

# Report of External Evaluation and Review

## Family Planning Professional Development Unit

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 8 March 2011

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MoE Number: 9864  
NZQA Reference: C03504  
Date of EER visit: 16 December 2010

# Purpose of this Report

*The purpose of this external evaluation and review report is to provide a public statement about the Tertiary Education Organisation's (TEO) educational performance and capability in self-assessment. It forms part of the accountability process required by Government to inform investors, the public, students, prospective students, communities, employers, and other interested parties. It is also intended to be used by the TEO itself for quality improvement purposes.*

## Introduction

### 1. TEO in context

Location:	Family Planning Professional Development Unit (PDU) is the private training establishment arm of the New Zealand Family Planning (Family Planning).  National Office is based in Wellington at: Level 7, Southmark House 203-209 Willis Street PO Box 11 515 Wellington
Type:	Private training establishment
First registered:	1994
Number of students:	Domestic: 1950 students attended courses between 1 July 2009 and 30 June 2010.
Number of staff:	Full-time – two These are the two coordinators, one based in Auckland and the other in Christchurch.  Part-time – 71 The part-time positions include administrators, assessors, and presenters who are based regionally throughout New Zealand.
Scope of active accreditation:	PDU is accredited to deliver unit standards within the Cervical Smearmakers Course (Level 6)
Sites:	Professional Development Units (PDUs) are also based at the Auckland and Christchurch Family Planning sites.
Distinctive characteristics:	PDU provides a range of courses and workshops on aspects of sexuality and sexual health. Courses cover

	the provision of medical and nursing care, screening, treatments, advice, sexuality education and understanding and accommodating different values and needs of clients.
Recent significant changes:	The two coordinators have recently increased their hours from part-time to full-time in the PDU.
Previous quality assurance history:	<p>PDU was previously quality assured in 2007 by NZQA under the audit system. The audit report states that the quality management system did not address all requirements and that practices between Christchurch and Wellington were inconsistent. The closing statement confirmed that PDU had made significant changes to the quality management system when it was reviewed. Other findings related to providing adequate and appropriate information to students.</p> <p>National external moderation results for 2009 show that the one unit standard moderated met the standard.</p>
Other:	<p>PDU trains health professionals throughout New Zealand in the delivery of sexual and reproductive health care. Some courses are delivered under the Ministry of Health (MoH) funded personal health contract.</p> <p>PDU contributes to the whole organisation's vision of: "Family Planning will be a leader in the development of good sexual and reproductive health for all, to achieve a healthier society".</p>

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of the external evaluation and review of Family Planning Professional Development Unit included the following focus area:

- Cervical Smertakers Course (Level 6)
- Family Planning Certificate in Contraception and Sexual Health.

These two programmes have the largest number of student enrolments and represent the majority of the PTE's provision. There are assessments to complete in these two programmes. The cervical smertakers course is the only unit standards based qualification delivered by PDU.

The mandatory focus area is:

- Governance, management, and strategy.

The three focus areas above were sufficient to give the evaluators an accurate representation of performance across the organisation.

### 3. Conduct of external evaluation and review

*All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published policies and procedures. The methodology used is described fully in the web document Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>*

The evaluation team for this EER of Family Planning Professional Development Unit comprised one lead evaluator and one team evaluator. The team visited the PTE for one and a half days at its site in Auckland.

The staff, students, presenters, and external stakeholders interviewed as part of the EER included:

- Family Planning staff: chief executive, deputy chief executive, quality coordinator, director Māori development, coordinator southern, coordinator northern.
- PDU students: current students enrolled on the two programme focus areas.
- External stakeholders: presenters contracted to deliver modules of the programme in their field of expertise; other external stakeholders.

# Summary of Results

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Family Planning Professional Development Unit**.

Students that complete the programmes delivered by PDU are contributing positively to their local and wider communities. There was strong evidence to show that staff, stakeholders, and students find the most valuable outcomes from the PDU programmes are the ability to broaden the scope of services offered and the positive impact on improved health outcomes for their patients.

