

Candidate Details

Nominations to Natural Health Products NZ Executive Board 2021

Gray, Samantha

Managing Director, BioEquitas Ltd

Samantha, a molecular biologist by training, has over 20 years' experience in the natural health products, pharmaceutical, medical diagnostic, and biotechnology industries. She is Managing Director of BioEquitas Ltd., a full-service consultancy to the natural health industry acting for more than 150 New Zealand and international clients.

She has been a director on the board of Natural Health Products NZ since 2018 and seeks election for a second term.

Samantha is also the Government Affairs Director for Natural Health Products NZ and in this role works closely with politicians and officials to advocate for the industry, including the urgent need for regulatory progress. Since being appointed to this role in December 2020, she has also been interviewed by international and national media, and has provided written, oral and in person submissions to parliamentary select committees on behalf of, and for the benefit of the natural health products industry.

She was Technical and Process Improvement Manager for Healtheries of New Zealand Ltd and an independent consultant to Vitaco Health NZ Ltd and Lifestream International Ltd. She has also held a variety of roles with the US blue-chip companies Abbott Laboratories (Pharmaceutical Products Division), Abbott Diagnostics & Invitrogen Life Technologies (now part of Thermo Fisher Scientific Corporation).

She currently also sits on the board of the Leather & Shoe Research Industry Partnership Governance Board, several Advisory Groups and is a member of the College of Assessors for The Endeavour Fund (MBIE).

Under Samantha's management BioEquitas won the Natural Health Products NZ Marketing (under \$2 million) in 2020. She was a leading member of the team awarded the Cawthron Institute, Innovation in Science and Technology Award in 2012.

Samantha holds a Bachelor of Science majoring in both Biochemistry and Genetics and a Post Graduate Diploma of Science, Molecular Biology (with Distinction) from Massey University. Her research was "Site-directed mutagenesis and X-ray crystallographic studies of C-lobe lactoferrin – a model for melanoma tumour antigen p97 (melanotransferrin)". She holds a Graduate Diploma of Business Administration from the University of Auckland.

She brings a wealth of regulatory affairs, technical, scientific and market knowledge to the Natural Health Products NZ Board and has contributed significantly to the Board's success in her first term, including being a key member of the crisis management team that achieved redaction of inaccurate and commercially damaging fish oil scientific paper within a week of publication in the NZ Medical Journal.

Samantha seeks re-election to the Board to continue working and contributing to our pre-eminent industry association for the benefit of our members.

Kumaran, Ravinesh

General Manager, GMP Pharmaceuticals Ltd

Ravi was born in Fiji and immigrated to New Zealand in 2005. He has three children aged 10, 8 and 3 years. Ravi is an experienced and recognised leader in the New Zealand dairy industry, with specific experience in pharmaceutical grade infant formula manufacturing and export. A chartered accountant by qualification, Ravi has held General Manager, Chief Financial Officer and Chief Executive Officer roles within the dairy and nutraceutical manufacturing companies in the last 9 years and travelled extensively to China and other markets to grow exports from New Zealand. Prior to this Ravi gained significant auditing and governance experience whilst working for PwC and KPMG in their audit divisions.

As a key supporter of Natural Health Products New Zealand, both GMP Pharmaceuticals and Ravi are keen to improve the current regulatory complexities affecting the sector's growth. GMP Pharmaceuticals is an industry pioneer and a long standing member of Natural Health Products New Zealand. Founded in 1994, GMP Pharmaceuticals is a MPI, Medsafe, FDA and GMP licensed complementary healthcare manufacturer with significant production facilities in Australia and New Zealand and offices in China and employing over 200 employees in New Zealand.

McNamara, Liz

Natural Health Expert, HealthPost / BioBalance Ltd

Registered Naturopath and Cosmetic Chemist with over 17 years' experience in the Natural Health Industry.

Liz is currently working in roles as a Natural Health Expert at HealthPost and is the President of the Naturopaths & Medical Herbalists of NZ. Liz is passionate about being able to contribute and work our (Natural Health) industry to create positive and sustainable change.

HealthPost is New Zealand's largest ethical online retailer of natural health, beauty and eco living products. In her role at HealthPost / BioBalance, Liz has contributed to NPD for own-brand, projects involving sustainability and created their industry-first ingredient standards. Liz is also responsible for regulatory affairs at HealthPost / BioBalance. Liz is working on a number of new projects with the HealthPost team to continue, to evolving ethically and sustainably.

Liz is in her 3rd year as the President of the Naturopaths & Medical Herbalists of NZ, progressing their mission of naturopathy as a regulated profession in New Zealand. This role has seen Liz engage with the wider industry, creating better support networks and resources for naturopaths, increasing the education standards, improving engagement of members with the organisation, and membership numbers, and making pivotal changes to the structure and culture of the organisation so that it functions more professionally and sustainably.

Liz is enthusiastic about the industry and has been involved in providing stakeholder feedback to the Ministry of Health regarding the review of the Natural Health Products Bill.

In her role on the Natural Health Products NZ board, she is looking forward to contributing to the growth natural and complementary health products sector.