



NZRDA

INTRODUCTORY GUIDE



- What is the NZRDA?
- What can the NZRDA do for you?
- How can you become a member of NZRDA?

Dear Colleagues,

Congratulations on your appointment to an RMO position in New Zealand!

We invite you all to join the NZRDA - but first, an introduction as to who we are is in order...



What is the NZRDA?

Who we are...

The NZRDA (New Zealand Resident Doctors' Association) - or the RDA for short is the only organisation in New Zealand representing RMOs (Resident Medical Officers, which include house surgeons, senior house officers and registrars). We are a union: a group of employees who come together to achieve strength and safety in numbers.

We are run by resident doctors for resident doctors. Our main purpose is to look after and promote the interests of our members. This includes taking care of doctors' rights and interests at work, within the health sector and in the wider community. The philosophy of the NZRDA is based on community, support and union principles such as a democratic structure and service delivery.

Who we are not...

Although often we work alongside them, we are separate from other health sector unions like APEX, NZMLWU, ASMS and NZNO. We are not politically aligned: our role is to represent RMOs and we must be free to do that regardless of who is in power!



What does the NZRDA do?

Supporting RMO Interests

The RDA negotiates and enforces RMO terms and conditions of employment and we work to ensure your employment contract is honoured. We also work to protect and enhance RMO training, improve work life balance and RMO wellness, represent individual members who get into difficulty and promote good change as it affects our members. Our recent work promoting action on bullying and harassment is one such example.

We actively lobby for our members' interests, comment publicly when appropriate and communicate with other medical organisations both in New Zealand and overseas. We work with politicians, government organisations and those in the private sector.

Through the RDA you have the opportunity to have your say and influence decisions that affect your future and the future of healthcare in NZ!



Welcome from our National President



Kia ora! I am Sara, National President of the NZRDA. I am working as a GP and in my spare time a Mum of three. There were some pretty important elements to being an RMO that I wish I had known about prior to actually starting work as one. Being entitled to leave for graduation day is one example! Contractual rights become important things to know about. Being a member of the RDA helps you to understand your rights, so that when they are questioned (or even worse, ignored - which unfortunately does happen) you are not disadvantaged!



Benefits of Membership

Advocacy and Advice

As a member you will receive all the benefits of belonging to a professional and employment-related union including advocacy advice, support related to contract compliance or enforcement, and representation if so required.

24/7 Support

Personal and professional support through the RDA can be accessed 24/7. RMOs are most vulnerable in the first 6 months of their employment!



Feedback from our National Executive

Kia ora, my name's Sam.

The nature of our work and the expectations that patients, society and ourselves have can make us vulnerable and fatigued.

Don't struggle alone. If something feels wrong or unjust, it's most likely a problem with the system and other RMOs will have experienced this too. If you're unsure, overwhelmed or just want a sounding board, don't hesitate to get in touch.



Representation

The RDA represents RMOs on a wide range of issues. For example, we sit on the HWNZ (Health Workforce NZ), Medical Reference Group which works to ensure a smooth transition for you whether you're coming from medical school going into GP-land or becoming an SMO. We work with the MCNZ (Medical Council) as well as DHBs and other professional bodies on issues such as pre-vocational training, bullying and sexual harassment, workload and supervision pressure that will directly affect you as an RMO.

We also play a part in the wider health scene, engaging with issues such as vaccination rates and healthy eating.

Issues Can and Do Arise

The current employment terms and conditions of RMOs in New Zealand have only come about due to strong collective action. In order to maintain and improve these terms and conditions we need high levels of RMO membership.



Feedback from our National Executive

Hello, my name is Juliet Kane, I'm a PGY1 at Hawke's Bay Hospital.

It's a challenging time starting off as a doctor.

I think there are some major issues in our profession, such as bullying and burnout, that need to be addressed.

I've felt this myself and seen it in my colleagues.

I want to support other doctors to enable them to enjoy their life at work and outside of work.



