

September 2024

Budget Talking Point

Only a few years ago, Premier Jeremy Rockliff announced the Tasmanian Parliament would be expanded - showing great insight and empathy to the growing number of Ministers resigning due to the crippling workloads.

This was commendable leadership, recognising ongoing issues affecting the efficiency and success of the Parliament.

Fast forward a few years, post-pandemic, nurses, midwives and assistants in nursing and midwifery are suffering burn-out and exhaustion.

On top of this, the ability of the Tasmanian health sector to retain nurses and midwives in Tasmania is increasingly difficult, let alone recruitment.

While there have been limited attempts to recognise this with a COVID-19 bonus to thank nurses and midwives for their selfless act of putting others before themselves during the pandemic (an act many are still paying the price from due to long COVID) and an overdue recruitment incentive only just launched - most other states and territories implemented these at higher rates in 2021.

Instead, we have seen the implementation of a transfer of care procedure that has resulted in increased workloads in our State's Emergency Departments (EDs), with no increase in care and treatment times, greater bed and access block and not a single additional resource to support this by Government.

To add insult to injury a vacancy control committee was established to reduce the size of the health workforce - any cut to positions results in higher workloads for remaining staff and complete inefficiency.

For example, a cut to hospital cleaners, ward aides and ward clerks likely means longer wait times for inpatient beds for admitted patients waiting in EDs as terminal cleans have to be completed one after the other instead of when the bed is vacated.

What is actually required is the same insight and empathy shown by the Premier to invest in the health care system and those who work in it

Sometimes spending money makes money through clinicians being able to do the job they were employed to do, rather than diluting their roles by doing everyone else's jobs due to vacancy control cuts.

The health sector cannot tolerate additional cuts and it will only exacerbate workload issues, loss of nursing and midwifery staff through burn out and the need to reduce services and close beds.

What's more, given the expansion of the Parliament, how about a full-time health Minister who is dedicated to supporting, resourcing and showing the same insight into the system that the Premier showed years ago?

The ANMF logo consists of the letters 'ANMF' in a bold, white, sans-serif font, centered within a solid blue square.The background of the top section is a blurred photograph of a hospital ward. A person in a white uniform is visible in the background, and a patient is lying in a bed in the foreground, partially obscured by a blue blanket. The overall color palette is dominated by blues and whites.

**Australian
Nursing &
Midwifery
Federation**
Tasmania

Media Release

Emily Shepherd, ANMF Tasmanian Branch Secretary

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Media contact:

Emily Shepherd

Mobile: 0400 884 021

Email: emily.shepherd@anmftas.org.au