

# Te Tiriti o Waitangi

**The Nurses Society of New Zealand is committed to honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the foundational document of Aotearoa New Zealand and we recognise the unique status of Māori as tangata whenua of Aotearoa New Zealand.**

As an organisation committed to promoting equitable access to healthcare in Aotearoa New Zealand, the Society acknowledges the fundamental rights of Māori articulated in He Whakaputanga o Rangatiratanga o Nu Tireni and Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Across all areas of our mahi we embrace Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles of equity, partnership and tino rangatiratanga. As such the Society recognises its obligations under Te Tiriti as non-negotiable and we are committed to promoting the provision of culturally safe healthcare. Achieving equitable health outcomes for Māori is of paramount importance, and we are dedicated to advocating for systemic and other changes to enable this outcome.

The nursing profession as a whole and nurses individually have a professional responsibility to uphold the following:

## **Partnership – working with Māori in health decisions**

Nurses should work in collaboration with Māori patients, whānau, hapū, and iwi in decision-making. In practice this includes:

- involving whānau in care planning if the patient wishes
- using shared decision-making rather than purely clinician-led decisions
- consulting Māori health services or kaupapa Māori providers when appropriate
- building long-term therapeutic relationships based on trust and respect.

## **Participation – supporting Māori involvement in health services**

Nurses must facilitate equitable access for Māori across all health services. In practice this includes:

- removing barriers to care
- providing cultural support where needed
- encouraging Māori representation in health programmes and governance.

## **Protection – protecting Māori health and wellbeing**

Nurses should work to protect Māori health interests and cultural practices. In practice this includes:

- addressing known disparities (e.g., cardiovascular disease, cancer screening)
- ensuring care is culturally safe and free from discrimination
- offering referral to Māori health providers
- supporting traditional approaches alongside Western medicine when safe and appropriate
- protecting Māori cultural concepts such as tapu, mana, and tikanga.

## **Equity – achieving equal health outcomes**

Nurses must recognise and address health disparities affecting Māori patients. In practice this includes:

- prioritising screening and preventive care for high-risk populations
- reflecting on unconscious bias in clinical decision-making
- advocating for equitable allocation to resources.