Terms and Conditions of Employment

The union and the DHBs do have to work together and a degree of cooperation is necessary. However, DHBs dishonouring your contract is not uncommon and as with any job, issues can and do arise.

Non-Members

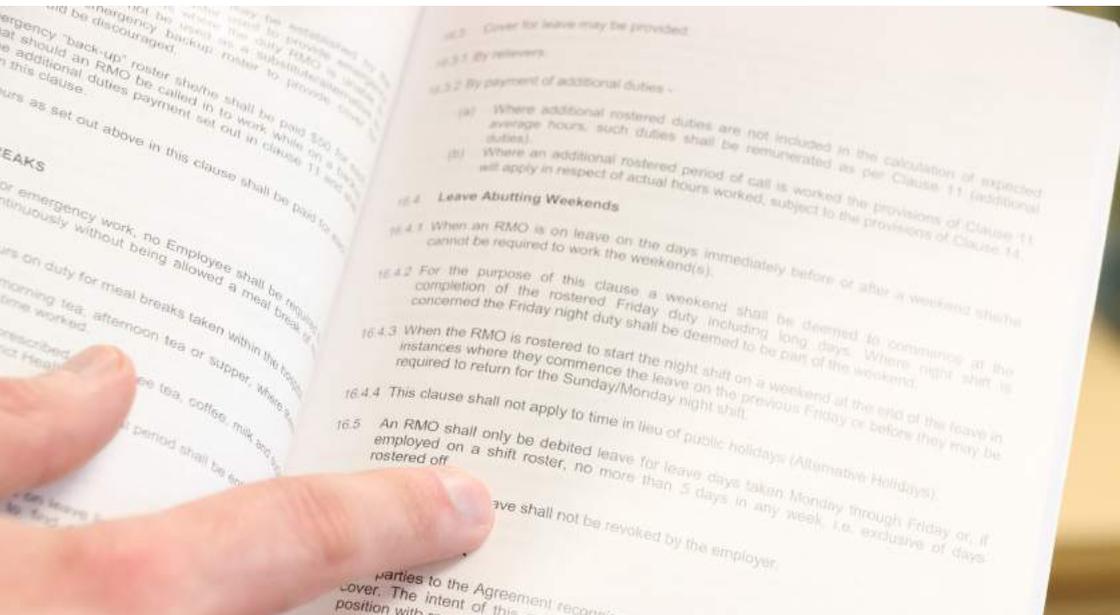
If you are a non-member, unfortunately the RDA cannot provide you with assistance. You cannot sign up at the time an issue arises.

You must already be a member in order to receive advice and representation from us (kind of like employment insurance).

Union Membership Stats

There are more than 350,000 employees in union membership across New Zealand. Almost 100,000 of these union members are employees working in the health and community sector.

Over 90% of RMOs are members of the NZRDA.



Feedback from our National Executive



Hi! My name is Sam! I am a Registrar in Auckland working in Obstetrics & Gynaecology.

I'm passionate about rights in general: human rights, womens' rights, patients' and workers' rights.

You as RMOs have rights, but are most vulnerable early in your career.

Don't be late to the party, join the RDA now, know your rights and make the most of life as an RMO!"



What is the MECA?

Multi Employer Collective Agreement

MECA stands for Multi Employer Collective Agreement. It is the employment agreement under which you will be employed (if you indicate such) when you commence work. If you are a member of the RDA you will continue to be covered by that agreement and anything further which is negotiated by us in the years to come!

MECA vs IEA

You are not automatically covered by the MECA: coverage is subject to RDA membership so you will need to join. If you do not become a member of the NZRDA you will be covered by an Individual Employment Agreement (IEA) offered by the DHB - the renegotiation of which is for you to arrange with your employer.

When you sign up as a member you receive a hard copy of the MECA. We will also send you a guide to the MECA and FAQs which helps explain your rights in easy to understand language. In the meantime, you can view and download the MECA in PDF version on our website.



Indemnity Insurance

The RDA also offers indemnity insurance through NZMPI: both for house officers and registrars and also for those employed under the GPEP employment agreement. Locum work in NZ is also included. The insurance extends into SMO and GP land when you get to that stage.

