

New Zealand Institute of Medical Laboratory Science (NZIMLS)

Strategic Plan: 2023 -2025



Overview.

The NZIMLS was formed in 1946 and is an Incorporated Society that represents the professional affairs of the nearly 3,700 Medical Laboratory Scientists, Technicians and other associated medical laboratory workers and industry representatives in Aotearoa New Zealand. The NZIMLS publishes the New Zealand Journal of Medical Laboratory Science, provides a CPD programme, an ethical framework for laboratory workers, education programmes, professional qualifications, and an advisory role to a variety of agencies and health working groups. Our services during the COVID pandemic have expanded into providing regular media updates and addressing misinformation about medical laboratory science while promoting our essential health role. The NZIMLS meets regularly with our professional and university colleagues and provides expert advice to working groups and organisations across the health and disability sector.

However, the NZIMLS does not operate in isolation. It is surrounded by external factors that must be taken into consideration as well as a rapidly changing healthcare environment. In reviewing the Strategic Plan, the following issues were considered.

- The ongoing need to raise awareness and profile of the essential role of pathology scientists and technicians in the healthcare outcomes for patients
- The need to incorporate a skilled pathology workforce in Te Whatu Ora
- The requirement of honouring obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- The ongoing impact of changes in technologies, scope of practice, supervision, and professional development
- Acknowledging the increasing demand for high-quality pathology testing, coupled with financial resources.
- The impact of any changes to undergraduate and graduate teaching and qualifications to be able to attract the most suitable applicants for positions to be filled
- To monitor the quality of undergraduate and post-graduate teaching to ensure the needs of the profession are met with any future of technology implications.

Vision.

To continue to pursue excellence in the practice of medical laboratory science and associated pathology, and research skills by contributing academic and technical expertise, professional development and communication.

Mission.

The NZIMLS mission is to:

- Provide support for the membership
- Utilise the expertise of scientists, pathologists and technicians in the development of policy and expert opinion
- Understand the appropriate cultural considerations in practice and in communications
- Develop a forum for scientists, pathologists and technicians that will foster a culture of research
- Establish and maintain linkages with other significant scientific and professional bodies
- Promote the capacity of Senior Scientists to pursue clinical and scientific investigations within the laboratory system
- Ensure competence and professionalism within the workforce

The NZIMLS priorities:

1. Strengthening external communication and inter-professional development
2. Ongoing development of NZIMLS member experience
3. Enhancement and promotion of educational excellence and cultural considerations
4. Growing professional development and role extension pathways
5. Promote advocacy and ethics
6. To consider the future and role of the NZIMLS

Priority 1: Strengthening external communication and inter-professional development.

Building on the knowledge and experience gained from the Covid pandemic and the interactions with political, health leadership and inter-professional organisations the NZIMLS has established a role as experts in medical laboratory science. To continue to enhance this role the NZIMLS will:

- Promote regular evidenced based commentary on topical issues within the Pathology sector
- Continue to submit on all relevant health strategy and policy proposals
- Collaborate with other Pathology stakeholders and professional organisations
- Establish regular meetings with political, Te Whatu Ora, Te Akai Whai Ora and Manatu leadership

Priority 2: Ongoing development of NZIMLS member experience.

A goal of providing memorable, supportive and functional experience for all members of the NZIMLS is the primary objective of the NZIMLS as an organisation. To develop this pathway the NZIMLS will:

- Create a genuine recognisable identity for its members
- Develop funding incentives to attend NZIMLS events
- Promote recognition of members professional service excellence
- Promote and acknowledge the vital role of volunteers

Priority 3: Enhancement and promotion of educational excellence and cultural excellence

The NZIMLS will ensure that all qualifications of its members are suitably recognised and promoted. This will include outstanding academic achievement in leadership and other services to the profession within the health system. To provide support for this the NZIMLS will:

- Review and promote academic prizes offered by the NZIMLS
- Strengthen the development of the QMLT qualification including potential integration into the National education framework
- Develop an inventory of academic and professional excellence of the membership
- Work collaboratively with Universities, RCPA, Te Pukenga and Maori and Pasifika education providers to facilitate academic achievement
- Investigate developing on-line educational options
- Continue to enhance the Continuing Professional Development programme
- Provide external professional promotion of the academic excellence within the membership

Priority 4: Growing professional development and role extension pathways.

The NZIMLS recognises that its membership needs to have ongoing professional development and education. To enable this Priority the NZIMLS will:

- Investigate options for micro-credentialling specialist courses
- Strengthen and extend the current Continuous Professional development programme
- Promote the NZIMLS Journal as a medium for scientific communication and excellence
- Enhance the NZIMLS membership qualifications provided by the NZIMLS

Priority 5: Advocacy and ethics.

The NZIMLS recognises the requirement of need for advocacy on behalf of its members to undertake this the NZIMLS will:

- Maintain regular contact with Medical Sciences Council of New Zealand
- Maintain optimal collaboration between pathologists and NZIMLS members
- Lobby for increased funding to support career pathways for scientists and technicians
- Support membership wellbeing by promoting mental health of the membership
- Work to ensure that the membership conducts itself in a professional and ethical manner

Priority 6: To consider the future and role of the NZIMLS.

The NZIMLS is aware that there will be significant changes in the provision of diagnostic pathology in the coming years, therefore the NZIMLS will:

- Maintain a 'future-watch' relating to pathology developments both overseas and in New Zealand
- Advise, when required, on workforce changes to accommodate changing technologies
- Promote the NZIMLS as the leading organisation for expert advice and implementation of new or novel scientific developments in diagnostic pathology.
- Continue to review the role of the NZIMLS and its membership with any changes in the healthcare system
- Facilitate progression of new career pathways for the membership