



Nurses' action to start in New Year

Govt refuses to guarantee an offer

NSWNA members will now close one in four beds and services from the New Year or shortly after, in response to the state Government yesterday refusing a formal recommendation from the Industrial Commission to guarantee an offer on ratios and skill mix by no later than 13th January, 2011.

NSWNA has been reasonable but Govt is stalling

Your governing Council met last night and has resolved that the original closure plan must go ahead. After more than 40 hours of conciliation talks in the Industrial Commission, during which the Association has been reasonable and measured, the Government now leaves members with no alternative but to proceed to action. The decision to localise impact to only those beds affected by management shut-downs must now change.

Last Friday NSW Health attempted to get a ban placed on any further industrial action by nurses and midwives for a further three months, but the Commission refused and instead urged that an offer be made on ratios and skill mix. The IRC was very surprised that no offer had been made to NSWNA and pressured NSW Health to make an offer by no later than 13th January, however the Government will not commit to provide an offer.

One2four action plan – how to close beds/services at your facility

NSWNA Council now asks Branches to plan your implementation of the closure plan – see the full plan overleaf.

In general the action will start from 4th January, however each Branch must plan your start date very carefully, as follows.

1. If there is no management shut-down of beds/services for Christmas-January, then your action can start on 4th January.
2. If there is a management shut-down of beds/services for Christmas-January, then your action should not start until emergency beds and time-critical services are scheduled to re-open. This will ensure that your action can be successful whilst still ensuring enough beds to provide emergency care and time-critical services at all times.
3. If there is a management shut-down with *progressive* bed re-opening dates, Branch Officials should call NSWNA to discuss the best date to start your action.

Branch officials should phone the NSWNA office for advice if you need to discuss the best date for your Branch to begin action or if you are unsure about taking action. Emergency and time-critical nursing care must continue to be provided at all times.





One2four Action Plan

Bed Closures and Service Restriction

During the bed closure plan all patients who require emergency care will be provided with that care.

Exempted Areas:

The bed closure plan to ensure safe patient care will occur in all wards and units except for the following exempted areas:

- oncology patients
- palliative care patients
- haemodialysis patients
- maternity wards/units where occupied by maternity patients
- paediatric beds where occupied by paediatric patients
- Emergency Departments, including Psychiatric Emergency Care Centres
- Intensive Care Units, Coronary Care Units and High Dependency Units
- terminations of pregnancy
- Category 1 and emergency surgery, and emergency and priority diagnostic procedures and booked caesarian sections.

The plan includes:

- 1 in 4 “operational beds” will be closed on every ward/unit in public hospitals and health services. Beds that are generally closed or not regularly used, such as “surge” beds, will not be opened.
- 1 in 4 booked operations or the equivalent in Operating Theatres will be cancelled, including endoscopy and day surgery.
- 1 in 4 outpatient appointments will be cancelled.
- 1 in 4 non-urgent home visits and clinic appointments by community health and community mental health nurses will be cancelled.
- In addition, up to 3 additional beds on every ward/unit will be closed and reserved for clinically-determined emergencies.
- residential aged care patients assessed as needing high care accommodation will not be discharged or transferred to low care facilities.

All normal staffing rosters will be maintained including the replacement of staff on leave during the action. Nursing staff on wards and units who are additional to those needed to provide safe patient care due to bed closures will work as additional support in Emergency Departments, if requested by their Emergency Department colleagues.

For more info phone 02 8595 1234 or go to www.nswnurses.asn.au