



ANMF NEWSFLASH

Launceston General Hospital

Backfilling and Cost-Containment Issues Raised with Secretary of Health

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmanian Branch (ANMF) has written to Dale Webster, **Secretary of Health** to raise concerns that statewide cost-containment measures, previously described by **Tasmanian Health Service (THS)** executive as “austerity measures”, are being implemented across the **THS** to reduce expenditure.

Backfilling of Nursing Roles

The ANMF is concerned that restrictions on backfilling are extending to include critical nursing roles such as Clinical Nurse Consultants (CNC), Clinical Nurse Educators (CNE), and Nurse Unit Managers (NUM). With members reporting that restrictions on backfilling NUM leave of less than 10 days have contributed to delayed patient discharges and significant additional workload pressures.

The ANMF considers this approach inconsistent with Nursing Hours per Patient Day (NHpPD) requirements. NHpPD establishes minimum safe staffing levels and includes leave relief factors for both direct and indirect nursing roles to ensure continuity of care and service delivery.

The ANMF has consistently emphasised that indirect nursing roles are essential to safe patient flow and positive patient outcomes. The broader impacts of this approach include:

- Delayed patient flow and discharge.
- Increased length of stay.
- Increased workload for direct care staff.



- Potential risks to patient and staff safety.

Clarification Sought

The ANMF has sought transparency regarding the intent of these measures. If cost reduction is the primary objective, this should be clearly communicated to staff and the community. If not, **the THS** must ensure that industrial obligations are met and that both direct and indirect nursing roles are appropriately resourced and backfilled.

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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