

# Socialist Equality Group (New Zealand) to hold online forum: The way forward for nurses and health workers

The Socialist Equality Group (New Zealand)  
11 July 2018

The Socialist Equality Group (New Zealand) invites health workers to take part in an online forum on Saturday July 14 at 4:00 p.m. (NZ time) to discuss the critical political issues raised by the nurses' eight-month long pay dispute and Thursday's nationwide strike.

Nurses, midwives and healthcare assistants have rejected four sellout pay offers. The most recent, recommended by the New Zealand Nurses Organisation (NZNO) after its anti-democratic cancellation of a strike scheduled for July 5, maintains low wages and grossly under-staffed, under-resourced hospitals.

The struggle by over 29,000 health workers is part of a developing movement of the working class internationally against austerity measures imposed since the 2008 financial crisis. In New Zealand, workers are coming into conflict with the Labour Party-led government, which is maintaining the previous National Party government's underfunding of health, education and other essential public services.

Workers also confront a privileged union bureaucracy that is hostile to their interests and has suppressed resistance to cutbacks for decades. In the present dispute, the NZNO has refused to organise mass meetings, where workers could debate the proposed agreements and challenge the union's collusion with the government.

NZNO leaders have echoed the government's lie that there is no more money available to address the crisis in the health system. In fact, there is plenty of money. The billions of dollars being wasted on the military, prisons and intelligence agencies, and on tax breaks for the super-rich, must be used to build new hospitals and hire thousands more health workers on high wages.

The Socialist Equality Group's online meeting will discuss the need for a conscious rebellion against the unions and the formation of new, rank-and-file committees, democratically controlled by health workers themselves. It will also outline a socialist strategy to unite health workers with others, including teachers and public servants, in New Zealand, Australia and internationally, in a political and industrial campaign against austerity.

We urge health workers to register to attend this vitally important discussion.

*The authors also recommend:*

Vote no to sellout of New Zealand nurses! Build rank-and-file committees!

[7 July 2018]

Outrage over union's cancellation of New Zealand nurses' strike

[3 July 2018]



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