



# Te Poari Kaimātai Hinengaro o Aotearoa

NEW ZEALAND PSYCHOLOGISTS BOARD

## Pānui | Newsletter

Issue 16 | July / Maramawhitu 2026



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### Nō te Taumata | Note from the Chief Executive/Registrar

Kia ora koutou,

Welcome to July's pānui. In this edition, we share an update on changes to the Board's leadership, introduce Raka Māui, our new competence programme for overseas-trained psychologists, and provide information about consultation on a proposed additional disciplinary levy.

Ngā mihi nui,

**Vanessa Simpson**

Chief Executive/Registrar | Tumuaiki/Pouroki

### Introducing Raka Māui – a New Competence Programme for Overseas-Trained Psychologists

The New Zealand Psychologists Board is pleased to introduce Raka Māui, a new competence programme for overseas-trained psychologists registering in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Developed in partnership with Māori, Raka Māui reflects the Board's commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and to ensuring psychologists entering practice in Aotearoa are supported to understand the unique cultural, historical and health contexts in which they will practise.

The programme focuses on building knowledge of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, cultural safety, Māori health equity, and the expectations of psychological practice within Aotearoa New Zealand. It complements existing competence requirements and is designed to support safe, culturally responsive practice that benefits both practitioners and the communities they serve.

Raka Māui applies to newly registered overseas-trained psychologists and forms part of the Board's broader commitment to embedding cultural responsiveness across its regulatory functions. Further information about Raka Māui, including programme requirements and guidance for practitioners, is available on the [Board's website](#).

### Leadership Update

After almost four years as Chief Executive/Registrar, I will be leaving the New Zealand Psychologists Board at the end of July. It has been a privilege to work alongside the Secretariat team, Board members, practitioners and stakeholders.

I am proud of what we have achieved together and grateful for the support, collaboration, and commitment that have made my time so rewarding.

I am pleased to advise that Nalini Meyer has been appointed as Interim Chief Executive/Registrar. Nalini has been an integral member of the Secretariat and brings extensive legal, regulatory and governance expertise, together with a strong understanding of the Board's work. I know the Secretariat will continue to work closely with the profession and stakeholders to support the Board's statutory responsibilities, and I thank you for your ongoing support and engagement.

### Disciplinary Levy Consultation

The Board is experiencing unexpected disciplinary cost pressures following a significant rise in professional conduct cases across the profession. The Board holds disciplinary reserves to fund Professional Conduct Committees (PCCs), which may then lay charges before the Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal (HPDT). This year, seven cases are before the HPDT, compared with an average of 1.4 cases per year over the past five years. This illustrates the significant increase in disciplinary activity currently being managed by the Board.

Since the APC fee and disciplinary levy for the 2026/2027 year were consulted on and levied, the scale, timing, and cost of disciplinary activity has changed materially. As a result, the Board is facing higher costs than anticipated and is forecasting that its disciplinary reserves will be exhausted by 31 March 2027.

As a result, the Board is consulting on a proposal to raise a one-off disciplinary levy for all registered psychologists under section 131 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act). The Act allows the Board to raise additional levies where needed, recognising that the number, timing, and cost of disciplinary matters can vary significantly.

The increased cost pressures are due to a combination of factors, including:

- An increase in conduct cases, resulting in more HPDT hearings.
- Greater case complexity, resulting in higher independent legal costs and more time required for PCCs to consider matters before them.
- A significant increase in general costs associated with PCCs.
- Updates to HPDT processes to better manage proceedings and shorten timelines. This means that, when a PCC lays charges before the HPDT, proceedings may begin in the same financial year as the PCC process. Historically, this timeframe may have extended across two or more years, spreading costs over multiple budget cycles.

Together, these factors have resulted in a forecast deficit in the disciplinary reserve for the year ending 31 March 2027. This has made the proposal for the one-off disciplinary levy necessary.

The Board acknowledges that the proposed one-off disciplinary levy is unexpected for practitioners, and the proposal has not been made lightly. Further information is provided in the consultation document, and submissions are invited on the proposed one-off disciplinary levy of **\$247.83 (plus GST)** by **Wednesday 2 September 2026**. [A copy of the consultation document is available on the Board's website](#).

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