
All District Health Boards

8 March 2019

Update on negotiations with the Resident Doctors' Association

Dear colleagues

The DHB bargaining team was in mediation with the Resident Doctors' Association yesterday, but unfortunately we were unable to reach an agreement.

The DHBs' claim is based on the ability for clinicians at a local level to determine how best to look after patients, manage training and arrange work while protecting RMOs' rights.

It is important to repeat that we are not seeking claw backs, pay cuts or forcing trainee doctors to work excessive hours. Our proposal does however involve the union giving up its ability to veto rosters and training arrangements agreed at a DHB level.

While we have made more progress in the last two weeks than in the previous two months, the RDA's veto is still the one issue we need to resolve.

DHBs are responsible and accountable for patient care in their area – how best to provide that care is a decision that must sit with clinicians and the Chief Executive at a local level, not the RDA.

No other health union has the ability to control work arrangements to the same extent and our offer is based on the same change process applying to more than 70 thousand DHB employees.

We have offered a number of alternatives to address the concerns of the RDA, including options for review mechanisms and safeguards, as well as the ability to reject proposed roster changes if a third of RMOs affected disagree.

No further talks have been scheduled, but we have told the union we remain prepared to talk. Our preference is to continue negotiations although we will consider an RDA application for facilitation.

DHBs have not received further strike notices and will review our position if that changes.

In the meantime, DHBs will continue to offer RDA members the terms and conditions of their expired agreement until we're required by law to offer the STONZ MECA – which will be the end of May for many RMOs.

We are committed to safe rosters for RMOs, but it is important local teams decide rosters that will work for them. The new pay deal with STONZ is evidence that there are other ways of addressing the needs and concerns of doctors in training as well as the DHBs.

Once again, I thank you for your patience and your hard work during this extraordinary time.
Regards

David Meates
Acting CE Lead
RMO Bargaining