



## ANMF NEWSFLASH

# Launceston Reception Prison

### Part 1 - Member Newsflash: Raising a Workload Grievance at Launceston Reception Prison (LRP)

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) updates members on the recent developments at the Launceston Reception Prison (LRP) and the actions taken by the ANMF on your behalf.

At a meeting held on 22 August 2023, ANMF members at the LRP endorsed the ANMF to raise a Nursing Hours per Patient Day (NHpPD) Step 1 Workload Grievance in accordance with the *Nurse and Midwives (Tasmanian State Service) Interim Agreement 2013* (the Agreement). This action was initiated to address concerns related to increased workloads and the need for sustainable staffing levels at LRP.

The grounds for the grievance are directly aligned with those outlined in Appendix C, section 5 of the Agreement, which addresses the Grievance Procedure. These concerns are as follows:

1. **Increased Acuity:** There has been a noticeable increase in the acuity of prisoners, with complex health conditions requiring a higher level of care and intervention.
2. **Rising Prison Numbers:** Since the introduction of the current nursing staffing profile in 2006, the number of prisoners at LRP has significantly increased.
3. **Frequent Escorts:** Escorts now occur up to five days a week, placing additional demands on nursing staff.
4. **Long Shifts:** Currently, 12-hour shifts are being worked, making it challenging to take breaks when working alone. There are limited opportunities for fresh air and sunlight during shifts.



5. **Sick Leave Management:** Sick leave is backfilled by the Nurse Unit Manager (NUM), increasing the workload of the NUM without adequate administrative support.

To address these workload concerns, members proposed the following potential solutions:

1. **Development of an Agreed Nursing Model:** In accordance with Appendix C, section 7(2) of the Agreement, an agreed nursing model should be developed for areas where the NHpPD is not applicable.
2. **Interim Safe Staffing Plan:** The development of an interim safe staffing plan, which includes provisions for sick leave cover and meal break relief.
3. **EA Support for NUM:** Consideration of Enterprise Agreement (EA) support for the NUM, in line with other areas across the Tasmanian Health Service (THS).

To better understand the extent of the workload challenges faced by LRP members, the ANMF has requested specific data from the employer. This data includes:

1. The number of Remandees for the North for each calendar year since the current staffing profile was developed.
2. Sick leave paid per pay period for the previous 24 months.

We anticipate receiving a response to these requests by no later than **close of business on Friday 29th September 2023**.

## **Part 2 - ANMF Advocacy for Medication Access Improvements at Launceston Reception Prison (LRP)**

The ANMF has taken proactive steps on behalf of LRP ANMF members regarding the recent concerns surrounding imprest medication access and the change management process.



In response to your valued input and feedback, from the meeting held on 22 August 2023, and further in response to the THS letter regarding the original concerns raised by the ANMF and the change process, the ANMF has now again written to THS management and detailed the following member concerns:

1. **Definition of Urgency:** There is ambiguity regarding the definition of urgency, with concerns that medications such as SSRI's may not always be recognized as urgent when they are essential for a prisoner's medical well-being.
2. **Staffing Constraints:** Recognising that at times, there is only one nurse present at LRP, making it challenging for them to leave their post to retrieve necessary medications.
3. **Parking Issues:** Addressing the financial burden imposed on nurses due to the lack of available parking facilities at the Launceston General Hospital (LGH) along with access to avoid delays when retrieving medications.
4. **Security Concerns:** Acknowledging the security risks posed by the presence of homeless individuals in Civic Square, raising concerns about the safety of nurses carrying medications.
5. **Increased Workload:** Recognising that the new medication access process has resulted in increased nursing inputs for medication procurement, subsequently escalating workloads.
6. **Obstruction Allegations:** Addressing concerns where some members have been labelled as obstructive to the change, leading to frustration among our workforce.
7. **Prison Policy:** Highlighting the challenges arising from medications provided by prisoners due to contraband risks.
8. **Community Setting vs. High Medical Input:** Recognising the unique challenges posed by LRPs status as a community setting while dealing with prisoners released from hospitals requiring significant medical and nursing care.
9. **Form 25a Process:** Exploring the potential benefits of utilising the Pharmacy Services Branch (PSB) form 25a process to extend imprest items in a community setting, with a successful case example.



10. **Confidentiality Concerns:** Addressing concerns about external discussions and processes related to form 25a, seeking clarification on progression procedures.
11. **Disputing Low-Level Change:** The ANMF has also raised concerns regarding the assertion in the letter dated August 24, 2023, that these changes constitute a low-level change. We have emphasised that consultation, as per the requirements outlined in the Nurses and Midwives (Tasmanian State Service) Award, Part VIII, clause 1, does not differentiate between low-level and other changes. We have demanded ongoing consultation and resolution of member concerns.
12. **Request for Process Clarification:** To ensure that your concerns are properly addressed, ANMF has requested clarification on how the ongoing consultation process will be structured and monitored moving forward.

We are committed to working collaboratively with all stakeholders to ensure the safety and efficiency of medication access for nursing staff at LRP. Your voices matter, and your well-being is our top priority.

We will continue to keep you informed of developments as we work together to address these important matters.

**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.**

---

Authorised by Emily Shepherd, ANMF Tasmanian Branch Secretary  
13 September 2023