
All District Health Boards

DHBs remain open to talks

District Health Boards are open to resuming talks with the Resident Doctors' Association to find a solution to the current roster dispute with trainee doctors.

DHB spokesman Dr Peter Bramley says the remaining sticking point in the negotiations is decision making over rosters and he hopes further talks can help find a solution.

"Everyone agrees the current roster system is impacting Resident Medical Officers' (RMOs) training and patient care – it's how to fix it that we can't agree on.

"The crux of the issue is who has the authority to make final decisions relating to the way work is organised. We believe these decisions must be made locally on advice of Senior Medical Officers and RMOs, rather than the union deciding whether or not a particular roster can be implemented.

"DHBs acknowledge our proposal does involve the RDA giving up the ability to veto arrangements agreed at a DHB level – we can only conclude that the RDA does not trust SMOs and RMOs working in conjunction with their respective medical colleges to find a suitable local arrangement.

"It's nonsense to suggest DHBs want to change working conditions or undermine the union. If that's how the RDA is describing our position to RMOs, it's little wonder we can't get an agreement."

Dr Bramley says hospitals across the country have managed to deliver acute and emergency services throughout the first part of the strike. Demand in some DHBs was higher than expected but additional staff have provided care for those for whom the only option is a hospital stay.

"There will be ongoing review of rosters and plans at each DHB and we'll make any necessary changes to ensure we have senior staff to manage the needs of patients and our people.

Dr Bramley says DHBs have always bargained in good faith with the RDA and were looking forward to discussions about how to reach an agreement.

ENDS

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