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ANMF CALL FOR RENEWED COMMITMENT AND CLARITY FOR TASMANIAN HEALTH PORTFOLIOS

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmanian Branch (ANMF) welcomes Sarah Courtney MP to the Tasmanian State Government's health portfolio. This move comes after Premier Will Hodgman announced the reshuffle of cabinet over the weekend. The ANMF are looking forward to working with the newly appointed Health Minister over the coming months.

However, it must be noted that the replacement of Mr Ferguson as the previous Health Minister, will not see the issues faced by nurses and midwives working in the public sector resolved overnight. The new Minister must ensure that work already identified and commenced under the access round table is continued in order to relieve pressure on the system. Further, there must be a recommitment to the 250 beds across the state that were already promised by the Tasmanian Hodgman Government, along with a clear plan on required staffing and subsequent recruitment to open these beds.

"The state of health in Tasmania remains an entire government issue," said ANMF Executive Director Andrew Brakey. "ANMF members will have high hopes after the cabinet reshuffle this weekend. They will be watching to see if the new Minister will bring with them fresh ideas and renewed commitments that will see real improvements for nurses and midwives working within the health system."

The decision to split mental health from the broader health portfolio will need clarification over the coming days. Clarity will need to be provided to nurses and midwives working within mental health services in order to understand the high-level governance of the area within the state. Further, clarity will also need to be provided for stakeholders on how, and who to approach for government level outcomes.

"The separation of mental health from the health portfolio will help to reduce the workload of the portfolio, however the two Ministers responsible will need to work closely to ensure positive outcomes are achieved for Tasmania's most vulnerable," said Mr Brakey.

"Both portfolios will need to be well defined so that there is no question as to where responsibilities lie, and ultimately ensure patient groups are not forgotten."

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