



ANMF NEWSFLASH

Royal Hobart Hospital Acute Pain Service and the Department of Anaesthetic and Perioperative Medicine Research Unit

Dispute Raised Over Consultation Process

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmanian Branch (ANMF) is providing members with an update regarding the recent Change Proposal titled “*Medical Offices – Surgical and Perioperative Services*”, received on Monday 22 December 2025.

Following strong concerns raised by members within the Acute Pain Service (APS) and the Department of Anaesthetic and Perioperative Medicine (DAPM) Research Unit, members have now formally voted to raise a dispute under the *Nurses and Midwives (Tasmanian State Service) Award 2024*.

Why Has a Dispute Been Raised?

Members have advised the ANMF that, despite raising concerns directly with supervisors and senior management, issues remain unresolved and no clear assurances or outcomes have been provided.

Key concerns include:

Failure to Genuinely Consult

Members report the proposal was presented as a decision already made, rather than a genuine consultation. This has left members feeling undervalued, particularly given their highly specialised clinical expertise.

The ANMF has reminded the Department that the Award requires consultation to occur before decisions are finalised and that employees must be given a genuine opportunity to influence outcomes.

Lack of Critical Information

The proposal does not clearly identify where APS or the DAPM Research Unit would be relocated. Without this basic information, members are unable to properly assess:

- Patient safety impacts.
- Workplace health and safety risks.
- Compliance and organisational risks.

APS Member Concerns

APS members have requested to remain co-located as a team with the anaesthetic service, in a stable and private workspace that supports their specialised clinical role.

Shared or bookable spaces pose serious risks, including:

- Breaches of patient confidentiality.
- Reduced efficiency and staff wellbeing.
- Increased risk to patient safety.

APS is a clinical service, not an administrative function, and requires a dedicated operational base to safely manage time-critical pain care.

DAPM Research Unit concerns

DAPM Research Unit members have raised significant compliance, ethical and regulatory risks, including:

- The need for clinical proximity to theatres and perioperative areas.
- Secure long-term storage of clinical trial records (minimum 15 years).
- Retention of a dedicated research landline used for participant safety.
- Controlled access to prevent breaches of confidentiality.
- Risk of accidental unblinding in clinical trials if secure workspaces are not maintained.

Any such breach would have serious implications for participant safety, trial validity, and the organisation's legal and reputational standing. Members have also noted the proposal does not achieve any additional workstations, despite claims of reducing departmental footprint, and appears inconsistent with the Department's WHS and Wellbeing commitments.



What happens next?

The ANMF has advised the Department that:

- The status quo must remain while the dispute is being addressed.
- If unresolved, the matter may be referred to the Tasmanian Industrial Commission (TIC).
- Members may escalate further, including potential action to raise public awareness through media, if required.

The ANMF has formally requested a **written response by close of business Tuesday 17 February 2026**.

The ANMF remains committed to working collaboratively to resolve these issues and will continue to advocate strongly for members, patient safety, and compliance obligations.

Further updates will be provided as they become available.

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
25 February 2026