

ANMF EBA 2016

Nurses, Midwives and Mental Health Nurses

VALUE RECOGNISE REWARD



Media Release

Wednesday 8 June 2016

Mental health nurses escalate protected industrial action to expedite enterprise agreement outcome

Victorian public sector mental health nurses will escalate protected industrial action tomorrow in a bid to expedite negotiations for safer and improved patient and client care and secure the same pay rises as public sector acute hospital and aged care nurses.

Public sector mental health nurses started wearing #ValueRecogniseReward red campaign T-shirts and handing out campaign information to clients, family and friends on 19 May in 12 Area Mental Health Services * (see page 2) across the state.

From 7am tomorrow mental health nurses in the same 12 services will implement phase two of their protected industrial action including speaking to the media and bans on overtime, redeployment, collection of non-clinical and administrative data, attending meetings where no backfill has been organised and implementing any management changes.

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (Victorian Branch) is negotiating a new mental health nurses enterprise agreement with the Victorian Government, the employers' representative, the Victorian Hospitals' Industrial Association (VHIA), and the Health and Community Services Union.

The agreement expired 69 days ago on 31 March 2016. The parties have met 19 times since negotiations began in February. By comparison the general public sector nurses and midwives agreement, which also expired on 31 March, was finalised after a series of daily negotiations almost five weeks ago on 5 May.

Negotiations are scheduled for today, tomorrow and 15 and 16 June. Former Fair Work Commissioner deputy president Greg Smith will facilitate two of these meetings.

ANMF (Vic Branch) Assistant Secretary Pip Carew said: "Negotiations have been painfully slow due to the unavailability of other parties. ANMF is available day and night, seven days a week and wants to work hard to achieve a new agreement that addresses mental health nurses' claims. The delays are already jeopardising whether mental health nurses will receive back pay from 1 April.

"Nurses only take industrial action as a last resort but they want to send the parties a strong message to focus on reaching a new agreement that addresses nurses' workload, patient care, safety and pay issues and that public sector mental health nurses are just as important as public sector general nurses.

"The bans will not impact on patient or client care which will remain as always mental health nurses' primary focus."

MORE

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Mental health nurses are seeking improved care through the introduction of nursing ratios in inpatient mental health services and a workload management mechanism for community mental health nurses. Ratios would operate, as they have for 16 years in public acute wards, varying according to type of ward/unit and time of day. Examples of ANMF's claim include:

- high dependency beds - 1 nurse to 2 patients
- adult acute beds - morning and afternoon shift 1:4, night shift 1:7
- acute child, adolescent and youth beds – morning and afternoon shift 1:4, night shift 1:5
- Forensic acute beds – morning and afternoon shift 1:4 plus in charge, night shift 1:7.

Mental health nurses are also seeking the recent public acute sector nurses' pay rises of between 4 and 20 per cent over four years. The VHIA and government offer is 2.5 per cent per year plus 0.5 per cent for service delivery improvements.

Mental health workplaces where protected industrial action CAN commence from 7.00am Thursday 9 June 2016 (stage 2):

Albury Wodonga Health

North East Border Mental Health Services
All areas where mental health nurses are employed

Ballarat Health Services

All areas where mental health nurses are employed

Barwon Health

All areas where mental health nurses are employed

Eastern Health

All areas where mental health nurses are employed

Goulburn Valley Health

All areas where mental health nurses are employed

Latrobe Regional Health

All areas where mental health nurses are employed

Melbourne Health

North Western Mental Health
All areas where mental health nurses are employed

Mercy Public Health

All areas where mental health nurses are employed

Mildura Base Hospital

Mental Health Services
All areas where mental health nurses are employed

Royal Children's Hospital

Banksia Unit
All areas where mental health nurses are employed

St Vincent's Hospital

All areas where mental health nurses are employed

Inner South Community Mental Health

All areas where mental health nurses are employed

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