with more of our midwives in the future!

## Updated mandatory vaccine order

The COVID-19 Public Health Response (Vaccinations) Order 2021 requires mandatory Covid-19 vaccinations for workers in the health and disability sector. The Order was amended on 5 November 2021 to require those who 'work' in clinical practice or in the clinical practice environment to be vaccinated against Covid-19.

On 15 May 2022, the Order was amended to introduce a new exemption process for mandated workers who test positive for COVID-19. Those people are exempt from being vaccinated against COVID-19, or from receiving their booster doses, for 100 days after the date they produce evidence of their positive COVID-19 test.

This process is managed by the employer or the person conducting a business or undertaking. Further information is provided in the attached document.

While the Council supports midwives to enable informed decision making and respects the individual's right to have their own opinion, it is the Council's view that there is no place for anti-vaccination messages in professional practice, nor any promotion of such claims on social media or advertising by midwives. That is clearly outlined in the [Midwifery Council Code of Conduct](#).

If you are unsure about anything relating to the updated Vaccine Order, please do not hesitate to [contact us](#).

## Update on feedback on the Scope of Practice statement

Te Tatau o te Whare Kahu | Midwifery Council hosted two webinars in April to discuss the revised Scope of Practice statement. Over 200 midwives took part.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, we had to cancel the first webinar at late notice and apologise to anyone who had planned to take part.

In order to make space for midwives and organisations to comment on the Scope statement, we delayed the closing date for submissions until April 29.

The Co-Chairs of Te Tatau o te Whare Kahu | Midwifery Council Ngarangi Pritchard and Kerry Adams would like to sincerely thank all those who took the time to supply thoughtful and considered feedback.

All the comments received (through Survey Monkey or via email) have been collated and are currently being analysed so that a report can be prepared for the Board to consider when it meets in early June.

Once the Board has reviewed the report and consulted with key people on the next steps in the process, we will communicate this to all midwives.

## Abortion legislation education

Please remember that Abortion Legislation education is a requirement for all midwives this recertification period. The course "[Introduction to the Abortion Legislation and Midwifery Roles and Responsibilities](#)" is now available for midwives to complete. Te Kura Matatini ki Otago | Otago Polytechnic has provided self-enrolment instructions for the course.



Te Tatau o te Whare Kahu | Midwifery Council acknowledges that some midwives may not want to participate in and provide abortion care on their own responsibility - it is their right to determine if they will do so.

This compulsory Abortion Law Reform education is focused on what the change in law means for all health

practitioners – midwives included – regardless of their belief systems.

Completion of this education does not make a midwife competent to provide abortion care - further education will be provided for those who want to provide midwifery-led abortion care. Work is about to commence on preparing the Midwifery-Led Abortion Care Scope of Practice, standards of competence and education requirements which will be sent to the sector for consultation.

Currently there is no education accredited by the Midwifery Council that enables midwives to provide midwifery-led abortion care.

## Current work

The Council recently submitted on proposed mandatory reporting by health professionals of firearms injuries.

The Council continues to actively work with other Responsible Authorities on joint prescribing standards.



• 27 May Finance Committee meets

• 9 June 2022 the Council meets