

It's a chilly wind blowing in the DHBs!

As we head into winter the Government and the District Health Boards have indicated to the union that they will be imposing a wage freeze on our public hospital members during 2009.

At meetings of our 2700 public hospital members last month the message given to union negotiators was that not only is a wage increase in order but that we want to catch up on some of the other conditions that DHB nurses, therapy workers and doctors enjoy.

The first set of DHB MECA negotiations for directly-employed members will kick off on 19-21 May in Wellington. The bargaining process agreement, that took over six months to settle in 2006, has already been concluded and the presentation and negotiation of the union claims will start almost immediately.

The DHBs have been given a list of union claims that includes:

- A 4% wage increase to keep our relativity with the wages of health care assistants (they received a 4% increase in March).
- All members who have completed five years service to receive five weeks annual leave consistent with nurses, doctors and most other workers in the DHBs
- Support for the development and recognition of minimum qualifications for all our members
- Overtime to be paid at T1.5 for first three hours and then T2 consistent with nurses payment
- Allowances such as tracer (\$5.00 per meal break), meal (\$10.00), post-mortem (\$20.00), body removal (\$5.00), broken shift (\$6.00), security (50c/hour extra), infectious (\$5.00 a day) and personal care (\$1.34/hour extra) to be made standard for all DHBs

The Union National Negotiating Team for the DHBs is John Ryall, Jill Ovens, Ian Hodgetts (SFWU), Wayne Place (Lakes), Kaumari Enoka (Auckland), Wayne Johnson (Counties-Manukau), Bernie Robinson (Capital and Coast), Julie Pope (Hutt), Steve Mulvey (Canterbury) and Elizabeth Morris (Waikato).

Meanwhile the Union has also initiated bargaining with both Compass and OCS and is awaiting dates for their negotiations to start. The claims for the contractors will be similar to the DHB claims and the negotiations will run in parallel with them.

Turn over for more...



Report # 1

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The Union will be initiating bargaining with Spotless this week. It was intended that we bring the Taylor's laundries in Hamilton and Auckland into the Spotless DHB Agreement but a counter move by Spotless to initiate bargaining separately with the Hamilton laundry put paid to that. We will be seeking the public hospital rates for the Hamilton laundry, which is located on the Waikato Hospital site. A similar claim will be made for the Auckland Taylors laundry.

The Union will also be initiating bargaining with ISS for our members in the Waikato, Otago, West Coast and Southland DHBs. Included in this will be the security workers employed by ISS subsidiary First Security at Auckland Hospital.

ISS have told us that they are totally opposed to these hospital security workers getting the same pay rates as their directly-employed counterparts, and prefer that they are employed under their commercial employment agreement with rates very close to the statutory minimum wage.

Increases from 1 July

Even if the negotiations for these collective agreements are not concluded by 1 July this year union members will commence moving up the grades.

The move up to the next grade occurs on your anniversary of the your employment, so you need to make sure that this is detailed correctly.

If your anniversary is on 17 July then you will move up a grade at this stage, and if the union negotiations are successful then you will also get another pay increase that will be backpaid until 1 July.

A double increase in 2009 would be great!

Report Backs

We were successful in 2007/08 in achieving national pay rates in public hospitals and we want to use 2009 for improving upon them and turning some other local conditions into national conditions.

After each session of negotiations we will be sending out a report to all delegates.

If you have an e-mail address make sure we have it so that the notices get to you and your workmates quicker.

Delegates need to put all reports on notice boards so that all union members can read them.



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