

10 November 2020

COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) Tasmanian Branch today called for a State Commission of Inquiry into former Registered Nurse Jim Griffin.

ANMF Branch Secretary Emily Shepherd said the Commission of Inquiry was warranted given the former nurse's extensive history across multiple workplaces in Tasmania.

"Members on Ward 4K have been extremely distressed by the magnitude of the allegations and the fact that they span a significant period of time, including during Mr Griffin's time on Ward 4K at the Launceston General Hospital as a Registered Nurse," Ms Shepherd said.

"As a result, while members welcome the independent investigation, they feel it is still not adequate, given that many agencies are involved and the breadth of the alleged crimes.

"They want a Commission of Inquiry into the historical child sexual abuse allegations made against Mr Griffin to ensure that anyone with information regarding these crimes is compelled to provide evidence to ensure that crimes against children, like those alleged, can never happen again in the Tasmanian Public Service.

"Our members believe daylight is the best disinfectant in these matters. No stone should be left unturned to ensure that every process, system, and support mechanism is analysed to identify the gaps and make the necessary improvements.

"Having this occur publicly provides complete transparency and will give confidence to victims, the community, and our members that everything has been done to ensure this can never happen again."

Ms Shepherd said the ANMF was unaware of the circumstances surrounding the situation in Launceston in 2019 until the charging and subsequent death of Mr Griffin.

"Following this, the ANMF was made aware that complaints had been made by members on Ward 4K and subsequently a complaint was made to the integrity commission.

"The ANMF has a zero tolerance for any form of sexual misconduct, particularly in relation to those who are most vulnerable, including children and young people."

Ms Shepherd said the Code of Professional Conduct for nurses in Australia, by which the ANMF abides, states that any sexual misconduct by a nurse is an extremely serious violation of the nurse's professional responsibility to the person in their care.

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