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# All District Health Boards

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## DHBs dispute union's claims about bargaining

District Health Boards strongly dispute the claims made by the Resident Doctors' Association about bargaining discussions related to a collective agreement for Resident Medical Officers (often called junior doctors).

DHB spokesman Dr Peter Bramley says DHBs have been trying to negotiate an agreement that enables clinicians and hospital managers to make decisions locally about work rosters that deliver better care and better training opportunities.

Dr Bramley said DHBs want to ensure RMOs are properly involved in decisions about their rosters and work placements.

"It is simply untrue for the RDA to claim that DHBs want to move RMOs around the country at will.

"Rosters across multiple hospitals in non-urban areas and any combined duty and on call period of more than 16 consecutive hours currently requires the approval of the RDA. DHBs would prefer that affected employees make decisions about these rosters locally, rather than the union.

"DHBs have not requested any change to the provision that a duty shift shall not exceed 16 consecutive hours."

The impact of working long shifts was a key driver in the DHBs desire to introduce more flexible rostering, with consultation and involvement of local clinicians and hospital managers, Dr Bramley said.

"DHBs are committed to being good employers supporting safe care and safe working conditions."

Dr Bramley said the DHBs will continue to bargain in good faith and believe their offer will maintain safe working rosters and promote better continuity of care and enhance opportunities for doctors who are in training.

He said all DHBs will implement contingency plans to provide essential services and acute care during the strike next Tuesday and Wednesday.

While there will be some disruption to planned services, DHBs will communicate directly with affected people to reschedule appointments, as needed.

DHBs acknowledged that RDA members have voted on a second round of strikes at the end of the month.

ENDS

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DHB media release re RMO Strike threat  
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