



NATIONAL HEALTH LABORATORY SERVICE (NHLS)

REPORT 3 OF 2017

8 MAY 2017

On 26 April 2017 the Health and Other Service Personnel Trade Union of South Africa (Hospersa) held a meeting with NHLS. The following matters were discussed:

Annual Wage Negotiations 2017/2018:

During this meeting the employer indicated that the organisation is experiencing financial constraints and as a result cannot meet labour's demand of a 13% annual increase citing the demand is unaffordable and unrealistic. The employer requested that labour reconsider the demand.

However the employer is prepared to grant paternity leave of three days as per our demand.

We responded by informing the employer that the response given shows that the employer is arrogant and not willing to negotiate. As a result we declared a dispute so that we can speed up the negotiations process. The employer was furnished with a dispute letter on the day of the meeting. Parties will have to convene a dispute meeting within ten working days as per the Constitution of the Bargaining and Labour Relations Forum (BLRF), to try and resolve the impasse, failing which the matter will be referred to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA).

Outstanding issues: Wage Agreement 2016

Proficiency Assessment for Healthcare Professionals (Core Occupations): In the previous report members were informed that the various task teams/expert groups concluded the development of the proficiency frameworks/matrixes and that the matrixes for Technician, Technologist, Scientist and Pathologist were subsequently approved by the Board including the proposed changes to the pay scales/levels. The employer informed us that it is experiencing challenges with sufficient resources to deal with the assessment and at this stage it is anticipated that the process will only commence in May 2017. There is a good probability that the actual financial impact on NHLS will not be substantive since some of the core occupations were previously placed on the minimum of the relevant general and management scale which were higher than the equivalent core scale. Any adjustment will be with retrospective effect to October 2016.

The employer further indicated that a draft proposal will be circulated to us.

We expressed discontent with the goal post shift on this matter by the employer as members have been waiting for the finalisation process for

a while. We are considering declaring a dispute on this matter.

Working hours: The Agreement provides that a 40 or 45 hour work week will be considered and the employer will consult with operational management in this regard. The employer subsequently confirmed its commitment to implement a 45 hour week which was defined as Monday to Sunday. Although parties agreed on the laboratories where this would be piloted from January 2017, we requested the employer at the previous meeting that due to unforeseen challenges the process be put on hold in order to allow further consultation with members.

At the last meeting it was indicated that the status quo regarding work hours will remain while further investigations by both parties are conducted.

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If you are not yet a member of Hospersa, we invite you to immediately become a member of the premier trade union in the health and service sectors.

Contact your Provincial Office on the numbers below and we will process your application as soon as possible.

Eastern Cape (043-722-3776)
KwaZulu-Natal (033-342-6847)
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Free State (051-448-4659)
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