

ANMF NEWSFLASH

Launceston General Hospital Emergency Department

On Tuesday 7 February 2023 the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmanian Branch (ANMF) met with Launceston General Hospital (LGH) Emergency Department (ED) members to discuss ongoing workloads, specifically members raised:

1. Overcrowding, due to bed block and demand.
2. Short staffing.
3. The loss of the COVID-19 PCR specimen collectors.
4. Limited numbers of pool staff available.
5. Overtime and double shifts on the increase.
6. Skill mix.
7. Ambulance Transfer of Care Delay Policy and the impacts of this particularly on the triage assist area, waiting room, 33 ISO and Fast Track.
8. Impact of Inter hospital transfers into a bed blocked department.

Further, at the meeting the ANMF discussed outstanding matters related to the ongoing workload dispute that remains under the jurisdiction of the Tasmanian Industrial Commission (TIC), these include:

1. The business case approval process for the Clinical Nurse Consultant (CNC) role that was agreed to in lieu of the nurse navigator role initially secured by the ANMF through the 2021/22 TIC process.

2. An update on the current vacant Full Time Equivalent (FTE) for the department, and recruitment update on the 21.3 FTE.

In relation to this, and the current concerns above, members were resolute that ongoing patient access and flow continually plagues the department and that solutions, outside of what has already been implemented, need to be found with a focus on improving flow and hospital avoidance. More staff in ED won't necessarily fix the problem.

Following the member meeting, the ANMF met with Tasmanian Health Service (THS) representatives to discuss the current concerns and confirm progress on the outstanding TIC matters. The ANMF can report the following:

1. The business case to establish fixed term 1.0 FTE safety and quality position in the ED at a grade 6 CNC was confirmed approved. Noting this occurred as late as the evening before the meeting despite this sitting with THS executive for approval since October 2022.
2. Recruitment to the additional 21.3 FTE and the baseline benchmarked FTE of 110.2 FTE is currently sitting at -5.27 FTE for February 2023 and projected through March 2023 to be at -0.52 FTE. This is a significant improvement on the vacancy rate of -28.47 FTE in September 2021, at the time the ANMF lodged a dispute with the TIC.
3. The ANMF will discuss further with members as to if this is an acceptable vacancy rate. Then in line with an agreement before the TIC the ANMF and the THS are to meet to discuss funding methods for the current clinical coach positions. As it was agreed that while the 21.3 FTE was being recruited to the clinical coaches would be employed out of this FTE. Once recruitment had occurred it was the preference of the ANMF that clinical coach FTE be in addition to the 21.3 FTE and the baseline benchmarked FTE of 110.2 FTE for the ED.

The ANMF, following further consultation with members, could consider that the grievance of 2021, held in the TIC, be closed out. This would be subject to; the CNC position being recruited to and implemented, a position reached on clinical coach funding and an acceptable vacancy rate being settled on. The ANMF has requested from the TIC for a further abeyance until **Friday 5 May 2023**. This will allow time to work through these matters.



In the interim, noting members concerns with access and flow and an understanding that the above does not entirely fix this problem, the ANMF will write to the executive director of nursing seeking immediate on ongoing solutions. We will be maintaining our advocacy for LGH ED ANMF members.

The ANMF Tasmanian Branch is 8000 plus members strong! Supporting nurses, midwives, and care workers as the only union in Tasmania employing nurses, midwives and care workers to represent members. This is why our Organisers and Member Support Team are uniquely positioned to understand your experiences, represent you in your workplace, and offer industrial advice that's relevant to you.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact our Member Support Team via email on membersupport@anmftas.org.au. Email is the preferred and fastest way of contacting the team. Alternatively, you can phone 1800 001 241.

Authorised by Emily Shepherd, ANMF Tasmanian Branch Secretary
28 February 2023