



ANMF NEWSFLASH

Royal Hobart Hospital Emergency Department Response to Concerns Raised by Members

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmanian Branch (ANMF) met with members recently and then raised concerns with management on their behalf. A summary of the questions and responses are provided below.

- 1. Workload concerns. Members reported that shifts are ‘always short staffed’. The ANMF requested a report on shifts worked short over the last six months.*

In response to these concerns the Emergency Department (ED) Nurse Unit Manager (NUM) provided a table which clearly demonstrates significant gaps over the past six months. The numbers now appear to be trending down with the number of ‘overstaffed’ shifts also increasing during this time. It is understood that ‘there are a number of reasons why a shift may be over staffed for example, changes rosters creating imbalance; [and] acuity requiring overstaffing on a daily basis.’ (ED NUM).

Roster Period	13/11/22 – 10/12/22	11/12/22- 7/1/23	8/1/23- 4/2/23	5/2/23- 4/3/23	5/3/23- 1/4/23	2/4/23- 29/4/23	30/4/23- 6/5/23
Early (27)	19 gaps 3 overstaffed	20 gaps 3 overstaffed	21 gaps 3 overstaffed	13 gaps 3 overstaffed	15 gaps 6 overstaffed	12 gaps 8 overstaffed	4 gaps 1 overstaffed
Late (28)	19 gaps 2 over staffed	19 gaps 3 overstaffed	12 gaps 4 overstaffed	10 gaps 12 overstaffed	8 gaps 16 overstaffed	4 gaps 16 overstaffed	2 gaps 2 overstaffed
Night (23)	19 gaps 2 overstaffed	15 gaps 2 overstaffed	8 gaps 5 overstaffed	4 gaps 11 overstaffed	12 gaps 7 overstaffed	10 gaps 9 overstaffed	2 gaps 0 overstaffed

2. *The ANMF asked for a timeframe around the recruitment of new positions and the skill mix that is intended.*

The response stated that ‘these positions are currently being recruited to’ (ED NUM). This is via ‘rolling recruitment every 4 weeks’ (ED NUM).

Skill mix of the additional Full Time Equivalent (FTE) agreed through benchmarking is as follows.

- 1.84 FTE Grade 5 Associate Nurse Unit Manager (ANUM)
- 22.59 FTE Grade 3-4 Registered Nurse (RN)
- 6.10 FTE Enrolled Nurse (EN)
- 4.79 FTE Assistant in Nursing (AIN)

3. *The ANMF reported that members had raised concerns in relation to violence and aggression in the ED and requested recent statistics on this.*

The ED NUM states that there have been 34 incidences of aggression lodged in the Safety Reporting and Learning System (SRLS) and that ‘each event is investigated and followed up with individual staff’.

4. *The ANMF asked for a report on SRLS with one member reporting having entered 5 SRLS forms in a single shift. ANMF also asked for a report on what is being done in response.*

The ED NUM conducted a review of the past 6 months of SRLS data and found that the highest number of incident reports entered in a single 24-hour period was 10. This occurred on 25 January 2023 and reports were entered ‘by numerous staff from various areas across the department’ (ED NUM).

In terms of what is being done, the ED NUM reports that the SRLS are:

- ‘Reviewed daily Monday to Friday and investigated accordingly’.
- Any incorrectly entered events are followed up with education provided to staff.
- Multiple entries in relation to the same incident are linked and the staff are also followed up on this.
- SRLS are promoted and encouraged to ‘identify safety events or near misses that have occurred’.

5. *Ambulance Critical Response Protocol. This was raised due to reports of the activation of the protocol adding to the pressure on the front-line ED clinicians, particularly when required to leave the floor to escort a patient to the ward.*

In response, the ED NUM has said that when a Tier 1 protocol is activated, the following occurs:

- a) *Integrated Operations Centre (IOC) releases a clinical float to the ED to assist with patient transfers to the wards.*
 - b) *ED access nurse supports transfers to reduce the need for frontline clinicians to be off the floor.*
 - c) *Orderlies are utilised if/when a non-nurse escort is clinically appropriate.*
 - d) *When activated Monday to Friday all indirect resources are released to support the Tier 1 protocol.*
 - e) *In addition, 'the ED are in support of clinicians from ward areas attending the ED to collect patients.*
 - f) *For additional support in working hours contact the ED NUM, or after hours, the After-Hours Patient Flow Manager or IOC Clinical Co-ordinator.*
6. *Meal Vouchers provided by the Roster Office and a query of resistance in accessing this entitlement.*
- The ED NUM reports that from August 2022 the Roster Office requested that ED no longer distribute meal vouchers to centralise distribution to a single point (the Roster Office). In addition, it was stated that 'ED are in support of staff receiving this entitlement' (ED NUM).

Please report any further concerns in relation to access to this entitlement to the ED NUM in the first instance. The ANMF has contact the roster office separately and it is hoped that this particular item will now be resolved.

If you have any questions in relation to the above or anything further you might like to raise with ANMF, please contact your Organiser Jenna Bowling, via email Jenna.Bowling@anmftas.org.au.

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 (03) 6223 6777.

Authorised by Emily Shepherd, ANMF Tasmanian Branch Secretary
31 May 2023