



ANMF NEWSFLASH

North West Regional Hospital Intensive Care Unit

Work Health and Safety Concerns

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmanian Branch (ANMF) has formally notified THS management of safety concerns articulated by members working at North West Regional Hospital (NWRH) Intensive Care Unit (ICU). Members have raised issues with Code Black situations for many months even years with no tangible outcomes and similar events continue to occur and feel unsupported by THS management, not ICU direct management. Decisions are often made without direct input from the nurses on the floor. Even simple, low cost measures such as a request for a locking mechanism for the staff room door has not been actioned despite a significant safety event early this year. This leaves nurses feeling that their safety and wellbeing is not a priority. They also feel that the safety of vulnerable patients in their care is at risk and reassurances to let the aggressive patient exit is not always easy or safe to do.

The following safety concerns and suggestions to mitigate risk include:

1. No lock on the staff room door or pin code access.
2. No personal duress alarms – needs to be at least 2.
3. Post event follow up with the clinical staff directly involved.
4. Within two weeks in consultation with nurses develop a pre-extubation checklist for potentially aggressive patients.
5. The checklist to encompass but not be limited to:



- a. Are all team members aware of and have agreed to the plan? - team members should include ICU nurse manager, ICU consultant and ICU REG, ICU team leader, the bedside nurse, and if available psychiatric liaison nurse. Should there be team members with outstanding concerns consider delaying the extubation until all parameters are in place or a further clinical review is undertaken.
- b. The timing of the extubation.
- c. Are there enough staff on hand?
- d. Is the location appropriate taking into account other patients and or staff potentially the exit points and the size of the area, for example, the isolation room may not be the most appropriate space?
- e. Are the code team alerted and on standby for a quick response?
- f. Does someone in the room have a phone to be able to call a code if necessary?
- g. At least 2 team members should have a personal duress alarm.

Members' intention by seeking their union assistance is to see positive progress however an escalation to WorkSafe Tasmania is being considered should members not see tangible outcomes. A written response is expected by **close of business Monday 28 October 2024**.

The ANMF will monitor the process and keep members updated on progress.

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
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