



New Zealand Medical Students' Association
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NZMSA Submission to United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) on the Rights of Intersex Children

In 2016 the Government of Aotearoa New Zealand was advised to implement several important measures to protect the rights of intersex children in our nation. Approximately 2% of people are born with intersex traits though not all of those will be picked up at birth. Those who are identified as Intersex while children are sometimes being exposed to 'normalising' surgery and potentially harmful medical treatment.¹ These practices serve no medical purpose, and have been directly challenged by the UNCROC who advised that the government should:

- Develop and implement a child rights-based health-care protocol for intersex children.
- Extend free access to surgical interventions and intersex medical treatment to intersex children between the age of 16 and 18.
- Educate and train medical/psychological professionals on intersex and the consequences of unnecessary medical interventions.
- Investigate incidents of non-consensual medical treatment on intersex children, and provide redress to victims.²

Disappointingly none of these have been fully implemented in Aotearoa. NZMSA calls on Te Whatu Ora and the Government to address these needs and to look into implementing these changes in the immediate future. This implementation needs to acknowledge the existing inequity in our health and justice systems and needs to be done in conjunction with Intersex community leaders as well as with meaningful input from Tangata Whenua and Pacific groups.

Equitable rights based healthcare should be the basic standard for all people in Aotearoa and the fact that our Intersex children are receiving anything less is unacceptable.

NZMSA stands with Intersex community organisers calling for immediate and meaningful change.

1. <https://otago.zoom.us/j/8247216352?pwd=Nmg2RHppMmdjOW9WZTV4akRtWk9oZz09>
2. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/concluding-observations/crcnzc5-concluding-observations-fifth-periodic-report-nz>