



**The mandated voice of general practice and urgent care providers.  
By general practice, for general practice.**

GenPro For You  
December 2024 Update



Working unashamedly to support sustainability and viability on behalf of general practice and urgent care business owners - and ultimately the New Zealand population they serve.

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### [Message from the Chief Executive](#)

Kia ora koutou,

This newsletter is a little lighter in content than usual, with substantive MECA progress and AGM activity still yet to happen. A round up bulletin with AGM and MECA progress will be issued in December as the last newsletter of 2024.

I would like to extend our appreciation to all members that stepped up and supported our efforts to ensure that the upcoming AGM is quorate. Our growth over the years has meant that achieving quorum for the AGM is increasingly challenging and this year we had to make the difficult decision to delay the AGM to allow time for us to ensure we had the numbers. This is a good problem to have and reflects our growth in independent general practice membership.

I am pleased to say that we can now confirm quorum and look forward to welcoming our members to the AGM in early December.

The last 4 weeks have been busy on the advocacy and planning fronts with PSAAP having reconvened and the first in person meeting taking place on October 31st.

There have been two days of MECA bargaining since the last newsletter and we are continuing to work in good faith with the NZNO and the other employers at the table.

The board met on Tuesday November 12th and spent the day planning for the coming year. We also held a regional meeting and met some existing and some new members in Auckland. It is always valuable to hear from our members and for us to have the opportunity to share our work and priorities. These are

challenging times for general practice, and we remain committed to advocating for our members at every opportunity.

Noho ora mai

Mark

Mark Liddle  
**Chief Executive**

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### **[Cremation Regulation 1973: Exemptions from Regulation 7 - Health New Zealand](#)**

GenPro contacted Manatū Hauora / Ministry of Health seeking continuation of the existing exemption from Regulation 7 of the Cremation Regulations as it was due to expire in December 2024.

We are pleased to let you know that Minister Reti has agreed to an extension of this exemption for one year until 31 December 2025. This timeframe will allow the Ministry to undertake policy work over the next few months to consider whether a targeted change should be made to the Regulations that would make a more streamlined process in lower risk settings permanent. GenPro will work to support this.

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### **[NZNO Primary Health Care MECA](#)**

The last MECA Bargaining meeting was held on Tuesday, 22 October 2024. It is clear that the affordability for members and the expectation of the NZNO are not aligned.

Our MECA subscribers have participated in two surveys as we seek mandate for a formal offer to the NZNO. This is only in relation to the pay as until this is resolved all parties have agreed that there is little point bargaining on other terms and conditions.

The outcome of this latest survey will be provided to the NZNO for them to share with their members in early December. We anticipate that they will notify us of their intended response ahead of the break.

The next meeting with NZNO is scheduled for late December. A round up bulletin relating to HR and MECA will be provided to all our MECA subscribers before Christmas.

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### [NZNO Stop Work Meetings](#)

GenPro provided advice to members regarding staff and patient safety in the absence of a full compliment of nurses during stop work meetings.

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### [NZNO Primary Practice Pay Equity Claim](#)

There has been no tangible progress to report for the period.

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### [PSAAP Update](#)

GenPro agents attended to represent more than half of all contracted providers and presented a paper seeking a larger proportion of System Level Measures (SLM) to be paid to general practices, with less being held by their respective PHOs. This proposal has the support of the majority of the Contracted Provider Caucus and Health New Zealand are happy for this to happen.

However, the PHOs are yet to agree and GenPro will continue to work with the PHO Caucus and Te Kāhui Hauora Māori to progress this - further updates will follow.

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### [Round Up Bulletin](#)

The next round up bulletin is scheduled for mid-December and will be the last bulletin for the year.

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### [Announcement from Manatu Hauora | Ministry of Health](#)

#### **Use of Mental Health (compulsory Assessment and Treatment) Act 1992 (The Mental Health Act)**

Coroner A Ho has made the following recommendation under s57A of the

## Coroners Act 2006:

*“The Ministry of Health should clarify to frontline doctors and nurse practitioners in the community, rural hospitals and emergency departments their legal ability to complete assessment paperwork under s8 of the Mental Health Act”.*

This relates to a situation where the attending ED doctor misunderstood their ability to complete both forms, the 8A and 8B of the Mental Health Act. This did not materially impact this case, however there is potential it could impact patient outcomes in other similar settings.

