

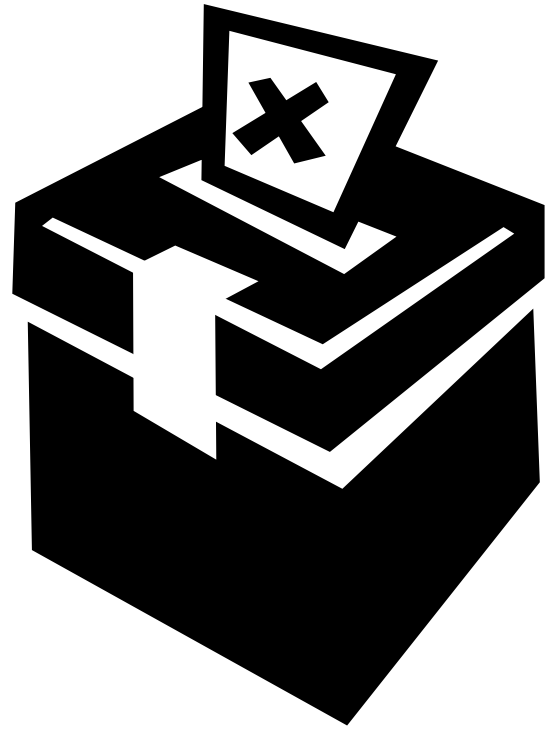
# Members to Vote on New Union Bargaining Strategy

In the pre-Christmas Healthy Hospitals Update (Report #7) we reported to members that we were talking to other major public health unions about a new joint approach to the DHB MECA bargaining.

We are now holding meetings for SFWU public hospital members to consider this "Alternative Bargaining Approach".

The meetings will consider whether our members employed by District Health Boards wish to be covered by a "National Terms of Settlement" (NTOS) to be negotiated between representatives of the 21 DHBs, the SFWU, the New Zealand Nurses Organisation (NZNO) and the Public Service Association (PSA).

This may also include a mechanism that would allow other Council of Trade Unions-affiliated unions (eg ASMS, EPMU, NDU, BTU and MERAS) to be joined to the National Terms of Settlement as subsequent parties.



## What would be in the NTOS?

It is difficult to be specific about the details of what would be in the NTOS because that is what we would be negotiating. However, initial discussions with DHBs have identified some things that we would expect to be part of the agreement reached:

- A common pay increase
- A common term
- A process for resolution of agreed outstanding union specific issues
- A common process to resolve future problems
- National processes or frameworks for delivering effective and efficient services comprising some new processes for national restructuring and some principles and processes for achieving healthy workplaces

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## **What will happen if members support this alternative bargaining approach?**

If this approach is approved by members, all existing DHB bargaining will be paused until the end of March to allow this alternative process to occur (bargaining with the contractors will still continue).

**If this new bargaining approach works** and our members ratify the NTOS, then the terms of this settlement will be incorporated into the existing DHB MECAs for SFWU, NZNO and PSA. It will also go into our Auckland DHB Dental Collective Agreement. (It will not mean that we will be merging with other unions or joining other unions MECAs).

**If this new bargaining approach does not work**, then all three unions will be back into their individual union bargaining at the end of March.

## **Why is the Union recommending support for this approach?**

The Union is recommending this alternative bargaining approach because:

- It brings together three of the main public health sector unions, who between them cover about 43,000 of the 50,000 public health workers.
- The DHB Chief Executives have already agreed for their negotiators to participate in such a process.
- It has a greater chance of delivering a wage increase to our members.
- Getting a settlement with the DHBs will make it easier to get a similar settlement with the contractors.
- It builds greater unity between workers across the public health sector.

## **What is the timeframe for completing the NTOS?**

Meetings of SFWU, NZNO and PSA members to endorse the approach will be completed by 19 February.

The negotiations of the NTOS by a small group of SFWU, NZNO, PSA and DHB reps will be completed between 20 and 27 February.

Information on any proposed settlement to be circulated to SFWU, NZNO and PSA members on 1 March.

Ratification meetings to take place between 15 to 26 March.

## **What happens to the Contractor Bargaining?**

There are negotiations scheduled with Compass, Spotless, OCS and ISS during February and into March.

So far, while some minor issues have been resolved with the contractors there has not been any wage increase put on the table.

We hope that once the DHB position on a wage movement becomes clearer so will the offers from the contractors.

We will be reporting back to members as the negotiations progress.



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