

New Zealand Medical Students' Association (NZMSA) Equity Advisory Board Report

Executive Summary

This report aims to provide an overview of the community feedback on the representation, advocacy efforts, and dedication to equity by the New Zealand Medical Students' Association (NZMSA) during the past year. The feedback has been collected through a survey conducted among various community groups within NZMSA. The report also includes suggestions for improvement.

Representation

LGBTQIA+/Takatāpui: 4/5

Respondents generally felt that NZMSA represented the LGBTQIA+/Takatāpui community well, particularly applauding the workshops at the conference.

Rural Students: 3/5

While there was praise for the rural workshop at the conference, respondents noted a lack of advocacy and change in the rural space, calling for increased rural representation within NZMSA leadership and events.

International Rep: 4/5

The international representative received positive feedback for relevant advocacy work, especially regarding job equity and the TI Grant.

Mangai: 3/5

No major issues concerning Māori taurira were reported, garnering a rating of 3 for participation.

Pacific: 4/5

I appreciate the communication between NZMSA and Pacific medical students, particularly in the context of the Clinical Leadership Forum theme: Climate Change. I am very eager for continued efforts to address Pacific representation within NZMSA, however a lot of work would need to be done, talanoa, brainstorming and so forth (e.g. forming a national Pacific Student Health entity?)

Hearing Issues

International Rep: 5/5

Respondents felt that NZMSA effectively addressed the concerns of international students, especially regarding job equity and the TI Grant.

LGBTQIA+/Takatāpui: 4/5

The LGBTQIA+/Takatāpui community generally found their concerns to be heard and acknowledged by NZMSA.

Rural Students: 4/5

Rural students reported that their concerns were heard and acknowledged by NZMSA.

Mangai: 4/5

The Māori community felt that NZMSA was responsive to their concerns and issues.

Pacific: 4/5

While efforts are appreciated, I acknowledge the challenges of specifically and comprehensively addressing Pacific students' concerns due to the complexity of the issue (e.g. involved Regional Medical Associations, medical school support, other support avenues etc.). However, one suggestion could be the increase of awareness of not just Pacific students, but all medical students being freely able to directly reach out to NZMSA, and the specific members (e.g. via the different platforms, "Contact Us" form on the website etc.)

Dedication to Equity

International Rep: 4/5

NZMSA received positive ratings for its dedication to equity, particularly regarding international students.

LGBTQIA+/Takatāpui: 5/5

The LGBTQIA+/Takatāpui community highly commended NZMSA for its dedication to equity.

Rural Students: 5/5

Rural students recognized NZMSA's strong commitment to equity.

Mangai: 5/5

NZMSA received praise for its dedication to equity, with no major issues reported within the Māori community.

Pacific: 5/5

I am very appreciative of NZMSA's equity efforts towards Pacific health equity, especially regarding the inclusion of my Pacific Representative role on the Equity Advisory Board. Although equity is a compounding issue, in the context of Pacific medical students I suppose working alongside the RMA's who already do a lot of advocacy around equity with their respective medical schools, however there is potential redundancy here. I suppose one question that needs to be brainstormed is how can NZMSA promote equity on a national level, towards specific groups?

Interactions with NZMSA Executives and Officers

International Rep: 4/5

The international representative was generally praised for their equity-focused work.

LGBTQIA+/Takatāpui: 5/5

The Rainbow community praised NZMSA for being approachable, relatable, and realistic in their interactions.

Rural Students: 4/5

Rural students found their interactions with NZMSA to be positive, though some room for improvement was noted.

Mangai: 5/5

NZMSA's interactions with the Māori community were highly regarded, with Indira receiving special commendation.

Pacific: 5/5

Respondents lauded Indira for their passion and drive for equitable change, along with NZMSA's commitment to supporting all communities.

Areas for Improvement

1. **Town Hall Engagement:** Enhance communication and engagement with the general public regarding advocacy progress and outcomes throughout the year.
2. **Communication and Meetings:** Improve early communication and increase the frequency of meetings
3. **Greater collaboration** between Equity Advisory Board and the other committees, important meetings, decision-making:
 - a. **Objective:** Enhance clarity regarding NZMSA structure, voting procedures, role expectations, and the issue triage process post-Equity Advisory Board meetings.
 - b. **Benefits: Promote Transparency:** Inclusion of Equity Board members facilitates direct communication and understanding of decision-making processes.
 - c. **Amplify Equity Perspective:** Allows for the integration of equity-related insights and perspectives into NZMSA's operations.
 - d. **Streamline Issue Resolution:** Collaboration expedites the resolution of equity-related matters and ensures their appropriate follow-through within NZMSA.

- e. Alignment with NZMSA Goals: Demonstrates NZMSA's commitment to transparency, inclusivity, and effective governance while advancing diversity and equity in the medical community.
 - f. Action requested: Discuss and consider this recommendation within NZMSA leadership to potentially implement the inclusion of Equity Board members in face-to-face meetings
4. **Awareness of Advisory Board:** Raise awareness about the Advisory Board's role and responsibilities to the public
 5. **Transparency in Selection:** Provide transparency in the criteria for selecting Advisory Board members.
 6. **Role Clarity:** Clarify the roles and responsibilities of Advisory Board members, however it is understanding that this Board is very new
 7. **Liaising with Regional Associations:** Explore opportunities for the Advisory Board to collaborate with regional medical associations.

Conclusion

Overall, NZMSA received positive feedback for its representation, advocacy, and dedication to equity within various communities. While there are areas for improvement, the organization is commended for its commitment to addressing the concerns and needs of medical students in New Zealand. The recommendations provided in this report can serve as a roadmap for enhancing NZMSA's support and engagement with its diverse community groups.