

13 August 2025

Paul Goulter  
Chief Executive  
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Tēnā koe Paul

I appreciate that safe staffing is a critical issue for NZNO and your members, and as such is central to the current bargaining. There have been valuable discussions recently between Health NZ and NZNO about the way forward for safe staffing and I thank you and your team for your engagement.

Given NZNO's focus on safe staffing, I was incredibly disappointed to see a recent post on the NZNO Facebook page (copy attached) about the recently cancelled NZNO strike in Canterbury perioperative, theatres and radiology services. This post implies that the issuing of strike notices and their late cancellation was part of a deliberate strategy by NZNO to 'create chaos'. It commends the action as 'beautiful bloody tactics' designed to keep Health NZ guessing.

The only people who are kept guessing in this situation are patients. As you know, 45 minutes notice of the withdrawal of the strike notice does not give enough time for Health NZ to resume services. Because of NZNO's actions in issuing strike notices for a strike it apparently had no intention of proceeding with, 85 Cantabrians didn't get access to the health services they need today. In OT/PACU, 20 planned care and 15 acute procedures were postponed and in radiology 30 CTs, 8 MRIs and 12 interventional radiology appointments didn't go ahead.

I recognise your members right to strike but find today's actions to be completely incongruent with NZNO's and its members' public statements about safe staffing. I hope the Facebook post is a misunderstanding at best or, the misguided actions of a few members at worst. I seek your urgent confirmation that this is not a deliberate tactic and your undertaking that this will not happen again.

Health NZ has also been advised that NZNO is not able to meet for bargaining this week or next due to the unavailability of your Lead Advocate (which I appreciate is for genuine reasons). Given his unavailability and NZNO's unwillingness to meet without him, I am requesting that NZNO does not proceed with the strike action on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4th September that you have recently advised us of. New Zealanders expect us to meet and work hard to try and resolve our issues to avoid industrial action. We can't do that in the current circumstances.

Paul, the path that bargaining is currently taking serves neither of us well and ultimately those that bear the impacts are patients. Health NZ needs to live within its budget and you will be aware of the shape of offers that have been made and accepted.

Robyn Shearer, Richard Sullivan and I will meet with you on Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> August to discuss how we can work together to develop a way through the current situation.

I look forward to your response.

Nga mihi nui



Dr Dale Bramley  
Chief Executive | Tumu Whakarae  
**Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora**

