

23 August 2021

Budget Must Deliver for Nurses and Midwives

The Australia Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) Tasmanian Branch has called on the Tasmanian Government to invest in the health system and importantly the nurses and midwives who have been relied upon heavily in the fight against COVID-19 in the upcoming Budget.

The ANMF has highlighted the need for additional resources to support nurses and midwives who are working hard to support the community, but are under increasing strain.

Key priorities include:

- Recruiting nurses and midwives to fill existing vacancies by funding base salary increases to ensure nurses and midwives wages are on average competitive with other States and Territories.
- Growing our own nurses and midwives in Tasmania by funding permanent positions for all Tasmanian graduate nurses.
- Funding clinical coaches and clinical educators for all wards and units that have more than 30% of their total workforce in early career roles.
- Fund an improved relief factor to cover known periods of leave, like long service leave, to ensure that rosters can be filled.

The ANMF Tasmanian Branch Secretary, Emily Shepherd said today “the health system in Tasmania is under enormous pressure not just from the business-as-usual health service delivery, but from the added stresses of dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. Nurses and midwives are bearing the brunt of this pressure and must be recognised and supported with resources in the upcoming budget, to ensure that they do not burn out”.

Nurses and midwives are working incredibly hard in COVID-19 testing clinics, hotel quarantine and in vaccination clinics across the State in an enormous response to COVID-19. However, many of these nurses and midwives have left roles in other parts of the health system that already were subject to high vacancy rates and workloads.

“The need for Tasmania to compete with other states and territories to attract nurses and midwives and keep our homegrown graduates here in permanent positions is more important than ever, with high vacancy rates across the country and reduced enrolments in universities in other jurisdictions from next year.

“We must keep all Tasmanian nurse graduates and provide them with additional clinical coaches and educators to prevent burn out.”

All too often the budget focuses on infrastructure, but more buildings and beds will not support Tasmania’s health without the nursing and midwifery workforce to go along with it.

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