



NEW ZEALAND PRIVATE SURGICAL  
HOSPITALS ASSOCIATION INC

9 April 2020

Dr Kathryn Hagen  
President  
New Zealand Society of Anaesthetists  
**Wellington**

Dear Kathryn

**Re: COVID-19 Response and recovery**

Thank you for your letter dated 8 April and your offer of assistance to our private hospital sector during our collective Covid-19 response including planning for the recovery period. We share your view that the pandemic response has certainly changed rapidly and will continue to do so.

I can provide you some comfort in that the private surgical sector is working closely together and sharing resources across the country to ensure high standards are maintained throughout our member hospital facilities.

The Clinical Advisory Boards (CAB) of our member hospitals are overseeing, providing guidance and governance on the concerns that you have raised. Generally, the CAB's will have an anaesthetist representative sitting on them to ensure that the viewpoint of the anaesthetic profession is heard. Given that all hospitals are in slightly different situations, we feel that this channel is the most appropriate. Should any of your members have concerns we would encourage them to approach their CAB representative directly.

The Infection Prevention and Control teams at our member hospitals are all monitoring PPE recommendations and providing appropriate training. Private surgical hospitals are obligated to provide this to meet their OSH obligations. The ANZCA PPE guidelines have provided a valuable resource in this regard.

Bookings for surgery at private surgical hospitals are overseen by the hospital's CAB and in most instances align with the approach taken by local DHBs. Where available, surgical college guidelines provide direction for the decision-making process. The NZPSHA is considering developing a list of appropriate surgical procedures in anticipation of the transition to Level 3 with a potential loosening of elective surgery guidelines. This will ensure some consistency nationally and we are willing to share this with you as it is developed.

NZPSHA member hospitals are committed to upholding the principles of the Government's COVID-19 response alert level 4 and also the DHB COVID-19 National Hospital Response Framework (Alert levels 1 to 4, green to red). This is a key consideration when considering individual surgery applications.

Thank you for your offer to have input into managing supply lines for anaesthetic agents, this would be valuable.

Please pass on our thanks to your NZSA colleagues for their feedback and we look forward to engaging further. I hope you have the opportunity for restful Easter.

Yours sincerely

Richard Whitney  
**President – NZPSHA**

cc: **Ian Williams, NZSA**