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**Dear Member**

Welcome to the second 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](http://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**

We are counting down to a joint one-day conference of the ASMS and the New Zealand Medical Students Association (NZMSA) in Wellington on Friday 1 April. This is an exciting new initiative that brings together current hospital specialists with some of the people who will be leading the delivery of health care in the future.

The one-day conference is being held at the Wellington Medical School and will be co-facilitated by Drs Marise Stuart and Curtis Walker. The theme is 'The future health workforce of New Zealand' and will include presentations from Medical Council Chair Andrew Connolly, University of Otago Medical School Dean Peter Crampton, and ASMS Director of Policy and Research Lyndon Keene. They will talk about the type of specialist workforce New Zealand will need in 2025,

training for this workforce, and what the health system is likely to look like in a decade.

If you are interested in attending this conference, please contact ASMS Membership Officer Kathy Eaden as soon as possible on [ke@asms.nz](mailto: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.

The presentations will be filmed and available online afterwards.

## **2. LONGER WAIT AND HIGHER PRICES LIKELY FOR SOME SPECIALTY DRUGS UNDER TPPA**

New Zealand is likely to come under pressure to extend the monopoly times for a new group of potentially life-saving specialty medicines under the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA), say the ASMS and the Council of Trade Unions in a joint media statement.

At the moment the big drug companies can virtually name their price for some of these specialty medicines and there is a risk the TPPA will extend their stranglehold on these drugs by another three years, to eight years in total.

Documents released under the Official Information Act do not appear to support the Government's claims that the TPPA will not extend monopoly times for medicines known as biologics.

The full ASMS-CTU media release, a background Q&A on the TPPA's impact on biologic medicines, and the set of OIA papers is available on the ASMS website at <http://www.asms.org.nz/news/asms-news/2016/03/15/longer-wait-higher-prices-likely-life-saving-medicines-tppa/>.

## **3. RELEASING SURGICAL PERFORMANCE DATA – HQSC VIEW**

The Health Quality & Safety Commission has come out in favour of releasing surgical performance data at the provider, department or team level, rather than focusing on individual clinicians. This is welcome news as it acknowledges the role of teamwork in surgical outcomes, the complexity of health care and the potential for misleading conclusions to be drawn from individual surgeons' data.

The Commission has produced a position paper on the transparency of information related to health care interventions, and this is available on its website at [www.hqsc.govt.nz](http://www.hqsc.govt.nz).

## **4. EXCLUSIVE APAC FORUM OFFER FOR ASMS MEMBERS**

A preferential rate is being offered to ASMS members registering for this year's APAC Forum in Sydney – as long as you book your place before 31 May. ASMS members can save up to \$404 on the price of a Forum ticket, and details of the preferential rate are [available here](#).

APAC is organised each year by Ko Awatea, the Centre for health system innovation and improvement within Counties Manukau DHB, and features presentations and workshops on a wide range of topics aimed at health professionals, senior managers, health researchers and others. It is one of the largest health improvement conferences in the world, and invites keynote speakers from New Zealand and overseas.

It is being held on 12-14 September, and more information about the Forum can also be found at <http://koawatea.co.nz/apac-forum/>

## **5. IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE SPECIALIST MAGAZINE**

By the time you read this the March issue of *The Specialist* magazine will be rolling off the printing press and on its way to you.

In this issue, we look at the upcoming DHB MECA negotiations and the importance of patient-centred care, longstanding shortages in the rheumatology specialist workforce, and the creeping return of market-driven forces in health. We also answer your questions about flexible working arrangements, look at the ways doctors bolster the health system, and talk to two of our long-serving members. And as always, we can enjoy the talents of Chris Slane, who was named cartoonist of the year at the Canon Media Awards in 2015.

## **6. MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS INCREASING**

A reminder that ASMS membership subscriptions are increasing by \$100 for the coming year (1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017). Delegates at the Annual Conference in Wellington last November voted overwhelmingly to raise the subscription. As you know, the membership subscription has not risen for the past four years. However, an increase is now needed to fund the expansion of the industrial team with the appointment of additional industrial officers and also the appointment of a new principal analyst for policy and research.

The subscription increase will ensure ASMS can provide the level of support, advice and representation our members require.

## **7. NEW FACES IN THE NATIONAL OFFICE**

There are several new faces in the ASMS national office. We have been pleased to welcome Olivia Jorgensen-Aitchison (administration officer projects), Lydia Schumacher (administration officer communications), Dianne Vogel (industrial officer) and Ian Weir-Smith (industrial officer).

## **8. DID YOU KNOW...ABOUT TIME IN LIEU OVER PUBLIC HOLIDAYS**

Did you know that time in lieu for working a public holiday can only be claim once? That means, where a public holiday is Mondayised, if you work both the actual day and the Monday, you can only claim one alternative (or lieu) day. You will be paid at the appropriate rate for all days you work, but one public holiday only generates ONE alternate day of leave.

More information is available at <http://www.asms.org.nz/employment-advice/agreement-info/nz-dhb-senior-medical-and-dental-officers-collective-agreement/part-three/clause-24/>



## 9. ASMS HOMEPAGE NEWS ITEMS

The following items can be downloaded from [www.asms.nz](http://www.asms.nz)

1. Government supports mask policy for health workers (Radio New Zealand)
2. Greymouth hospital staff fear for their safety as rebuild delays continue (Stuff)
3. Labour supports early access scheme for Pharmac (Labour Party media release)
4. Zero hour contracts official history (CTU media release)
5. College draws line in the sand on climate change, saying GPs will feel impact (*NZ Doctor*)
6. Editorial: Ministry of Health found grossly wanting (Stuff)
7. Hypocritical political double standard over Ministry's financial bungle (ASMS media release)
8. Health Ministry sought to recoup money from DHB budgets (Stuff & Radio New Zealand)
9. Data shows outcome of GP referrals for first time (Minister of Health media release)
10. Rheumatic fever rates drop 45% (Minister of Health media release).

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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](mailto:ke@asms.nz).*