Superannuation

RMOs are amongst the very few health sector employees to have 6% employer superannuation contributions available – courtesy of NZRDA's negotiations on our members' behalf. The RDA has a scheme that is transportable, allows contributions to be suspended for up to 2 years (and longer by agreement) in case you need to go overseas for instance.

What about Primary Care?

Further into your career you may wish to enter the GP world. The RDA negotiates the GP employment agreement for GPEP registrars and contractors. We can represent and assist you if becoming a GP is your chosen pathway!



Joining the NZRDA

Apply online

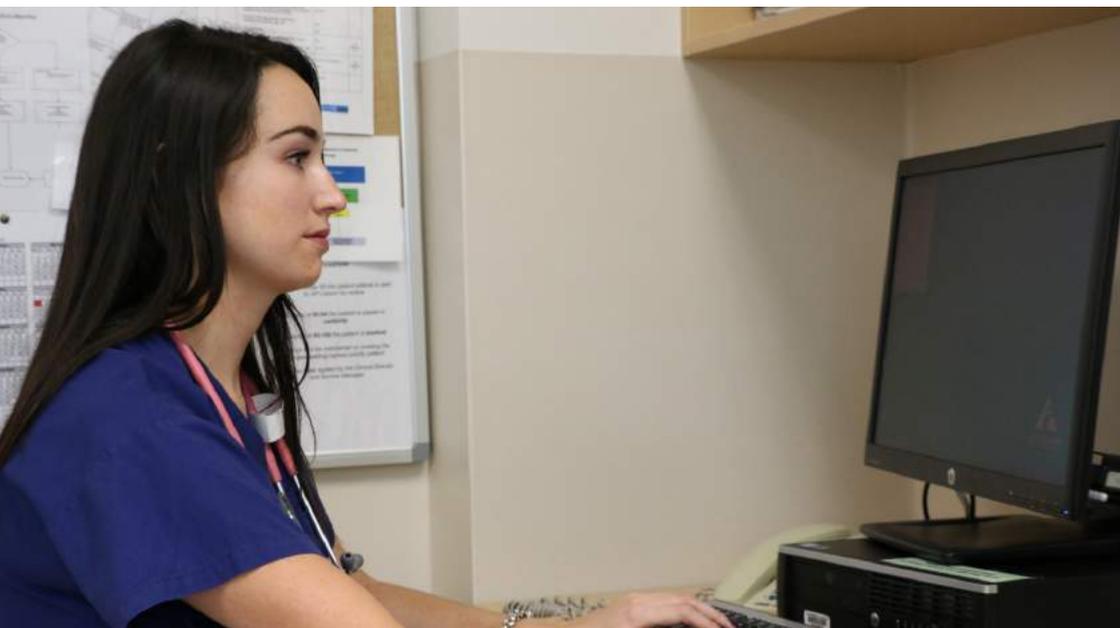
Membership is free as a Trainee Intern and as an RMO it's \$40 per month (or \$480 per year).

Simply fill in the online form on our website!

What happens after I join?

Once you join, you will get an introductory package and regular updates. This information will include what is going on in the hospitals and employment and MECA related issues.

You will also start to receive our monthly RDA newsletters and other communication telling you what is going on in the wide world of health!



Contacting the NZRDA

Delegates

If you have further questions please do not hesitate to contact your RDA delegates (RMOs who are representatives of the RDA) in your hospital - if you do not know who they are then go to our website www.nzrda.org.nz

The Office

You can call the RDA office located in Auckland directly on (09) 526 0280 (or 0800 803 993 if outside of Auckland) and speak to one of the team. Alternatively, if you have a membership query you can email us at membership@nzrda.org.nz. All other RDA queries can be sent to ask@nzrda.org.nz - we are happy to assist!

Note that all membership and contact details provided to us are confidential. Any inquiries you make are confidential too (unless you are a risk to yourself or to others).



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