

9 April 2021

## **BUILDING AND BEDS, BUT NO NURSES AND MIDWIVES IN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN**

### **MEDIA DOORSTOP TODAY**

**When:** TODAY, Friday 9 April at 2.30pm  
**Where:** Royal Hobart Hospital Main Entrance, Campbell Street  
**Who:** ANMF Tasmanian Branch Secretary, Emily Shepherd  
alongside a nurse and a midwife sharing their story

Today, the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmanian Branch (ANMF), alongside our nursing, midwifery, and assistants in nursing members will gather outside the Royal Hobart Hospital to address their concerns for the nursing and midwifery crisis in Tasmania.

ANMF members are dismayed by the apparent lack of recognition from election candidates to the current and impending crisis. To date, the issue has largely been ignored by candidates in their policy announcements in the lead up to the State election.

Nurses, midwives, and assistants in nursing are at breaking point. They are alarmed that the crisis they are now facing, the most significant to affect the profession since the beginning of COVID-19, is not even being discussed by candidates let alone a proposed plan to fix it.

“As it stands, no party has recognised and developed a policy with funding attached to address the fundamentally low and unsustainable vacancy rate for nursing and midwifery positions across the State,” said ANMF Branch Secretary Emily Shepherd.

“At the Royal Hobart Hospital alone, there are 264 full time equivalent vacant nursing and midwifery positions. This is causing perpetual overtime and double shifts - exhausting an already fatigued workforce.”

Further, according to members, the Royal Hobart Hospital is currently operating at 70% occupancy due to the lack of staff to safely care for patients in in-patient beds. Essentially this is compounding access block issues and adversely affecting those in the Emergency Department when admitted patients can't be moved out.

“Members, while recognising the need for additional beds and the redevelopment of existing buildings, are alarmed by current political commitments. As it stands, there aren’t even enough staff to look after the patients in beds today, let alone adding more in the future.”

“The current situation is untenable, and action must be taken now.”

Today, ANMF members from the Royal Hobart Hospital will take to the streets. They will be calling on the community to pressure local candidates to make health a priority in the upcoming State election.

“It is our members hope that if candidates are not listening to nurses and midwives, maybe they will listen to the voters in their electorate.”

“What our members need to see from the parties and candidates this election, is not just acknowledgement, but a clear commitment with funding to address the vacancy rate and ensure existing services can be delivered safely for patients and staff.”

“End”

**Media contact:**

Emily Shepherd, ANMF Tasmanian Branch Secretary

Mobile: 0400 884 021

Email: [emily.shepherd@anmftas.org.au](mailto:emily.shepherd@anmftas.org.au)