
All District Health Boards

24 April 2019

Strikes unnecessary now facilitation set

DHBs are urging resident medical officers to withdraw planned strike action and let the Employment Relations Authority (ERA) do its job.

RMOs who are members of the NZ Resident Doctor's Association plan to strike for five days next week but DHB Spokesman Dr Peter Bramley says that will disrupt patient services unnecessarily now the ERA has set dates for facilitation.

"It was the NZRDA that asked for facilitation, that's now been agreed and dates set. DHBs welcome the ERA's involvement as a way to settle this dispute – there is nothing to be gained from a strike.

"Facilitation involves independent experts looking at both sides of the issue and making an impartial recommendation for settlement. The strike will have no impact or bearing on the facilitation, all it does is disrupt patients."

Dr Bramley says the impact will vary from DHB to DHB, but there will be more impact than the last strikes due to the longer duration.

"Some DHBs have not scheduled procedures next week to avoid inconveniencing patients, although services are being scheduled where staff are available and RMOs have indicated they'll be working.

"DHBs have contingency plans in place to ensure essential and emergency services are maintained, however some planned and elective services will be deferred and DHBs will contact those affected.

"To minimise pressure on hospitals, people should see their GP in the first instance, but no one should delay seeking medical treatment and go to hospital if the matter is urgent," says Dr Bramley.

"They should dial 111 for emergencies or an ambulance.

"I urge RMOs to reconsider striking – they asked for independent facilitation and we now have a mechanism to help us find a solution. If the RDA is looking for a pathway to settlement, then this is it and strike action is not necessary."

The following dates have been agreed for facilitation:

- 3 May Both parties to file a written submission setting out the context and the outstanding issues
- 9 May Auckland (individual meetings with each party)
- 10 May Auckland
- 13 May Wellington
- 14 May Wellington

ENDS

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