



Anti-Bullying Policy for NMHNZ

1. Purpose:

This policy affirms the Naturopath and Medical Herbalists of New Zealand, (NMHNZ), commitment to fostering a respectful, inclusive, and safe environment for all individuals involved with the Association, including board members, general members and other stakeholders.

Bullying, in any form, is unacceptable. This policy sets out the expectations for respectful conduct and outlines the process for addressing and resolving concerns when bullying is alleged to have occurred.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Board members
- General members
- Any individuals acting on behalf of NMHNZ
- Any individuals employed by NMHNZ

It covers all interactions in the context of NMHNZ's activities, whether in person, via digital communications, during meetings, or NMHNZ related events.

3. Definition of Bullying:

Bullying is defined as any:

- Repeated, unreasonable, and/or hurtful behaviour directed at a person or group of persons
- Behaviour that intimidates, degrades, harms, undermines or controls another person's dignity or professional standing and may include:
- Verbal, physical, emotional, financial and/or social behaviours

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal abuse or aggressive language
- Physical aggression
- Ridicule or dismissive behaviour
- Intimidation, threats or humiliation
- Persistent unjustified criticism or complaints
- Deliberate exclusion or isolation
- Cyberbullying and/or inappropriate use of social media or email
- Spreading rumours or gossip

Reasonable actions, including constructive feedback, outlining performance expectations, or disciplinary measures, which are conducted respectfully and fairly, do not constitute bullying.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Board Members** are expected to model respectful, courteous and professional conduct, including in disagreement and ensure this policy is upheld in all business of the Association
 - **Members** are expected to treat each other with respect, courtesy and professionalism, even in disagreement.
 - **The Chair** (or delegated complaints officer), is responsible for overseeing the complaints process in cases where bullying is reported.
-

5. Policy Statement:

5.1 Prevention:

- a. NMHNZ is committed to fostering a culture of inclusivity, empathy, and respect.
- b. NMHNZ will actively promote kindness and understanding amongst our board, the membership, employees, volunteers and external partners.
- c. Education and training on recognising bullying and prevention, may be provided to board members and general members, emphasising the importance of recognising, reporting, and intervening in bullying situations
- d. Our Association will foster safe spaces and positive social environments where individuals feel supported and empowered to speak out against bullying behaviour

5.2 Reporting and Response:

- a. Anyone who witnesses or experiences bullying within the Association is encouraged to report it to a member of the board or through the established complaints policy.
- b. All reports of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated promptly and impartially, whilst respecting the confidentiality and privacy of those involved.
- c. Appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken against individuals found to have engaged in bullying behaviour, in accordance with our organisation's policies and procedures.

5.3 Support and Intervention:

- a. NMHNZ is committed to providing support to victims of bullying, including access to counselling services, advocacy, and other resources as needed.
- b. NMHNZ will work collaboratively with individuals involved in bullying incidents to address underlying issues, promote understanding, and facilitate resolution through restorative practices.
- c. NMHNZ will actively engage with community partners and mental health professionals to ensure comprehensive support for those affected by bullying.

5.3 Membership Engagement:

- a. NMHNZ will engage with the our membership to raise awareness about the harmful effects of bullying and to promote positive relationships based on mutual respect and empathy.
 - b. NMHNZ will collaborate with other organisations and stakeholders to develop and implement strategies for preventing and addressing bullying on a broader scale.
 - c. Through advocacy and outreach efforts, NMHNZ will strive to create a culture of kindness and acceptance that extends beyond our organisation and into the wider community.
-

6. Complaints Procedure:

6.1 Informal Resolution

Where appropriate and safe to do so, individuals are encouraged to resolve issues directly with the person concerned through open and respectful dialogue.

6.2 Lodging a Formal Complaint

If informal resolution is not possible or appropriate, a formal complaint may be lodged.

All formal complaints to be made in the prescribed manner as per the Constitution of the Association.

7. Support and Confidentiality

The Association will take all complaints seriously and handle them with fairness and confidentiality. Parties involved in a complaint may access support, including mediation or professional counselling, where appropriate.

Retaliation against anyone who makes or supports a complaint in good faith will not be tolerated.

8. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier if required, to ensure it remains fit for purpose and reflects best practice.

Approved by the Board on: [14.7.25]

Next Review Date: [14.7.27]

Annex:

Recognise signs:

- Members feel isolated or increasingly remove themselves from contributing
- Contribution dismissed or ridiculed
- Unusually stressed or anxious

Open dialogue:

- Encourage open honest sharing of situation/experience in a safe confidential setting
- Validate their feelings
- Goal is to understand the situation in full and ensure all voices are heard without fear of retribution

Establish policies:

- Define acceptable/unacceptable behaviour
- Outline process for reporting unacceptable behaviour
- Ensure investigation is impartial
- Provide support for all parties involved – victim and bully
- Define consequences

Training required:

- To recognise
- To address
- To prevent
- To build confidence
- To build supportive team dynamics

Support Victims:

- To report without fear of retaliation
- By providing counselling or support they deem appropriate
- To investigate thoroughly
- By providing appropriate resolutions

Enforce consequences:

- Be respectful
- Enable mediation of parties involved
- Reassignment of roles
- Termination of membership