

Chelsea Hendrickson, Sheree Bowen and Lesley Joy Burke “problem solving” at the Wellington workplace reps education held 2 June.



June 2021

NZNO strike action likely to go ahead next Wednesday

NZNO members are voting on a revised offer from the DHBs after mediation the week before last. That vote closes today. If NZNO members have rejected the offer, the planned industrial action will go ahead from **11am to 7pm, next Wednesday, 9 June.**

You will be aware that the DHBs have been preparing contingency plans, including the provision of life preserving services (LPS) during the strike.

Where the DHBs cannot deliver life preserving services without NZNO members, the union and its members have had to agree to maintain those services for the strike to go ahead.

Our advice to MERAS members is not to interfere in this process by agreeing to undertake any duties or responsibilities outside your normal job.

MERAS members should not be performing work normally done by NZNO members.

- The roster should not have been changed at this stage; if you are on a rostered day off, you do not have to come in to cover during the strike.
- You are required to continue to perform the normal duties you would have performed had there been no strike on that day.
- Senior midwife managers may be asked to perform other duties, but should only do what you would normally do to help out on a busy shift; similarly with midwife educators who sometimes help out with clinical duties on a busy shift.
- Midwives cannot be asked work outside your scope of practice.

The DHB can ask you to do the work of a striking employee – but only if you agree.

You can only take industrial action in support of your own MECA.

If you are a member of MERAS, and you are rostered to work next Wednesday, you must attend work.

If you are a dual member of NZNO and MERAS, you can only take strike action if you are employed in a nursing role covered by the NZNO MECA and you were rostered to do your nursing role next Wednesday.

However, if you were rostered in your midwifery role and you are being paid under the MERAS MECA for your midwifery role, you **cannot** take industrial action.

We are encouraging MERAS members to support your NZNO colleagues.

If you are not rostered to work next Wednesday, you might like to join an NZNO picket in your town. Or you can support the nurses’ action by signing their petition which is circulating on fb.

Update on the MERAS DHBs MECA

- We responded to the DHBs with a way forward on the outstanding issues that had been agreed in January, but were not included in the DHBs’ offer of 4 May.
- The DHBs have not yet responded to MERAS.
- We agreed to flat rate increases over two years, but we said these needed to be effective in May and not August in each year.
- We agreed to the introduction of a Continuing Professional Development pool at each DHB equivalent to \$1,000 per midwife.
- We want the Midwifery Career Pathways to be included in the MECA with a process to establish the appropriate grades for the roles.
- We want the settlement to record agreement that MERAS will work with Midwifery Leaders on “new ways of working” for midwives, including working from home arrangements where appropriate.
- We want to record our agreement to work with Midwifery Leaders to develop policy for DHBs to look after flight midwives away from home, and to provide support for midwives after sentinel events.

In other news...

At a full day of mediation last Tuesday, we agreed to a process to progress the Midwifery Pay Equity claim effectively and efficiently. The issue of the GP comparator claim was put aside for now, while we focus on completion of the work assessment and establishing the undervaluation of midwives.

Caroline Conroy, Co-leader (Midwifery)
Jill Ovens, Co-leader (Industrial)