As a start:

It is highly recommended, if there are concerns that a person requires support and that the Mental Health Act will be needed, contact is made with a Duly Authorised Officer (DAO) (contactable via the local Mental Health Crisis Team) as soon as practicable. They have the expertise and authority to guide health practitioners through this process. DAOs are appointed with specific legal powers (these are detailed further in this memo) and one of their obligations is to investigate the matter and provide all such assistance, advice and reassurance as may be appropriate in the circumstances (Section 37).

As described the DAO will guide and support however the process is outlined here in summary form for ease of use and the more detailed rationale follows.

- To initiate the Mental Health Act, under section 8B(4)(b) of the Act, a nurse practitioner, medical practitioner or registered nurse working in mental health must ‘consider that there are reasonable grounds for believing that the person may be suffering from a mental disorder’ before issuing a certificate to accompany an application for compulsory assessment.
- The 8B certificate needs to have an 8A application with it, completed by a person who has seen the person within 3 days of completing the application (8A).

Once the 8A is completed the DAO must, as soon as possible, ensure that the next assessment is completed. This must be done by an appropriately trained mental health practitioner.

The above advice is drawn from:

<https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1992/0046/latest/whole.html>

<https://www.health.govt.nz/publications/guidelines-to-the-mental-health->

## [compulsory-assessment-and-treatment-act-1992](#)

Furthermore, the Ministry of Health recommends all frontline doctors and nurse practitioners in the community, in rural hospitals and in emergency departments, engage with training such as that available on Te Pou <https://www.tepou.co.nz/e-learning> on the application of the Mental Health Act.

Changes to the Mental Health Act now enable remote psychiatric assessment under the Act. Awareness of this may increase the comfort of rural practitioners with completing paperwork under section 8, as where it is safely possible and practicable it no longer requires removing people from their communities for compulsory assessment and treatment.

The Ministry of Health highlights section 38 Mental Health (Compulsory Assessment and Treatment) Act 1992, which describes the role of a Duly Authorised Officer, and that “anyone who believes that a person may be suffering from a mental disorder may, at any time, request the assistance of a Duly Authorised Officer”. This can support practitioners less familiar with the Act in managing patients who may require compulsory assessment and treatment.

Nāku noa, nā

Dr Joe Bourne

Chief Medical Officer

Clinical, Community and Mental Health | Te Pou Whakakaha



### [Why would you join GenPro?](#)

- To add to GenPro's collective national voice and growing mandate and therefore its ability to make a difference
- To work towards having a single voice representing General Practice Owners in Aotearoa

- To have a strong voice in national negotiations and discussions
- To have access to GenPro's exclusive range of member-only resources and briefings

Further information on the benefits of joining GenPro can be found [on our website](#) or by contacting [membership@genpro.org.nz](mailto:membership@genpro.org.nz)

Download the GenPro membership application

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Remember to follow us on Facebook and LinkedIn for current updates



### [Te Whatu Ora | Health New Zealand Updates](#)

#### **Plunket Partnership to increase childhood immunisations**

Health NZ and Whānau Āwhina Plunket have partnered on a pilot programme to boost childhood immunisations. Click on the link to [Read more](#).

#### **Myocarditis and pericarditis after Comirnaty vaccine study**

Health NZ has published a study on the long-term outcomes of myocarditis and pericarditis following vaccination with Comirnaty (Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine).

The study explores individuals' experiences of being diagnosed, however it was not designed to confirm or investigate whether the vaccination event was the cause or related to the myocarditis or pericarditis. Click on the link to [Read more](#).

#### **Immunise now against whooping cough**

Pregnant people, babies, children and others at high risk from whooping cough are being urged to get vaccinated as soon as possible due to the high risk of an outbreak. Click on the link to [Read more](#).



For a full list of Te Whatu Ora updates visit : [News and updates – Te Whatu Ora - Health New Zealand](#)

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### [The Final Word...](#)

***As always, member feedback and membership enquiries are always welcomed - email [enquiries@genpro.org.nz](mailto:enquiries@genpro.org.nz)***

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**By General Practice, for General Practice**

- Membership enquiries/updates [membership@genpro.org.nz](mailto:membership@genpro.org.nz)
- MECA enquiries [meca@genpro.org.nz](mailto:meca@genpro.org.nz)
- Accounts enquiries [accounts@genpro.org.nz](mailto:accounts@genpro.org.nz)
- All other enquiries [enquiries@genpro.org.nz](mailto:enquiries@genpro.org.nz)



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