



## ANMF (Vic Branch) Policy

### Permanent night shift

#### Position

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (Victorian Branch) (ANMF (Vic Branch)) supports the choice of all nurses and midwives to work the shifts that best meet the requirements of the nurse or midwife, having regard to the reasonable requirements of the health service, including permanent night staffing levels.

Management must ensure that all nurses / midwives working night shift have access to similar facilities and amenities as day staff that includes:

- access to food heating and refrigeration equipment; eg microwave, fridge, toaster;
- appropriate and secure staff only rest facilities;
- adequate professional support and mentors;
- environmental working conditions that meet Occupational Health and Safety legislation requirements, including lifting equipment, security and suitable lighting; and
- adequate human resources

#### Education and professional development

The ANMF (Vic Branch) believes that all Health Services should ensure that their nurses and midwives are able to access education and professional development opportunities. The Health Service must provide education and professional development opportunities inclusive of all shifts wherever practicable. Such opportunities should be provided during normal rostered working hours. The ANMF (Vic Branch) recognises that there may be times when it is appropriate for nurses/midwives to spend a reasonable time (up to 4 weeks per year) on day shift in order to participate in education, training and professional development activities.

Where this occurs, it should be:

- without loss of pay or allowances, including night shift penalties;
- be at a time mutually agreed upon by the affected nurse and the employer, for example immediately before or after annual leave; and
- in accordance with a pre-planned professional development regime

Where hospital management require permanent night staff to spend time on day shift they must take the following into consideration:

- childcare/family/carer commitments;
- health issues;
- travel arrangements;
- car parking;
- study leave; and
- other employment and social responsibilities

Any period of time spent by permanent night staff on day shift should be planned and rostered. Such programs should be designed and agreed between the nurse / midwife and the Nurse / Midwife Manager with the assistance of nurse / midwife educators where required.

### **Occupational health and safety**

Night-shift workers experience circadian disruption and accumulate a sleep 'debt' over successive night shifts. Sleep deprivation can lead to fatigue and sleep-related performance issues. Some research indicates that permanent night shift is also harmful to a person's health in the long term including negative effects on metabolism.

The ANMF (Vic Branch) supports a risk management approach to work-related fatigue.

Where night shift must be rostered, it is the view of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (Vic Branch) that:

- a night shift should be no longer than 10 Hours; and
- roster pattern consisting of blocks of no more than 3 nights in a row and no more than 6 consecutive work days

This policy should be read in conjunction with ANMF (Vic Branch) Continuous professional development policy and fatigue prevention policy

### **Relevant guidance**

- ANMF (Vic Branch) Continuous professional development policy
- ANMF (Vic Branch) 12 hour roster agreements
- ANMF (Vic Branch) Self rostering guidelines policy
- ANMF (Vic Branch) Fatigue prevention policy