

## **Midwifery Council welcomes government initiatives to support and grow midwifery workforce**

**4 July, 2023**

Te Tatau o te Whare Kahu | Midwifery Council welcomes the high priority the Minister of Health has placed on retaining and growing the midwifery workforce in Aotearoa. The Health Workforce Plan 2023/2024 was released today and describes the changes needed to relieve pressures on the health workforce to improve the care they provide to the public.

Retention of our midwifery students in education programmes is a key focus of this report – we know that often students fail to complete their midwifery qualifications due to financial hardship, not lack of pastoral support.

We are pleased the Minister has recognised this and is offering additional financial support so more students will be able to navigate the significant clinical requirements of midwifery programmes - including time spent on-call 24/7. This will encourage an increase in New Zealand enrolments and make a real difference to improving Māori and Pasifika representation in midwifery.

The Council looks forward to working with the Ministry (Te Aka Whai Ora and Te Whatu Ora) to discuss the pathways for midwives from overseas wanting to register and practice in New Zealand.

Midwifery qualifications vary from one country to the other. In Aotearoa, midwifery is a specialist profession and midwives here undertake a four-year degree before they can be registered and apply for an Annual Practising Certificate.

As kaitiaki of midwifery in Aotearoa, the Council wants to ensure that all midwives who work with whanau during their pregnancy and birth journey are appropriately qualified, competent and culturally safe to provide the best possible care.

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