XX XXX 2020

«Title» «First\_Name» «Surname»

«party electorate»

«address»

Dear [ ]

I would like to invite you to [facility name] to discuss a petition on behalf of New Zealand’s more than 5,000 registered nurses (RNs) who work in aged residential care (ARC) facilities all over the country.

Aged care nurses earn on average at least $10,000 a year less than nurses who work in public hospitals, because of the way rest homes are funded by the Government. This undervalues the amazing work they do.

During June, more than 15,000 people signed a petition led by the New Zealand Aged Care Association (NZACA) calling for the Government to pay aged care nurses at parity with their counterparts in public hospitals. The petition is now closed, but you can still view the Support Fair Pay campaign page [here](https://nzaca.org.nz/fair-pay/).

Covid-19 has highlighted the dedication and expertise of our ARC nurses, keeping more than 36,000 of our most vulnerable older people safe in more than 650 rest homes around the country. More than 99% of these rest homes have had no Covid-19 cases.

In fact, New Zealand rest homes are the safest in the world when it comes to Covid-19. This is evident in the latest global analysis[[1]](#footnote-1) on the impact of Covid-19 on rest homes, showing for example, that of all the UK’s rest home residents, 5.3% were confirmed or suspected to have died from COVID-19, compared with 0.4% in Germany, and 0.04% in New Zealand.

As the Independent Review of Covid-19 Clusters in ARC facilities has acknowledged, the ARC sector has done substantive work to prevent and to manage Covid-19 outbreaks - which has largely been led by aged care nurses.

Further, the Review of the Health and Disability System released by Heather Simpson on 16 June has called for pay parity issues to be addressed for all professions working across the health system.

***“The system should seek to address pay parity issues for professions working in different parts of the system” (p. 195).***

This underpins the fact that, contrary to public perceptions, aged care nurses are no less important or skilled than those who work in public hospitals. They have significant clinical responsibilities managing very frail people often with multiple co-morbidities and without the support of the expert medical teams available in public hospital settings. They also lead teams of healthcare workers.

Aged care nurses deserve to be paid at parity with nurses in public hospitals – and more than 15,000 people have shown their support.

This is an important election year issue at a time when our health system is a focus.

Again, I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue with you, here at our facility where you can find out more about the work our nurses do.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

[Name]
[Facility name] Manager/Owner

1. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/28/covid-19-risk-of-death-in-uk-care-homes-13-times-higher-than-in-germany [↑](#footnote-ref-1)