

ANMF NEWSFLASH

North West Regional Hospital Operating Suite Step 1 Nursing Hours per Patient Day Grievance

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmania Branch (ANMF) held a meeting with North West Regional Hospital (NWRH) Operating Suite (OS) members on Friday 10 March 2023, at this meeting members unanimously endorsed the ANMF to raise a Nursing Hours per Patient Day (NHPPD) Step 1 grievance.

The grievance is a result of nurses being consistently placed in the position of having to manage sustained and unreasonable workloads due to:

- Members being unable to leave the theatre at planned break time due to a case going beyond the scheduled finish time. Members often can't take their minimum meal break as they are interrupted.
- Current staffing levels have not kept pace with the demands on the unit - some patients have to be transported to another hospital.
- Out of hours day cases (emergency patients) are admitted and/or discharged via day ward without day ward nurses being rostered (so taking theatre nurses away from their duties).
- Members report that late afternoon, early evening staffing is of concern.
- There is increasing pressure on the in charge Registered Nurse (RN), particularly when the skill mix is inadequate or when the in charge RN has a full patient allocation/responsibility.
- Members report unplanned short notice shifts are not always filled yet, despite this shortfall emergency cases are still scheduled.



- Afterhours and on weekends there is increased pressure from surgeons for “day case” (so-called) emergency patients, sent home to wait for available theatre time, to be added to the weekend list, sometimes without notice.

In addition to the above, the following work health and safety concerns have the potential for physical injury:

- Storage facilities for sterile instruments are limited and inadequate.
- Trolleys being overloaded and difficult to push; and
- Heavy trays have to be placed, and removed, from above shoulder height.

The ANMF note that that the previous grievance raised was expected to be resolved with the 2021 benchmarking, change proposal and subsequent business case however that change proposal and business case was not fully progressed.

As a resolution to the concerns raised members seek a commitment from the Tasmanian Health Service (THS) to the following:

1. Meet the obligation under Appendix E to resolve the grievance within 1 calendar week.
2. Progress the benchmarking business case.
3. Review the rostering and or the “booking” system for after-hours cases to ensure safe staffing occurs.
4. Review and increase the after-hours and weekend nurse allocation for Post Anaesthesia Care Unit (PACU) and day ward.
5. Review the storage and movement of sterile instruments; and
6. Complete a review of the roster establishment and immediately advertise vacant Full Time Equivalent (FTE).



The THS have advised they are working to prioritise a response and requested an extension until **Friday 21 April 2023**.

The ANMF will organise further member meetings in **early May 2023** to discuss the response and seek members direction. Watch for the invite in your inbox.

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
13 April 2023