Student achievement of the contraception and sexual health qualification in 2010 is good at an average 78 per cent across the three regions of Christchurch, Auckland, and Wellington. However, achievement of the smertakers qualification has not been as successful and was reviewed early in 2010 to address the non-completion issue. Continual review of the programme shows that changes made have successfully reduced barriers to learning without compromising the standard of the qualification at level 6. These changes include improvements to teaching, assessment, and verification processes and have led to completion of the qualification in a shorter timeframe.

Very few students withdraw from the programmes or do not have the capability to pass the qualifications. The students' commitment to the programmes and the evidence of students now completing the smertakers qualification in a shorter timeframe should see the achievement rate continue to rise.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Family Planning Professional Development Unit**

PDU is clearly focussed on continuous improvement. The evaluation team heard and saw many examples of effective self-assessment that have led to improvements, for example the introduction of a workbook exercise that meets the cervical smertakers course criteria and has replaced the lengthy assignment which was identified as a barrier to learner completion.

Although PDU is fully aware of individual student achievement, it is not currently able to gather, collate, and analyse data readily. Greater analysis of valuable data would result in identifying patterns and trends of programmes over time and inform changes for improvement. PDU already sees the value in the recent investment in a student database, which registers progress of programme components. This database clearly identifies those students that need support in their achievement and produces reports that will strengthen self-assessment and contribute to improvement.

There was convincing evidence of the newly developed comprehensive and systematic self-assessment process. The evaluation team agreed with PDU that it was still in the process of

embedding the new emphasis on self-assessment throughout the organisation in order to support its aim of continuous improvement.

## TEO response

Family Planning Professional Development Unit has confirmed the factual accuracy of this report.

# Findings<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 How well do learners achieve?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Adequate**.

Students that complete the programmes delivered by PDU are contributing positively to their local and wider communities. There was strong evidence to show that the enhancement of students' skills and knowledge gained as a result of the programmes has given them greater competence and increased confidence in their role.

Student achievement of the contraception and sexual health qualification in 2010 is good at an average 78 per cent across the three regions of Christchurch, Auckland, and Wellington. However, achievement of the smertakers qualification has not been as successful and was reviewed early in 2010 to address the non-completion issue. The qualification completion rate of the smertakers programme was 50 per cent in 2008 and 68 per cent in 2010. Self-assessment showed that many students found the large assignment required on completion of the programme was causing a delay and lack of motivation in completing the qualification. Changes have been made to address this issue and continual review shows successful reduction of this barrier to learning without compromising the standard of the qualification at level 6. These changes include replacement of the assignment by a workbook that assesses knowledge through questions and answers. The oral component of the assessment has been altered also. The assessor now interviews the supervisor of the student prior to the oral assessment, to verify competency at work. This provides the assessor with important contextual information about the student's current practice and guides the assessor's judgements.

PDU is not currently able to gather, collate, and analyse achievement data readily. Greater analysis of valuable data would result in identifying patterns and trends of programmes over time and inform changes for improvement. The recent investment in a student database has already shown PDU how easily students' achievement can be supported and the value of the reports it can produce that can strengthen self-assessment.

Very few students withdraw from the programmes or do not have the capability to pass the qualifications. The students' commitment to the cervical smertakers course and the evidence of students now completing the qualification in a shorter timeframe should see the achievement rate of this qualification continue to rise.

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<sup>1</sup> The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

## 1.2 What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including learners?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

PDU successfully demonstrates the value of the programmes for the students and stakeholders. This was clear to the evaluation team through:

- student evaluation analysis
- interviews
- increasing numbers wishing to enrol
- repeat business from District Health Boards (DHB) and Primary Health Organisations (PHO) who have sponsored their staff to do the programmes in the past
- continuing contracts with MoH who fund 60 places on the contraception and sexual health programme.

