



Care and support workers from E tū, PSA, and NZNO rally for better pay in May 2022

Building our power with Equal Pay for care and support workers

Work on our pay equity claim to raise the pay of care and support workers is well underway.

With the General Election happening in October, we aim to have equal pay secured for care and support workers by then.

Work in the care and support sector has been traditionally undervalued and underpaid, as it's work that's mainly done by women.

Our pay equity claim is about making sure that workers' pay shows the true value of their work compared with work in male-dominant occupations that are paid more. This will also go a long way to bringing wages up to meet the current cost of living.



What's the story with Equal Pay?

- On 1 July 2022, E tū, along with other unions, PSA and NZNO, filed a new joint pay equity claim on behalf of care and support workers.
- The unions' joint claim to address pay discrimination is with 15 different employers, who are all partially funded by the government. If the claim is successful, then the pay increases will pass on to all workers in the sector.
- Since July 2022, care and support workers have only seen a 3% increase in their wages, which is neither fair nor equitable.



Kristine Bartlett (second from right) with E tū leaders at the announcement of the settlement for Equal Pay in 2017

Why did care and support wages fall so behind?

The Care and Support Workers (Pay Equity) Settlement Act in 2017 was an historic win for workers, after a campaign led by E tū leader and aged care worker Kristine Bartlett and others.

Care and support workers received huge wage increases initially. However, the law, which expired in June 2022, didn't allow for any further pay equity claims or pay rises above the agreed rates.

This meant that with the rising cost of living, workers' wages fell well behind during the four-year term of the Act.

The amended Act passed in July 2022, but didn't increase workers' pay more than 3%. So E tū and other unions raised a new pay equity claim on the first day it was possible to do so on 1 July 2022.

"It's all about receiving equal pay for work of equal value.

"E tū led the way to our huge victory in 2017, but now workers are struggling again. We are tired of having the same workload and not getting enough pay. Workers can't afford things like fresh food and petrol.

"We need decent pay so we can live decent lives. It's also about being able to keep workers and attract new ones to our industry, so we have enough staff to do our jobs safely and protect our residents."

E tū leader and aged care worker Bernie Chand

