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Dear Member

Welcome to the first issue for 2016 of *ASMS Direct*, our national electronic publication.

You can also keep in touch with the latest news and views on health issues relevant to public hospital specialists via our website www.asms.nz, which contains links (at the top of the home page) to our [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) pages, as well as our quarterly magazine *The Specialist*. We're also on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/ASMSNZ>.

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1. JOINT ASMS-MEDICAL STUDENTS ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE: APPLY NOW

The ASMS and the New Zealand Medical Students Association (NZMSA) are holding a joint one-day conference on Friday 1 April to discuss the sort of medical workforce New Zealand needs by 2025. This promises to be a stimulating discussion and will be attended by both ASMS and NZMSA delegates as well as representatives from a range of professional associations, colleges and the Ministry of Health.

The conference will be held from 9am to 5pm at the Wellington Medical School. The programme includes presentations from Medical Council Chair Andrew Connolly, Otago University Medical School Dean Professor Peter Crampton, and ASMS Policy and Research Director Lyndon Keene.

Their respective themes will be:

1. The sort of specialist workforce we should need in 2025
2. Training for this workforce
3. The possible health system in 2025.

It will be co-facilitated by Drs Marise Stuart (Chair, NZMA Doctors-in-Training Council and former NZMSA President) and Curtis Walker (renal physician at MidCentral DHB and former Resident Doctors Association President).

As well as providing opportunities to discuss in some depth issues to do with the medical workforce, the conference also offers opportunities for the ASMS members attending to strengthen their connections with medical students who will be the specialists of the future (and, we hope, eventually become ASMS members).

If you are interested in attending this conference, please contact ASMS Membership Officer Kathy Eaden as soon as possible on ke@asms.nz. Clause 29.1 of the MECA provides an entitlement to leave with pay to attend this conference. ASMS will meet travel and associated costs. Please don't hesitate for too long as spaces are limited.

2. PROVIDING A STRONG VOICE FOR MEMBERS ON TPPA CONCERNS

The ASMS has received much positive feedback for the concerns we have raised about the risks the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) poses for New Zealand's public health system. We have also had a few inquiries about why we have raised these concerns – is it, for example, core ASMS business. This is a very good question and one that we been glad to address with members on the few occasions it has arisen.

Members have given the ASMS National Executive a very strong mandate on the TPPA, with significant concerns raised about its potential impact on health care in this country. At the ASMS Annual Conference in 2014, delegates overwhelmingly adopted the following two resolutions with no dissents and only one abstention:

- That Annual Conference support the request for a formal independent health impact assessment of the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement based on the draft text prior to signing
- That the ASMS opposes the TPPA on the grounds that health care will suffer from the loss of national autonomy that may result.

The passing of these resolutions was reported to members following the Annual Conference, and the TPPA continued to be a topic of discussion at National Executive meetings. In May last year, the Executive decided to support an initiative organised by law Professor Jane Kelsey to challenge the Government's position of not releasing the TPPA negotiating documents. As a result we, along with several other organisations, joined the legal challenge led by Professor Kelsey, which was subsequently successful. This decision also sets important precedents for future inquiries under the Official Information Act on a range of subjects that ASMS might be interested in.

Most of ASMS' time is spent representing, advising and defending members – but we also understand that members' concerns extend beyond immediate employment issues to broader concerns about the quality of, and access to, public health care, and we endeavour to provide a strong voice on these issues whenever there is a clear direction to do so.

3. DID YOU KNOW...ABOUT OVER-PAYMENTS

Did you know that over-payments happen from time to time and, should this occur, in most cases you will have to repay some or all of the money?

If you are concerned that there may have been an over-payment, you should alert payroll straight away. If you are notified of an over-payment you have the right to seek advice (ring your ASMS industrial officer), to have your pay history checked, and to negotiate how/when

repayments are made. DHBs do not have the right to recoup an over-payment without your consent.

More information is available at

<http://employment.govt.nz/er/pay/paymentanddeductions/index.asp>

4. ASMS HOMEPAGE NEWS ITEMS

The following items can be downloaded from www.asms.nz

1. Alarm over \$138 million DHB saving plan (*NZ Herald*)
2. Melanoma referral by business card (Labour Party media release)
3. Growing health workforce fit for the future (Government media release)
4. Risk of two-tier health system, specialist says (*Otago Daily Times*)
5. Screening needed in Taranaki for people with alcohol problem (*Taranaki Daily News*)
6. Defiant Australian doctors in uncharted territory (Radio NZ, *Morning Report*)
7. Call for nominations for Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal (Ministry of Health)
8. Long-serving Taranaki DHB chief executive resigns (Taranaki DHB media release)
9. Minister deaf to mental health issues in Canterbury, says Labour (Labour Party media release)
10. Hospitals restricting videos and photos (*Stuff*).

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Kind regards

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If your email address has recently changed or is about to change, will you please inform Kathy Eaden at ke@asms.nz.

