

## **DOREVITCH PATHOLOGY & GIPPSLAND PATHOLOGY EMPLOYER REFUSES TO END LOCKOUT OF SCIENTISTS**

### **STRIKE ACTION TO RECOMMENCE**

**Despite talks in Fair Work Australia (FWA) on Saturday 19 December 2009, Dorevitch/Gippsland Pathology has refused to end the lockout of 22 scientists. The scientists were locked out of their employment more than a week ago, with Dorevitch/Gippsland refusing to let them back to work until 1 February 2010.**

The Union made an application under s 425 of the *Fair Work Act* to have the lockout suspended so that bargaining with the company can take place. The application went to Fair Work Australia last Thursday but the matter was adjourned into conference.

On the recommendation of the Commissioner, the Union agreed to meet in FWA yesterday (Saturday) on the understanding that if progress was made on the issues between the parties, that the company would suspend the lock out.

Despite progress being made, the company refused to honour its part of the bargain.

**The lockout is having a severe impact on the quality of pathology services at a number of regional public hospitals** where pathology services have been privatised. Two senior scientists have been locked out at **Ballarat Base Hospital**, three at **Bairnsdale Hospital** and the laboratory managers have been locked out at **Sale** and **Frankston Hospitals**.

**Scientists employed by Gippsland Pathology at Latrobe Regional Hospital at Traralgon and at Sale, Bairnsdale and Warragul Public Hospitals will be taking strike action from 10.30 am Monday 21 December 2009 until 7.00 am Tuesday 22 December 2009 in support of their colleagues who have been capriciously locked out. There will be no pathology services at these hospitals during this period.**

FWA is due to hear the Union's application to suspend the employer lockout on Tuesday.

The Union has been attempting to negotiate an agreement with the company for more than 18 months. According to the Secretary of the Medical Scientists Association, Dr Rosemary Kelly, the Union has reached agreement with all the other major private pathology providers in Victoria to pay market rates of pay for scientists

"Apart from the company's refusal to pay fair wages, scientists are angry that the quality of pathology services is now at risk. Quality is already being compromised by understaffing and redundancies. Now management want to turn Dorevitch Pathology into a low wage ghetto, a far cry from the high quality, high wage service it used to be" Dr Kelly said.

**Contact: Dr Rosemary Kelly 0418 543 683**