



**Manatū Wāhine**  
**Ministry for Women**

# **Fortnightly Report Minister for Women**

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**19 December 2025**

## Current priority outcome areas

### Plans developing for Shepherdess Muster wellbeing hub

The Ministry is working with Shepherdess to secure the health providers and services for the wellbeing hub at the 2026 Shepherdess Muster. The focus of the three-day event, which is taking place from 6-8 March in Southland's Tokanui, is community connectedness and wellbeing. It provides a space for women from isolated rural areas across New Zealand to meet, share stories, and form connections. The aim of the wellbeing hub is to offer health services and resources that women may not readily have access to.

So far, the following health and wellbeing providers have been confirmed for the hub:

- Dr Helen Paterson, Women's Health Bus – offering gynaecological appointments and cervical screening
- Te Whatu Ora – cervical screening programme, working closely with the Woman's Health Bus
- Ovarian Cancer Foundation New Zealand – information
- Anna Thompson, Health Down South – pelvic floor checks
- Rose Keast, Naturopath – consults
- Angela Evans, Clinical Nutritionist & Health Coach – consults
- Sarah Connor – menopause information

Shepherdess is also in discussion with iwi health provider Ngā Kete Mātauranga Pounamu Trust to provide skin spot checks, smoking cessation information, and general health screenings like blood pressure checks. It is hoped that Farmstrong, as one of the Muster sponsors, will have some involvement in the hub, too. We will keep you updated as plans for the hub progress.

### New research on the cost of endometriosis in New Zealand

New Zealand's first national cost-of-illness analysis for endometriosis and chronic pelvic pain (CPP) has found an annual economic cost of between \$22.6 billion and \$31.7 billion (depending on whether prevalence of 10% or 14% is used). For each woman living with endometriosis, the average annual cost was \$174,130, where 65% of that cost was accounted for by productivity loss (e.g. missing work, reduced performance at work) and 35% by direct healthcare costs (e.g. surgery, fertility treatment).

The cost of endometriosis estimated by this study is higher than the cost estimated in a similar 2019 study in Australia. This is because the New Zealand research factored in some of the cost of CPP, on the basis that many cases of CPP are believed to be undiagnosed endometriosis.

The authors note that the highest costs are likely to be concentrated among groups such as Māori and Pacific women as these groups experience longer delays in diagnosis and treatment.

The authors also comment that diagnostic delays, access to healthcare, and symptom management are likely to be the most significant modifiable factors contributing to economic burden and argue that these findings provide a fiscal case for investment.

The research was led by the Medical Research Institute of New Zealand and is separate to research Endometriosis New Zealand is currently undertaking with the University of Canterbury.

The Ministry is meeting with Endometriosis New Zealand in late January to discuss their research further.

### **Making Menopause Work webinar**

On 10 December 2025 the Ministry held a webinar with Sarah Connor on Making Menopause Work. Sarah provided an overview of the guide and its resources, and the actions workplaces can take before opening up for questions and discussion.

There were 45 attendees from a range of organisations, including Fire and Emergency New Zealand, Engineering New Zealand, Pacific Radiology, New Zealand Transport Agency, New Zealand Qualifications Authority, Sexual Wellbeing Aotearoa, and Te Puni Kōkiri.

All survey respondents said they found the webinar useful and it had assisted them to identify how to use the resources. The webinar was recorded and will be available on the Ministry's website.

Making Menopause Work has also been featured on the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's [business.govt.nz](https://business.govt.nz) website. The New Zealand Institute of Architects has also shared the guide with all its members.

### **Ministry support for Electrify Aotearoa, 9-10 June 2026**

The Ministry of Awesome's Electrify Aotearoa Summit will take place on 9-10 June 2026 in Auckland. We have recently confirmed that the Ministry for Women will be a strategic partner for the event and will provide financial support.

The Summit is strongly aligned with our strategic priority to support women's economic empowerment. It is focused on practical support for women founders, strengthening the startup ecosystem, promoting equitable economic growth and addressing the investment gap for women-led businesses.

As part of our partnership, we will have a physical presence at the Summit. Our intention is to use this as an opportunity to promote the Nominations Service to an audience of highly engaged entrepreneurs and stakeholders in the private sector. We will also engage with colleagues at NZTE to identify any other opportunities around the event and support for women in trade.

The Ministry will also support eight women founders from regional New Zealand to attend next year's Summit and share their stories of entrepreneurship via videos created for web and social media.

We are finalising our agreement with Ministry of Awesome and will provide further updates as plans develop.

### **Mana Wāhine Kaupapa Inquiry hearings rescheduled**

The Mana Wāhine Kaupapa Inquiry is now in the substantive hearings phase, with the first of nine hearing weeks taking place in May this year. Hearing week two was tentatively scheduled for February next year but has now been rescheduled to May 2026 to avoid Waitangi week events and allow more time for claimants to prepare and attend. The revised plan is to hold the second and third hearing weeks consecutively in May 2026, with specific dates and locations to be confirmed.

The Ministry continues to work with other agencies to develop a robust Crown Response. This involves standing up a multi-agency group in 2026 to collaboratively prepare Chief Executives (or Deputy Chief Executives) to give evidence at the hearing.

We will continue to provide updates to you and Minister Potaka as the joint Ministers responsible for this Inquiry. This will be done in the form of a quarterly update with the next one due on 18 December 2025.

### **NGO delegate selection for CSW70**

The Ministry has received 32 NGO representative applications for the seventieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW70). The NGO delegate is funded by the Ministry and is an important member of the official Government delegation. The delegate is involved in:

- providing advice from an NGO perspective
- sharing expertise relevant to the themes
- acting as a liaison point between New Zealand NGOs and the delegation
- attending specific sessions and diplomatic functions as an official member of the delegation.

Applications will be assessed by a panel of 11 International Women's Caucus members. The NGO delegate selection will be subject to the approval of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. We expect to provide a briefing seeking approval of the official Government delegation, including the NGO representative, in late January.

## Ministerial Servicing

### Policy advice and reports in progress

Type	Title	Log number	Due date
Memorandum	CEDAW Next Steps	MW MM 25-26 0093	29 Jan

### Event and meeting briefings in progress

Type	Title	Log number	Due date
Aide memoire	Meeting with Linda Dear, 29 January 2026	MW AM 25-26 0102	23 Jan
Aide memoire	Meeting with PADA, 29 January 2026	MW AM 25-26 0104	26 Jan

### Ministerial letters and responses

Subject	Log number	Due date
Response to Withheld 9(2)(a)	MW 25-26 0106	19 Jan
Response to Withheld 9(2)(a)	MW 25-26 0105	20 Jan

### Official Information Act requests in progress

Subject	Log number	Due to requester
<b>Ministry OIA requests</b>		
Update on the Long-term Insights Briefing	MW DOIA 25-26 0026	19 Jan
Advice provided on ADHD and women	MW DOIA 25-26 0027	16 Jan

### Cabinet paper consultations

Title	Comment	Agency
Withheld 9(2)(f)(iv)		

## Proactive release

This Fortnightly Report will be considered for release within three months of publication, under the Ministry's 'proactive release of documents' policy.