Tēnā koutou katoa,

We understand that this is an enormously stressful time for many of our members, and the apparent void of information can add to this stress. As many of you can imagine, there are extraordinary demands being placed on leaders and management to create plans as this situation is ever-evolving. What can be current information yesterday may not end up being the information valid for today.

A number of questions have been being raised by midwives, and I can assure you all that these questions and concerns do not fall on deaf ears.

Our National Office moved out of their premises this week so are still in the process of figuring out new ways of working, whilst still continuing on actually working!  One of the new issues now is communication with members, as they are no longer able to access the entire NZ membership email distribution remotely. As such they will continue to add updates to their websites, and also will ask regions to send out through their distribution lists.

We hope that everyone can continue to be kind and patient as we navigate unprecedented territory. It really can be hard to carry on working in these conditions when all some of us want to do is hide away with our families and keep themselves safe. One thing though is becoming very clear Midwives are an exceptionally essential and important part of our society. Let's hope this will be remembered down the track when we eventually get back to normal work and life.

***The following update is from National Office.***

**Latest information from the MoH re PPE;**

**Current demand for personal protective equipment (PPE) is unprecedented. The Ministry recognises this is causing concern among the increasing number of clinical staff being brought in to help manage the COVID-19 outbreak.  Measures to address immediate needs, which include a limited urgent release of equipment and accompanying guidance, will be announced within 24 hours. These measures are in addition to a longer term solution which is also being worked through. The safety of staff is a top priority as we work through this fast-evolving and challenging time.**

**Specific information for Midwives;**

**The Ministry and the College have produced clear guidelines for when PPE is required for clinical midwifery care. Midwives have also been advised that: Midwives are not expected to do any visit that requires PPE (according to the Ministry’s advice) if they cannot access PPE, which is provided by the DHB. If PPE is unobtainable, care may need to be provided in a DHB facility where PPE is available.**

 Claiming information for midwives;

The Ministry of Health has now confirmed that LMC midwives will still be able to claim the full birth fee and the full postnatal fee in circumstances where a handover of labour care has been required for COVID-19 and a reduction in postnatal visits. Please see the information at the bottom of the page in the following link.

<https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/primary-maternity-services-notice-2007>