

17 December 2020

Nursing and Midwifery Wish List for Christmas – COVID-Safe

All I want for Christmas is a COVID-safe Tasmania.

As the Tasmanian community prepares for Christmas and the holiday season, the members of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmanian Branch (ANMF) are preparing to continue delivering high quality services to patients, clients, and residents.

ANMF Tasmanian Branch Secretary Emily Shepherd said nurses, midwives, and carer workers will be on full shifts throughout Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day and every public holiday this festive season.

"These services will be provided 24/7, as they are and should be every year," Ms Shepherd said.

"The ANMF is calling on the Tasmanian community to recognise nurses, midwives, and care workers for their efforts over the festive season, but also to thank them for their dedication and efforts this year in the face of the terrifying COVID-19 pandemic.

"Our members have faced enormous challenges in 2020, keeping patients, clients, and residents safe along with the broader community. Their dedication and efforts during this time have and continue to be, enormous.

"The ANMF believe it's thanks to the efforts of members and their healthcare colleagues leading the way in supporting the community, that will allow us all to enjoy a COVID-19 free Christmas."

Ms Shepherd said the ANMF has put together a Christmas Wish List, which includes:

- 1) Legislated ratios for Aged Care
- 2) Funding to resource all health care services adequately
- 3) Developing and resourcing a strategy to build the nursing and midwifery professions for the future
- 4) Tasmanians staying COVID-safe - maintaining physical distancing, contact tracing when in venues and washing their hands

"2020 was the Year of the Nurse and the Midwife – but we were unable to celebrate it properly.

"There is no doubt the incredible work of nurses and midwives has been highlighted on the global stage this year - through the COVID-19 pandemic. Sadly, this dedication has cost the lives of many nurses, midwives, and care workers across the world; the ANMF will be remembering them this Christmas.

"There will be many empty chairs at Christmas tables this year. Many families have lost loved ones in aged care due to COVID-19.

"It didn't need to be this way and the Federal Government can take decisive action to implement legislated ratios this Christmas to ensure that our loved ones in residential aged care never have to suffer again."

Ms Shepherd said health services across Tasmania face increasing demand.

“The effects of access block are well known on patients, staff, and services.

“Similarly, those working in clinical areas without funded workload models continue to deliver services, without the required level of support.

“The State Government can address these issues with short-term support strategies to address the fundamental issues that are driving increasing reliance on the State’s acute health care system.

“Lastly, the State and Federal Governments have been reminded how critical it is to have robust nursing and midwifery professions.

“However, with an ageing and retiring workforce both Governments must prioritise the creation of the next generation of nurses, midwives, and care workers.”

Ms Shepherd said the ANMF could not be prouder of every nurse, midwife, and care worker in 2020.

“In 2021, we look forward to celebrating their collective efforts as the World Health Organisation has declared 2021 the International Year of Health and Care Workers.

“During the announcement, it was highlighted that applause without any action is no longer acceptable and it is a sentiment that is supported by the ANMF.

“Our members appreciate the thanks and kind words, but the ultimate thanks is with action.”

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