

# Emergency Departments Statewide

## Transfer of Care – Ambulance offload patients within 60 minutes

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmanian Branch (ANMF) has been actively engaging with the Transfer of Care Working Group. This group was formed following the Premier's pledge to address Ambulance wait times in hospitals via an Enterprise Bargaining commitment with HACSU to enable paramedics to transfer the care of their patients within 60mins. This commitment was for implementation by **April 2024** with HACSU affirming their intent to maintain this timeline.

It's the position of the ANMF that it is imperative to recognise that this initiative cannot be viewed in isolation. Ambulance ramping is a direct consequence of Emergency Department (ED) congestion due to hospital bed blockages. Pushing for rapid patient offloading without addressing the underlying issues will further strain our already exhausted nursing workforce.

While the Working Group looks to other regions like Canberra for inspiration, we must note that their hospitals have significantly shorter Length of Stays (LOS) compared to Tasmania. In such a challenging environment, pressing forward with a policy that doesn't account for our unique circumstances is impractical.

The Australian College for Emergency Medicine emphasises that rapid offload is prohibited. We advocate for a policy that reflects this stance, ensuring patients are only transferred when clinically appropriate and safe handover can be assured. To achieve this, we propose the following measures:

- Develop a THS policy on hospital flow and establish an access and flow working group.
- Conduct a comprehensive review of escalation protocols/policies across hospitals for quicker and more effective responses to ED blockages. This may include measures such as cancelling elective surgeries, opening overflow beds, deploying additional staff, and collaborating with private hospitals.
- Consider ambulance diversion to appropriately resourced nearest hospitals if capacity cannot be ensured, in consultation with emergency physicians and senior hospital management.



- Promote open and transparent communication and data sharing between hospitals and ambulance services to optimise patient care.
- Allocate necessary resources within EDs to support policy implementation and address access and flow issues.
- Implement a consultation plan and strategy to engage ED nursing staff in shaping the policy implementation.

For the ANMF to support of the Transfer of Care policy, we have demanded a firm commitment from the Minister for Health to addressing systemic issues contributing to ED access blockages. Our goal is not to shift workloads from one profession to another, but to improve patient care comprehensively. We value our paramedic colleagues, and we support enabling them to return to the community as quickly as possible, but we must ensure that this is done with due consideration of all systemic and pressing issues known to guarantee safer patient outcomes.

### **Join the Conversation:**

Your voice matters! Be part of the dialogue and influence the implementation of the Transfer of Care policy. We invite all ANMF ED members to engage in discussions, share insights, and help shape the future of healthcare in Tasmania.

### **Stay Informed:**

Watch out for ANMF Officials conducting worksite visits for Emergency Nurses Day **11 October 2023** in your ED and ensure you attend and participate in conversation. **Not an ANMF member**, we extend an invitation for you to join us today by clicking [here](#), as the largest union in the country who employees nurses and midwives who understand your professional and industrial needs.

### **Contact Us:**

For any questions or concerns, please reach out to ANMF Tasmanian Branch Member Support Team: 6223 6777 or outside of Hobart on 1800 001 241, or via email [membersupport@anmftas.org.au](mailto:membersupport@anmftas.org.au)

*Together, we can create a healthcare system that truly prioritises patient care and the well-being of our dedicated healthcare professionals.*



*Advocating for Quality Healthcare*

**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.**

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Authorised by Emily Shepherd, ANMF Tasmanian Branch Secretary  
6 October 2023