Graduates of the PDU training contribute strongly to the wider community by providing greater accessibility of services in their practice. The evaluation team heard from the staff, stakeholders, and students that the most valuable outcomes from the PDU programmes are the ability to broaden the scope of services they can offer and the positive impact on improved health outcomes for their patients.

Students that spoke with the evaluation team expressed unanimously how the increased competence and confidence as a result of the training had contributed positively to the services they offer at their practice. Students have benefitted from increased knowledge and up-to-date skills while gaining reassurance of their existing skills.

Self-assessment does not thoroughly capture the true value of the programmes. A comprehensive and systematic approach to gathering valuable data which has already been developed and is to be implemented in 2011 should enable PDU to understand the value more fully.

PDU demonstrates the value of the organisation's vision: "*Family Planning will be a leader in the development of good sexual and reproductive health for all, to achieve a healthier society*". The organisation achieves this vision by delivering training programmes to practitioners throughout New Zealand so they can positively contribute to improved health outcomes in their communities.

### 1.3 How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other stakeholders?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

PDU is proactive in its approach to programme development. Family Planning has ongoing engagement with its stakeholders to ensure that programmes are designed to match their current and future needs. There was evidence to show that the organisation has strong links with many stakeholders nationally and internationally in addition to their key stakeholders MoH, district health boards, and private health organisations. Feedback as a result of this collaboration contributes to coherent self-assessment processes that effectively review programmes to ensure the content and delivery is matching the needs of the students.

Examples of this are:

- changes in delivery to the Family Planning Certificate in Contraception and Sexual Health programme from eight to five days to better suit the practices and the student
- development of the Standing Orders training programme to meet future needs.

Student feedback is valued highly by PDU and has informed changes for improvement. Students who spoke with the evaluation team expressed how they enjoyed the practical and relevant activities on the programmes which engage them well in learning. This was supported by self-assessment information. Examples of activities from the smertakers course are the “models” used to enable students practically to apply their newly acquired skills, and the opportunity to visit a laboratory and speak to the pathologist who processes the smears. A component of the cervical smertakers course is a required “adequacy” rate from the ten smears submitted to the laboratory for processing. The value of this requirement is discussed in 1.4 below.

PDU successfully identifies gaps in learning and responds in a timely fashion. Examples of this are the introduction of the workbook to replace the assignment, enabling students to carry out observation assessments at a local Family Planning clinic where opportunities at their own practice do not arise, and a more recent development of a student information management system for registration and attendance data. Work on the creation of an e-learning package as a teaching method is due to commence in February 2011. This new technology will be designed to provide a blended learning experience and augment the face-to-face delivery of training. The information technology system will include pre-testing and pre-reading to prepare the students for their chosen programme.

### 1.4 How effective is the teaching?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The teaching on the programmes delivered by PDU is very effective. There was strong evidence to show that the coordinators, presenters, and assessors involved in the delivery of

the programmes adopt a number of teaching styles that engage the students well. Trainers on the programmes are qualified registered nurses, registered medical practitioners, qualified laboratory staff and appropriate staff from external agencies who all bring their area of expertise to the programmes. The regular trainers keep their skills current carrying out at least eight hours of clinical practice per week.

The evaluation team heard from students and stakeholders, supported by the analysis of student evaluations, that the variety of teaching was successful in engaging the students and increasing their knowledge and skills. Examples where students have the opportunity to apply their learning include role-play, group work, use of multimedia, and practical application of theory and discussions. An appropriate level of interaction allows the trainer to be assured that the students are engaging with the learning and increasing their knowledge and skills.

The level of a student's ability to take a successful smear is provided by an objective measure of competence from external stakeholders. These are the results of all the smears taken by the nurse and processed at the laboratory by a pathologist achieving an "adequacy rate" of above 80 per cent. Supervisors verify the student's competence while being observed in their own practice.

