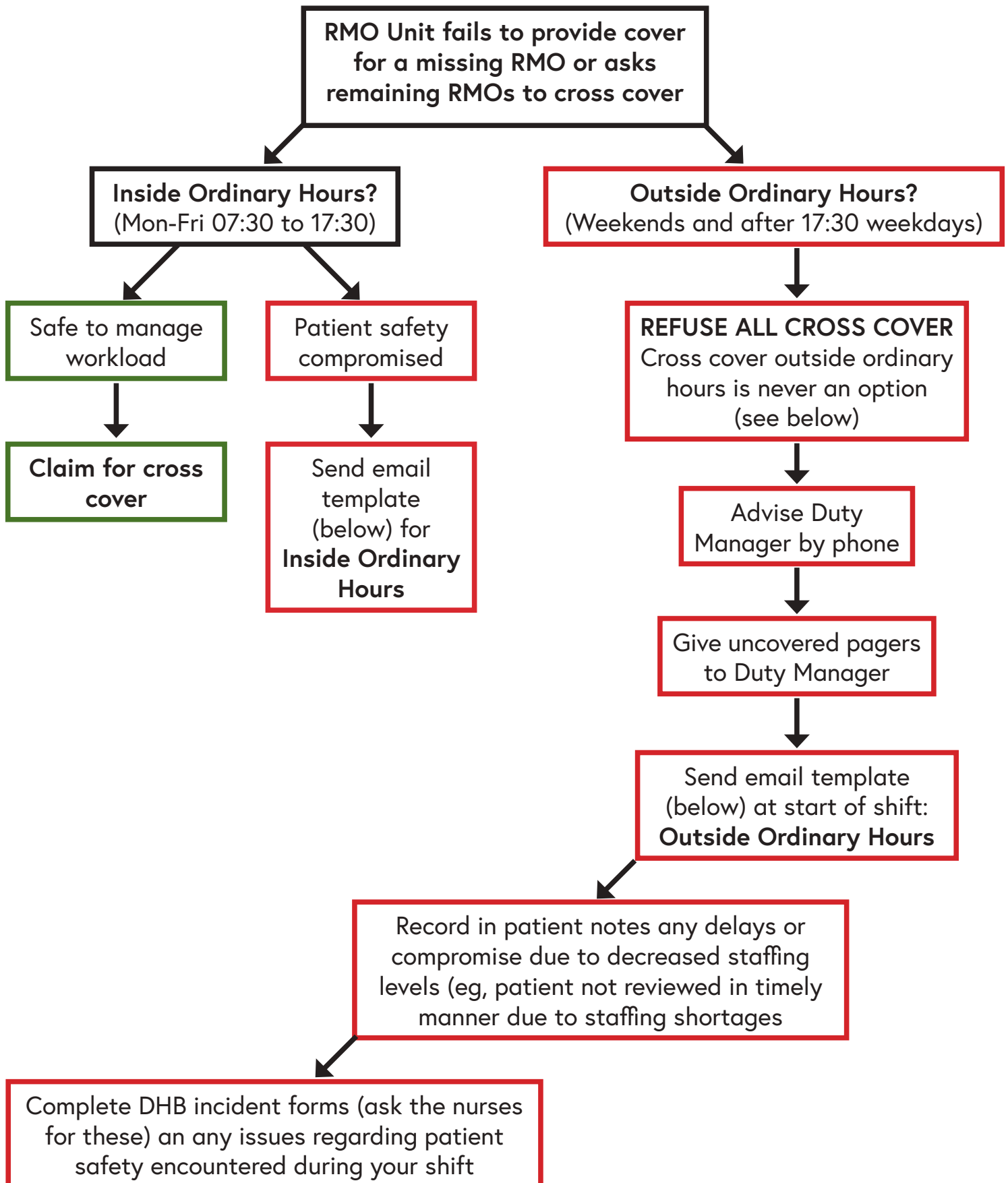




# CROSS COVER

## Decision Flow-Chart



# Email Templates for Cross-Cover

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## How to use these templates

- Follow the flow diagram (above) to select the appropriate template
- You will need to find email addresses specific to your DHB for the appropriate staff member
- Please copy the subject line as written below – and don't forget to copy in secretary@nzrda.org.nz

### TEMPLATE 1: INSIDE ORDINARY HOURS

To: Clinical Director, Service Manager, Chief Medical Officer  
Cc: secretary@nzrda.org.nz  
Subject: Cross Cover Inside Ordinary Hours

As per clause 17.1 of MECA, I/we are writing to advise you that I/we have been placed in a situation that I/we believe will compromise patient care, and if the situation persists I/we cannot be obliged to undertake professional responsibilities that compromise the safety of my/our patients.

Details of the uncovered shift:

Type of RMO uncovered:

Date:

Time of Shift:

Service:

DHB:

### TEMPLATE 2: OUTSIDE ORDINARY HOURS

To: Duty Manager, Chief Medical Officer  
Cc: secretary@nzrda.org.nz  
Subject: Cross Cover Outside Ordinary Hours

This email is to notify you that you are failing to meet your obligations under clause 17.2 of the MECA to provide an equivalent replacement suitably qualified house officer/registrar [delete as appropriate] while an RMO is absent outside ordinary hours. As this is a breach of MECA a copy of this email has been sent to NZRDA.

Details of the uncovered shift:

Type of RMO uncovered:

Date:

Time of Shift:

Service:

DHB:

If you are unable to provide alternative arrangements to decrease service demand during this period patient safety will be compromised and the RMO's on during this shift will not be held responsible for any decrease in quality of patient care that may occur during this time.

# Cross Cover Outside Ordinary Hours

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## Cross cover outside ordinary hours is prohibited under the MECA

Cross cover outside ordinary hours occurs when one of the RMOs rostered on outside ordinary hours is absent and another RMO already rostered on duty is asked to cover both duties.

MECA provides that: where an RMO is absent from a roster for any reason outside ordinary hours Monday through Friday, the employer must provide cover from an at-least equivalent replacement suitably qualified medical practitioner. This means absences from the roster for evenings, nights, public holidays and weekends must be covered in a like-for-like manner. For example, an RMO on duty must be replaced by an at least equivalent suitably qualified medical practitioner on duty, and not in any circumstances be left to the remaining RMOs rostered on during the period to cover the absent employee's duties in addition to their own.

## Why?

Because RMO staffing outside the ordinary hours is at a minimum. Normally, cross cover is only allowed if the RMO feels clinically competent to cover the duties of another, and this is during the ordinary hours when significant numbers of other staff are available to assist. Outside ordinary hours we are already on minimum staffing. Asking a RMO to do more is unacceptable. If one person is absent a locum or reliever must be supplied.

When you're not rostered on duty but have been asked to do additional work outside ordinary hours (as a result of a vacancy), a minimum of additional duty payments apply. Additional Duties are also voluntary. The additional duty payments described in the contract are the minimum payments that apply.

If you are asked to perform a weekend duty as an emergency (i.e. not as part of your roster), you are entitled to time in lieu in addition to any payment made.

**Performing cross cover has medico-legal consequences. If you do not feel safe to perform the duties you must decline, regardless of what money is on offer.**