



**Te Ao Māramatanga
New Zealand College of Mental Health Nurses (Inc.)
Partnership, Voice, Excellence in Mental Health Nursing**

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Te Ao Māramatanga New Zealand College of Mental Health Nurses

Mental health nurses are a vital workforce component in meeting increasing population mental health and addiction needs.

The college sees a number of key issues in mental health that would help the sector and mental health nursing improve outcomes for people with mental health and addiction issues across the care continuum.

Maximising the potential of the mental health nursing workforce requires:

- Agreed national mental health and addiction competencies within undergraduate nursing programmes.
- Ongoing investment to strengthen post-registration NESP (new entry to specialist practice) programmes and other postgraduate, clinically-focused, skills-based education and training programmes.
- Adequate resourcing of mental health services including acute inpatient areas.
- Compulsory completion of postgraduate NESP programmes in order to work as a specialist mental health nurse.
- Mental health nurses to have prescribing authority to authorise and review medications.
- Innovative programmes such as the Australian MHNIP (Mental Health Nurse Incentive Programme) where mental health nurses work alongside GPs and psychiatrists to provide interventions for people with serious mental illness.
- A specific strategy for developing mental health nurse practitioners in identified areas of need, i.e. rural, addiction, plus child and youth. This could be a Health Workforce New Zealand strategy and involve the funding of nurse practitioner intern positions.

<<<Ongoing support for the role of the Mental Health Commission>>>

Ongoing support for the functions of the Mental Health Commission - particularly in light of the Australian government's support for such a body.

Addressing alcohol-related harm

A call for all parties to declare their intentions in regard to alcohol-related harm strategies: raising alcohol prices; raising the purchase age;• reducing accessibility; reducing advertising and sponsorship; increasing drink-driving counter-measures;• increasing treatment opportunities.

Increased access and responsiveness to the needs of people with mental health and addiction issues

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Stigma and discrimination result in people with mental health and addiction issues comprising a vulnerable population. In addition to a nurse practitioner strategy, the college strongly supports:

- a continuing priority for Whānau Ora, children and youth;
- increasing the role of generalist primary healthcare staff in identification, brief assessment and interventions;
- addressing mental health and addiction issues amongst the increasing older population;
- increased consumer input to services, peer support roles, consumer advisors and peer led services;
- recognise that people with mental health and addiction problems frequently have co-existing physical health problems;
- enable mental health nurses and other practitioners, including peer support workers/systems, to work collaboratively across health service boundaries and public sector boundaries, i.e. welfare, justice and education. +

Source: Te Ao Māramatanga New Zealand College of Mental Health Nurses.