



ANMF NEWSFLASH

St Helens District Hospital

Member Meeting Update, Summer Workload Concerns

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmanian Branch (ANMF) met with members at St Helens District Hospital, during this meeting staff raised critical concerns regarding staffing levels in the Emergency Department and the challenges they face, particularly with the approaching summer months.

Issues raised include:

Staffing Concerns: St Helens is classified as a Tier 1 Emergency Department (ED), staff experience high ED presentations & patient acuity however, it is currently staffed at the same levels as lower-tier Emergency Departments. This is a significant concern; especially given the high volume of patient presentations the Department faces due to its location and the influx of tourists during the summer season.

Summer Surge: Members expressed concern over the anticipated increase in ED presentations over the summer months, driven by the areas' popularity as a tourist destination - offering sporting activities that have been shown in previous years to lead to an increase in ED presentations and acuity of patients. The hospitals current staffing levels are not adequate to manage this surge in patient numbers.

Temporary Staffing Increase: In response to these concerns, the hospital management has planned a temporary staffing increase for one month starting on Wednesday 25 December 2024. This will include one extra nurse on day shifts and additional administrative support. However, this increase will only apply on weekends and public holidays, leaving non-holiday weekdays staffed at the current levels. Staff are concerned that the busy period will be busy for the whole month not just on the weekends.



Admin and Leadership Gaps: Currently, there is no administrative cover after 1700hrs or on weekends. During these times, the nurse in charge also assumes the role of triage nurse, having the responsibility of triaging patient presentations, handling phone triage while maintaining overall responsibility for the hospital's operation, and frequently being requested to accept patients from other hospitals. During business hours the ANUM is frequently required to provide direct patient care. This workload is unsustainable, and members are calling for urgent solutions to ensure adequate support for staff and patients.

Next Steps:

Members have agreed to collect shift data, please access the survey via the link below. The ANMF encourage all members to complete the survey after every shift to capture the challenges facing St Helens District Hospital. The ANMF is committed to advocating for improved staffing levels and working conditions for members at St Helens District Hospital. We will continue to raise these issues with hospital management to ensure that the safety of both staff and patients is prioritised, particularly during peak times.

We encourage all members to stay engaged, share feedback, and participate in ongoing discussions as we work towards a resolution.

Stay tuned for further updates.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9859GJY>

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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