Medical Officers Enterprise Agreement Negotiations

Bulletin 10

This bulletin only applies to employees covered by the Medical Officers Northern Territory Public Sector 2014 – 2017 Enterprise Agreement

Revised Proposal for a New Enterprise Agreement

As reported in Bulletin 9, a formal proposal for a new Northern Territory Public Sector Medical Officers' enterprise agreement was provided to the Australian Salaried Medical Officers' Federation ('ASMOF') on 30 August 2018. Since that time, feedback has been received from ASMOF and directly from Medical Officers. Thank you to all those who have taken the time to submit feedback.

At the bargaining meeting yesterday the parties discussed the few remaining outstanding matters in relation to restrictive duty and the proposed new allowance for working in prisons. Unfortunately, agreement could not be reached on these proposals and the union are seeking increases in excess of the NTPS 2017 – 2020 Wages Policy. However, in a genuine attempt to settle negotiations, I proposed amending the Professional Development Allowance proposal to provide a significant improvement for junior Medical Officers.

A number of matters continue to be raised by the union and employees which are operational in nature (e.g. leave applications, staffing levels, use of locums and hours of work). These operational matters are for the Department of Health ('the Department') to consider as they are policy matters. I understand the Department has expressed a willingness to continue to work with ASMOF and its members to address operational matters.

I have given careful consideration to the views and feedback provided by ASMOF and received from Medical Officers and believe that the revised proposal for junior Medical Officers, together with all the other proposals of 30 August 2018, will improve current enterprise agreement entitlements for Medical Officers. As a total package, the NTPS will continue to provide competitive terms and conditions for all Medical Officers compared to other leading jurisdictions over the next four years.

Key Improvements

Full details of the proposals for a new agreement are outlined in Information Sheet 4.

- **4 year agreement with 2.5% annual wage increases**.
- **The first 2.5% wage increase will be back paid from 12 January 2018**, provided the agreement is approved by the Fair Work Commission.
- **Additional Professional Development Allowance ($1000)** - available to junior Medical Officers on a reimbursement basis each year where annual allowance has been exhausted.
- **Rostering Review -** review current rostering practices to ensure efficient, clear and consistent application of rostering practices that support the wellbeing of Medical Officers while the operational needs of the Health Services are met.
- **Fatigue Leave Improvements** - increase minimum rest break after overtime and before the next scheduled ordinary shift from 8 hours to 9 hours including reasonable travelling time. Clarify the application of the fatigue leave provisions where return to work and/or phone calls related to restriction duty/OT disrupt the

'rest break' within the 16 hours immediately before the Medical Officer's next scheduled ordinary shift.

- **Improved First Roster and Clinical Advice by Telephone On-Call Rates** - increase the First Roster on-call hourly rate ($1.90/hr to $4.00/hr) and the rates for Clinical Advice by Telephone (night rate $123 to $157; day/night rate $139 to $189).
- **Improved Return to Work Overtime Payments for Specialists** – increase the Specialist's ordinary hourly base salary rate before overtime payments are calculated to result in higher overtime payments for each overtime hour worked.
- ***New* Allowance for Working in Correctional Centres** ($42,000 p.a. in TEHS and $54,000 p.a. in CAHS) paid fortnightly to Medical Officers while working in the prisons.
- **Interns – Longer Term Contracts of Employment** of up to 3 years to allow for completion of the first post-graduate year. This is an improvement on the current 1 year contract arrangements.
- **Office Bearers and Representative Paid Leave** for a period approved by the CEO to enable Medical Officers who are Office Bearers for Medical Colleges and their constituent Faculties, Medical Boards, Medical Industrial Organisations, or who represent the NTPS, and where there is an identified benefit to the Department.
- ***New* Allowance - Rural Generalist Trainees (RGTs) in Gove and Katherine** District Hospitals. Subject to specified requirements, a new allowance equal to 20% of RGT3 ordinary annual salary.
- ***New* 'Category C' option under Specialist Private Practice Allowance** - A Medical Officer who elects the new Category C will receive the allowance on a fortnightly basis at the rate of 30% of ordinary annual salary per annum plus 50% of revenue (private practice billings) to a maximum $100,000 per annum.
- **Parties to Develop Non-Direct Clinical Contact Time Guide** -These guidelines may refer to recommended non-direct clinical contact allotted times that are consistent with industry practice and a statement of principles.
- **Paid Parental Leave (up to 14 weeks) for Medical Officers with <12 Months Service** who leave NTPS to undertake mandatory training in another jurisdiction and then return to the NTPS.
- **Improved 'NTPS Common' provisions including**:
  - Parental leave provisions (surrogacy, paid partner leave and superannuation)
  - Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) Leave
  - Cultural and Ceremonial Leave (up to 5 days unpaid)
  - Shiftworkers paid recreation leave loading where 1 day's recreation leave taken.
- **Maintenance of key terms and conditions including:**
  - 6 weeks Recreation Leave (7 weeks for shiftworkers)
  - 14 or 18 weeks paid Parental Leave and up to 3 years parental leave.
  - Allowances
  - Work life balance initiatives

Next Step – Time to Vote

Given the circumstances and the fact that the bargaining parties have comprehensively discussed the outstanding matters, I have decided to provide Medical Officers with an opportunity to vote on the proposal for a new enterprise agreement.

Further details about the ballot (e.g. when, how etc.) will be provided to Medical Officers in due course.

More Information

Bulletins and Information Sheets related to bargaining will be posted on the OCPE website (www.ocpe.nt.gov.au) under the following link: Medical Officers Current Negotiations.

Information on bargaining in general can be obtained at www.fairwork.gov.au or you can contact the Fair Work Commission Infoline on 1300 799 675.

CRAIG ALLEN
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