

Advice for DHB members asked to work outside their DHB

18 April 2020

NZNO is aware that members working in DHBs are being asked to provide care in facilities outside of the DHB they work for. The most important thing to remember is that this is voluntary and you do not have to agree. However, many of you will want to help, so here is some advice you should consider before agreeing.

- You can be asked but not directed to work in a different (i.e. non-DHB) workplace. It is voluntary.
- Your terms and conditions of work under the NZNO/DHB MECA still apply, e.g. hours of work and penal rates.
- You should only volunteer if you feel safe to practise in the non-DHB environment, based on your nursing experience.
- If you would like to volunteer, but there are barriers preventing you from doing so, you should let your manager know. They may be able to resolve the issue.
- Before you agree you should make sure you are satisfied with the PPE and infection control practices in the non-DHB place. If you are not satisfied, you should raise this with the DHB as a barrier to you volunteering.
- Make sure there is agreement as to how long you will be volunteering to work in the other workplace along with arrangements for return to your normal workplace.
- Make sure you are comfortable with the procedures for returning to work, for example stand down periods.
- If you face any additional costs (e.g. travel) these should be covered, preferably in advance, by the DHB.

NZNO also believes the DHB needs to take appropriate steps to protect staff who agree to provide care in another workplace. The steps the DHB should take are below.

- Conduct an assessment/audit of PPE stocks in the facility to ensure the PPE is of the quality and stock quantity required.
- Take a precautionary approach towards infection control in the other facility.
- Immediately clean and disinfect the facility and ensure an appropriate cleaning regime is put in place.
- Check and confirm that all staff of the facility are appropriately trained and can use infection control procedures.
- Provide an expert from the DHB Infection Prevention and Control Service to oversee infection control processes to prevent infection.
- Provide PPE as required according to the professional judgement of the staff working in the facility.
- Provide access to testing for all staff who request it.

- Audit the facility against the Health and Disability Sector Standards and make any adjustments necessary.
- To support the correct use of PPE, add 'PPE Champions' to the teams working in the facility to check that PPE is being worn correctly and, importantly, that it is removed safely to minimise the risk of cross-contamination.
- Provide staff at the facility 24 hour access to a DHB-based manager to address any issues which may arise.

In solidarity,

David Wait, Industrial Adviser

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