



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Tuesday 15 January 2019

### **Frustrated Rotorua Anaesthetic Technicians to Strike Twice Next Week**

Intense frustrations have culminated in Lakes DHB Anaesthetic Technicians at Rotorua Hospital issuing notice for two 24-hour strikes to be held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2019, beginning at 8am each day.

In November 2018, the Employment Relations Authority turned down Lakes DHB's application for facilitation. In doing so, the Authority recommended that the parties continue their collective bargaining in good faith, including by utilising mediation as necessary, and by providing to each other further relevant financial and budgetary information to support their positions.

Upon returning to mediation, Lakes DHB refused to budge at all on their restrictive pay claim and completely ignored the Authority's recommendation by failing to provide the APEX bargaining team with any additional information to support their bargaining position.

Lakes DHB also rescinded their prior agreement to a crucial health and safety provision which they knew would be a deal-breaker for the Anaesthetic Technicians.

APEX Advocate Luke Coxon says, "Lakes DHB knew how essential it was to our members that they get a decent chance to rest between their shifts. Our members were shocked and appalled that the DHB would turn around and throw this already-agreed health and safety provision by the wayside."

Effective today, the Anaesthetic Technicians will also be taking the collective action of 'working to rule' to ensure their health and safety. This includes finishing their shifts on time, working no overtime, and taking their scheduled lunch breaks without interruption.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:** Luke Coxon is available for comment on 021 904 888.

#### **ABOUT ANAESTHETIC TECHNICIANS**

Anaesthetic Technicians are essential members of the surgical team. They work mainly in operating theatres, providing skilled assistance to the Anaesthetist. Anaesthetic Technicians check and maintain the anaesthetic machines and other related equipment, ensure appropriate equipment and drugs are available, assist with inserting airway devices and venous/arterial cannulas, and act as advocates for patients. While Anaesthetic Technicians work predominantly in operating theatres, they are called upon to work in any area where an anaesthetic may be given, including CT, MRI & radiology, ED & intensive care, and during cardiac arrests.

**ENDS**