

## ANMF NEWSFLASH

# Royal Hobart Hospital Mother & Baby Unit Change Proposal Received – Intensive Residential Parenting Unit (IRPU)

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmanian Branch (ANMF) has received the Department's Change Proposal outlining the transition from the current Mother and Baby Unit (MBU) at the Royal Hobart Hospital (RHH) to the new Intensive Residential Parenting Unit (IRPU), planned to commence operations mid-2026. This proposal has significant implications for services, staffing, and employment arrangements.

The ANMF is now seeking member feedback to inform a formal response.

### Summary of the Change Proposal

The Department is proposing:

- A new six-bed IRPU, with two virtual beds, will be established at St John's Park, providing extended parenting support for families with children up to age three.
- Once the IRPU becomes operational, services currently delivered by the RHH MBU will cease.

### Rationale for Change

- Current MBU at RHH provides only *limited* interim services (post–St Helens closure in 2023).
- IRPU is intended to offer a more “home-like” and comprehensive parenting support environment outside the acute hospital setting.

### Staffing and Employment Impacts

- New positions will be advertised through **merit-based recruitment**, including:
  - Associate Nurse Unit Manager (ANUM) (G5) – 1.0 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE).
  - Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) – 1.0 FTE.
  - Registered Nurse (RN)/Enrolled Nurse (EN) positions (9.57 FTE).
- All positions open to MBU, Child Health and Parenting Service (CHaPS), and external applicants.

- The current MBU Nurse Unit Manager (NUM) position will cease; the IRPU will sit under the CHaPS NUM structure.
- MBU casual staff will remain in the Statewide Mental Health Service (SMHS) casual pool and may be used at IRPU.
- Two fixed-term positions (NUM 1.0 FTE and Clinical Nurse Consultant CNC 1.0 FTE) commenced in November 2025 to support transition.

### **CHaPS Workforce Impacts**

- Redistribution of CHaPS NUM roles from four teams to three, plus oversight of the new IRPU.
- CHaPS clinicians will be reallocated to new teams; some reporting lines may change.
- Possible increased opportunities for CHaPS positions as staff move to IRPU.

### **Service Delivery Impacts**

- IRPU intended to improve continuity between community and residential services.
- Increased travel/time impacts anticipated for Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Service (PIMHS) and partnership services.
- The proposal notes no cost savings and confirms a business case has been submitted for increased staffing costs.

### **Consultation Arrangements**

- A formal two-week consultation period with separate meetings for MBU and CHaPS.
- Dedicated IRPU SharePoint site established for ongoing updates.
- Feedback directed to CHaPS Nursing Director and SMHS EDON.

Included in the 2024 Nurses and Midwives Agreement part VIII Consultation and Change 1. (b):

*Consultation is undertaken because all parties acknowledge that by discussing proposed changes with the employees who may be affected by the change and giving consideration to their views and feedback, a better informed decision occurs.*

*Consultation is not joint decision making or a barrier to the prerogative of management to make decisions; nor is it simply advice on what is about to happen. It is a process that informs affected employees about proposed change and provides them with a genuine opportunity to influence the outcome before a final decision is made.*

### **ANMF Member Meeting – Have Your Say**

**Date:** Wednesday 10 December 2025.

**Time:** 1330hrs – 1500hrs.

**Location:** K6 Meeting Room.

This meeting is an opportunity to:

- Discuss the proposed closure of the RHH MBU.
- Identify risks, workforce impacts, and member concerns.
- Direct the ANMF's position and response during the consultation period.

Your attendance is strongly encouraged.

**Member Survey – Please Complete by 1400hrs, Tuesday 16 December 2025 via the link below.**

**Survey:** <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/019ae74b67307b9684364a19db969951>

Your survey responses will be compiled into the ANMF's formal submission.

### **Next Steps**

The ANMF will:

- Gather member feedback via the meeting and survey.
- Analyse staffing, safety, and workload impacts.
- Prepare a comprehensive submission on behalf of MBU members.
- Provide ongoing updates as the matter progresses.

**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

4 December 2025