

22 March 2019

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern
Prime Minister

Hon Dr David Clark
Minister of Health

Hon Stuart Nash
Minister of Police

Dear Prime Minister and Ministers

The New Zealand Medical Association was horrified at the recent attacks in Christchurch on 15 March 2019. We, along with the country, grieve with the Muslim community, family, friends and whānau and stand together with them.

What happened in Christchurch should never be repeated. It's simple - one person should not be able to accumulate lethal weaponry with such ease. There is no better time to review our gun laws and we support the Government's move to make New Zealanders safe from gun violence.

As doctors, we and our colleagues across the world, see first-hand the damage, the physical and emotional trauma, and the long-lasting impact on health and well-being caused by guns. The NZMA supports any campaigns or policies that strengthen firearm restrictions, firearms purchase and ownership.

We welcome the Government's swift action to tighten gun legislation and the immediate banning of military style semi-automatic weapons, and the NZMA stands with the Government in its determination to further strengthen its gun laws in the coming weeks.

We commend to you, a Position Statement on Firearms from our sister association, the Australian Medical Association. Following the 1996 Port Arthur tragedy, in which 35 people died and 32 were injured, the National Firearms Agreement came into existence. Over the past two decades since then, gun deaths have halved. I would also respectfully suggest that the Position Statement on Firearms be considered as part of the policy making and implementation thereof as we, as a nation, move to protect New Zealanders and keep them safe from gun violence.

Kind regards



Dr Kate Baddock
Chair NZMA