



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

**FEEDBACK ON REFERRAL TO NATIONAL HEALTH COMMITTEE 9 DECEMBER 2011**

Te Ao Māramatanga is a professional body for practicing Mental Health Nurses in Aotearoa New Zealand. We thank you for the opportunity to comment on the referrals to National Health Committee. Although the short time frame for consultation provided challenges, we have provided a brief overview of our position on 2 referral templates with particular relevance to mental health nursing.

1. Te Ao Māramatanga New Zealand College of Mental Health Nurses (referred to as the College) supports any national strategy that improves the mental health of New Zealanders.
2. 005 Suicidal Problem Solving Therapy – The College sees PST as an effective therapy for some people who present to hospital after a suicide attempt. The College would like to see more work in this area on vulnerable groups such as Māori and the effectiveness of this therapy. The College looks forward to seeing further therapies added to the National Health Committee referrals site as there are many opportunities to improve the mental health status of New Zealanders before hospitalisation.
3. 012 Alcohol Strategy – The College supports any strategy that aims to reduce the burden of harm on New Zealanders associated with alcohol. Alcohol related harm is prevalent in NZ society and the College hopes that this strategy is supported at Government level.
4. The College sees focused funding on the Primary Healthcare Sector for Referral templates 005 and 012 as essential in order to improve the health status of New Zealanders. Nurses in primary health care have an important role in the provision of mental health and addiction services by identifying and managing mental health and substance use/addiction issues. It is widely known that physical and mental health are intrinsically linked and that early intervention at the primary care level achieves good outcomes and may prevent or delay the onset of more severe problems. Targeted therapy (brief intervention models) on low risk behaviours and alcohol related harm can be provided in a primary care setting. The College is currently in planning phase with HWNZ and a NZ PHO to deliver a credential to primary care nurses to improve the mental health of local communities. Training, skills enhancement and translation of mental health knowledge into practice is a key initiative for the College.

NZCMHN contacts  
Dr Daryle Deering – president  
Mel Green – vice president  
Jo Harry – College administrator

**Te Ao Māramatanga NZCMHN®  
PO Box 83 111, Edmonton Road, Auckland  
admin@nzcmhn.org.nz**