

16 November 2018

Nurses and Midwives take their Industrial Action to the Streets - Community Gathering TOMORROW

COMMUNITY EVENTS - TOMORROW SATURDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2018:

- **Street Walk:**
Where: 12.30pm – Starting at Launceston General Hospital, Charles Street Entrance
- **Community Gathering:**
Where: 1.00pm - Civic Square, Launceston
- **Media Doorstop:**
Where: 1.45pm - Civic Square, Launceston
Who: Emily Shepherd, ANMF Tasmanian Branch Secretary and
ANMF Theatre Representative, Kylie Stubbs

Members of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmanian Branch (ANMF) will take to the streets of Launceston tomorrow alongside concerned community members. This escalated action aimed at the Tasmanian Government, is in pursuit of a competitive enterprise agreement offer and more broadly improved conditions in the health system.

“This action shows the desperation nurses and midwives, as well as the community are feeling. Those attending the events tomorrow are seeking a positive outcome not only for the nursing and midwifery professions, but the broader Tasmanian community and health system which are suffering,” said ANMF Branch Secretary Emily Shepherd.

“The ANMF entered into good faith negotiations with the Tasmanian Government on 31 May this year and to date have not been able to negotiate an outcome for members. Industrial action was launched on 10 September 2018 by nurses and midwives who have become increasingly frustrated by the lack of action by the Tasmanian Government and the enormous challenges facing the state’s health system.”

“To date, the Government are still yet to put an offer on the table to nurses and midwives that will enable quality care delivery both now and into the future.”

“The aim of the community walk and gathering tomorrow is to highlight why nurses and midwives are taking industrial action - it is not just to ensure the future of the profession, but to ensure safe and quality health care services for the Tasmanian community.”

“We know that workforce projections are dire with an expected shortage of nurses and midwives to reach 123,000 by 2030. But this can be mitigated with positive and decisive action by the Tasmanian Government. Yet, they continue to sit idle and ignore this looming crisis,” said Ms Shepherd.

“ANMF members are increasingly fatigued by ongoing overtime, double shift demands, and challenges associated with bed block due to lack of capacity. The workforce challenges are already evident with 7.4 million dollars being spent on agency nurses and midwives in the last financial year due to the Tasmanian Government having no strategy to retain and recruit their own nurses and midwives to the state.”

“The over reliance on nurses and midwives goodwill is having a dire impact on the health and wellbeing of individual nurses and midwives. These staff continue to work over 7.5 million dollars’ worth of overtime and double shifts annually to ensure patient safety. They do this because there is no alternative and they refuse to put their patients’ lives in jeopardy or compromise their colleague’s safety,” said Ms Shepherd.

“The Tasmanian Government should be ashamed of the negligence they have shown to nurses and midwives. They are disregarding their personal wellbeing, and this is clearly evident through the lack of action to implement strategies to improve retention and recruitment as well as an improved workload model.”

“Nurses and midwives have vowed to continue their industrial action until they receive an offer from the Tasmanian Government that will ensure retention and recruitment of the current nursing and midwifery workforce. They want to be recognised for their significant efforts in the delivery of public health services. But more importantly, nurses and midwives strongly believe that these outcomes are not only required for them as individuals, they believe they are integral in ensuring safe and quality patient care for the future,” said Ms Shepherd.

“End”

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