



College of Nurses Aotearoa (NZ) election manifesto October 2011

While the College of Nurses Aotearoa (the College) does not have a formal election manifesto the College's strategic plan 2009-2012 and vision of *'100% access and Zero disparities'* driving all College activities, underpins the key concerns going into the 2012 election. Ensuring every New Zealander has access to affordable and acceptable primary health care (PHC) requires politicians and health professionals to work together to address social and health determinants.

The College mostly supports the well developed and articulated NZNO manifesto, especially the call for universal PHC. Not only do we whole heartedly agree that PHC is the most cost-effective means of reducing future health and social service demands, but we also strongly support the belief that nursing is intrinsic to achieving population-wide improvement in health.

4 key areas are identified as pivotal to addressing health inequalities and ensuring all New Zealanders have access to health care as and when they need it.

- **Releasing the potential of nurses in PHC:** Since the release of the PHC strategy in 2001 nurses have worked tirelessly to provide PHC to people, families and communities. And yet huge health needs remain; growing health concerns related to diabetes, heart disease and family violence are a few of many. Nurses have the capacity to address these in a cost effective and acceptable way. Recognising the capabilities and skills of the largest health workforce would progress the health of all New Zealanders sooner rather than later.
- **Releasing the potential of nurse practitioners (NP) in Rural health care:** Rural communities and health organisations are



increasingly concerned by the amount of health dollars being spent on expensive and unnecessary medical locums. NPs offer a viable and acceptable alternative, not only for their capabilities skills and expertise, but also for their understanding of the complex needs of often peripatetic rural communities. With health organisations NPs can provide a cost effective, accessible and affordable health service to rural communities.

- **Releasing the time for nurses to care and address comfort, quality and safety for hospital based nurses:** An increasing number of stories from disillusioned families about poor treatment for their loved ones in the public hospital system are being heard. Nurses in under resourced wards treating acutely unwell patients are finding it difficult to provide the nursing care and comfort integral to their practice.
- **Nurses must be involved in workforce planning:** Addressing significant health inequalities will only succeed when all health professionals, especially the largest group, nurses, are legitimately consulted and involved in health care workforce planning at all levels.

Prof Jenny Carryer, ED
Judy Yarwood, Co Chair
Taima Campbell, Co Chair