PDU trainers are well respected by the students and stakeholders. The two PDU coordinators who have recently been appointed to full-time roles within PDU have relevant and extensive experience both from their nursing backgrounds and adult education teaching experience. Stakeholders and students had only good things to say about Family Planning and the PDU training, including their knowledge, passion, and enthusiasm for advancing women's healthcare.

Assessment results are consistent and fair. There was evidence of a thorough process that ensures consistency of assessments, and findings captured from this process contribute to the review of programmes.

## 1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The coordinators have been successful in supporting students through the programmes. However, support given to the students by the coordinators has been restricted by limited resources in personnel and systems to show where support is required. These areas have already been addressed by PDU with the placing of the two coordinators in full-time positions and the introduction of a student database to track the students' progress with assignments.

Alongside the support given directly by PDU staff, students undergoing cervical smear training are allocated a supervisor within their practice to support them in the workplace and observe their practice for competency. This level of support is facilitated and monitored by PDU and will be strengthened by the coordinators having more time to engage with their stakeholders.

Coupled with the existing process of pre-reading and information given to the students prior to start of their programme, it is proposed that the new e-learning package system will guide students through the pre-enrolment stage to provide them with a clear outline of the respective programme.

The comprehensive and systematic self-assessment discussed in section 1.2 should provide PDU with valuable data and inform changes for improvement in their support.

## 1.6 How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The Family Planning Council supports the training arm of the organisation well. An organisation-wide approach to developing a strategic plan has ensured that all staff understand the vision and strategic direction of the organisation as a whole and particularly the PDU staff in their education programmes. This strategic plan, currently in draft form, has been endorsed and will be implemented by the council on receipt of the feedback from stakeholder consultation, ensuring it has a strong needs-based component. The plan includes Family Planning's advocacy role with health providers and other funders of their courses. For example, while it is highly recommended by Family Planning that all people who take smears have completed the cervical smea-takers course and attend regular, ongoing training, it is not mandatory that this happens.

An extensive review of the delivery of programmes has successfully identified areas for improvement. Governance and management of PDU recognises the value of the training programmes and has subsequently invested in more resources to meet the greater demand for, and quality of, training. These investments include the increase in hours for the coordinators, a student database for more accurate recording of progress and achievement, and the e-learning package system due to be implemented in 2011.

The chief executive and management staff of Family Planning have an open leadership style which engages all PDU staff through effective communication and their own evident drive and passion to educate people in good sexual and reproductive health.

PDU is clearly focussed on continuous improvement. The evaluation team heard and saw convincing evidence of the newly developed comprehensive and systematic processes. The evaluation team agreed with PDU that they were still on a journey to embed the new emphasis on self-assessment throughout the organisation.

## Focus Areas

*This section reports significant findings in each focus area, not already covered in Part 1.*

### 2.1 Focus area: Governance, management, and strategy

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

### 2.2 Focus area: Cervical Smearmakers Course

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

### 2.3 Focus area: Family Planning Certificate Course in Contraception and Sexual Health.

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

# Recommendations

There are no recommendations arising from the external evaluation and review.

# Further actions

The next external evaluation and review will take place in accordance with NZQA's policy and is likely to occur within four years of the date of this report.

# Appendix

## Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

*Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of course approval and accreditation (under sections 258 and 259 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the course approval and accreditation criteria and policies established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) and (e) of the Act.*

*In addition, for registered private training establishments, the criteria and policies for their registration require self-assessment and external evaluation and review at an organisational level in addition to the individual courses they own or provide. These criteria and policies are set by NZQA under section 253(1)(ca) of the Act.*

*NZQA is responsible for ensuring TEOs continue to comply with the policies and criteria after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of courses and/or registration. The Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality (ITP Quality) is responsible, under delegated authority from NZQA, for compliance by the polytechnic sector, and the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.*

*This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the policies and criteria approved by the NZQA Board.*

*The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.*

*External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.*

*External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website ([www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)).*

*Information relevant to the external evaluation and review process, including the publication *Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review*, is available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>*

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