



## ANMF NEWSFLASH

# RHH Maternity Services Update

## The ANMF Call for an Independent Inquiry

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmanian Branch (ANMF) wrote to the Acting Director of Nursing and Midwifery Services at the Royal Hobart Hospital (RHH), the Chief Executive of Hospitals South and the Department on Tuesday 27 August 2024 to raise an urgent RHH Midwifery Staffing Grievance. This action was taken in response to a series of critical staffing concerns reported by our members, which are affecting the quality and safety of care provided to mothers and their babies in the RHH.

On Wednesday 28 August 2024, the ANMF issued a media release to bring these concerns to the public's attention. ANMF Tasmanian Branch Secretary, Emily Shepherd, discussed the issues live on ABC Mornings with Leon Compton and gave a television interview to further address the situation.

In the days since, several midwives have come forward anonymously to raise additional significant staffing concerns. Many women in Southern Tasmania have also spoken out about how inadequate staffing has affected their pregnancy and birthing experiences.

Branch Secretary Emily Shepherd has been in ongoing discussions with the Minister for Health, advocating on behalf of midwives and members regarding these concerning issues. The Minister is committed to ensuring safe staffing, understanding the issues thoroughly, and working on immediate solutions.

**To that end, the ANMF has called for an Independent Inquiry to be undertaken.** This includes confidential one-on-one discussions with staff who wish to participate, a detailed review of staffing allocations, including overtime, double shifts, agency and casual staff usage, as well as wait times for inductions and other delays caused by short-staffing.



## **Government Response**

The Minister has agreed to this request, and a formal announcement has been released by the Government today. Work is underway to identify the lead for the inquiry, and the terms of reference will be developed in consultation with the ANMF.

While this does not provide an immediate resolution, it represents a step toward addressing systemic understaffing issues, workload pressures, and their impact on patient care. The ANMF still expects a response from the Department regarding the solutions proposed by members and the ANMF.

The ANMF extends its appreciation to midwives working tirelessly under challenging conditions to ensure that new and expectant mothers receive the best possible care. It is a testament to the dedication and commitment of our midwives.

**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  
30 August 2024