

2018 MECA BARGAINING

protect & improve



26th November 2018

Dear Members,

Following on from our last newsletter 25th October, we met with the DHB team Thursday and Friday of last week. We had hoped that with a mediator present at bargaining there would be a more successful meeting but as you will see from the following this was not to be.

We commenced the round by identifying to the DHB team what a feasible settlement would need to include for the NZRDA this was:-

- 3% pay increase 1 December 2018 with a second 3% increase 1 March 2019. This is the same pay rise everyone else in health is getting offered, from nurses to allied scientific and technical practitioners.
- Lump sum payment in effect to cover back pay to expiry of our document in February 2018
- 24 month term to February 2020
- Increase to on call allowance from \$4/hour to \$8/hour
- If schedule 10 can't be implemented for some reason and the RMOs have come up with a better roster that still enhances safer rostering it can be introduced by agreement.
- Moving the ED provisions from schedule 4 into the body of the collective.
- An increase to the cross cover payment (although we indicated we were flexible around exactly how much)
- Other technical changes such as replacing mileage allowance with the agreed IRD rate

The DHBs then departed to consider this and after some time returned with the following proposal:-

- 2.5% pay increase December 2018 with a second 3% increase December 2019
- Lump sum payment of \$2000 regardless of whether you are a registrar, house officer or what pay category you have earned since February 2018.
- Contract to expire 30 November 2020 (33 month term)
- Delete NZRDA from all current clauses requiring RDA agreement,. This includes agreement to rotate you to another DHB or hospital, changes to the manner in which your training is delivered, introduction of shift work e.g. to the 8 hour rotating shift work type rosters (nursing rosters).
- Delete 2/3s agreement being required to change a run description and replace it with a requirement that 1/3rd of those affected actively disagree with the change.

- Change 8.1.2 which has the effect of drastically reducing the penal payment when unsocial hours are worked. By the DHBs own “guess” this will reduce at least 10% of run categories immediately and more will follow as rosters change to take advantage of the lower pay – and remember 1/3rd of you will have to disagree to those changes!
- Remove the deduction model but only if the change to 8.1.2 (see above) is also agreed so whilst no deductions are applied the salary categories can instead drop. Overall this will represent a pay cut to at least 10% of our members immediately and more in the future.
- Remove the requirement under schedule 10 that rostered days off be attached to an unworked weekend (which is currently possible by agreement of the NZRDA)
- Allow “Alternative Rosters” without schedule 10 rosters as they are currently described having been investigated or trialled and without requiring the agreement of the NZRDA.
- Increase in the on call allowance from \$4 to \$8 but the minimum payment period for a call back to go from 4 hours to 3 hours. This will have a net effect of reducing payment where a callback occurs.
- Move both the ED and ICU provisions from schedule 4 into the body of the collective – a reduction of protections for our colleagues in ICU.
- Remove Waikato exception for ED where they currently must have no less than 3 weekends in 5 off duty
- Increase cross cover payment from \$150 to \$165

It became utterly clear that anything we did to get more in line with the DHBs position would not shift their position as above is their “bottom line” – a take it or leave it position!

We have no doubt an intention of the employers is to undermine the role of the NZRDA in so far as NZRDA provides protections for members. The employers focus is on making you stand up and say no (e.g. 2/3rds agreement shifting to 1/3rds disagreement), rather than the MECA provisions being your right and the employers have to get your agreement to change them. Having the RDA sit between you and the DHBs means you are able to say “no” without personally standing up and facing the music! This includes individually saying “no” to any rotation the employer’s desire which will be taken as read if contained in a letter of offer.

We will be providing some video explanations in more detail over the next week to help explain the above. We need to know from you your thoughts and response to the DHB “bottom line”.

Your delegates are meeting 5th December and before then you need to tell them your views on this, alternatively you can email your feedback to us but we need to be clear you must provide your response and give your take on this matter now.

But make no mistake – your bargaining team are firmly of the view that if we say “no” to the above, we will have to strike to get our MECA settled – so this is crunch time!