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ST VINCENT'S PRIVATE HOSPITALS NURSES AND MIDWIVES EBA 2024

CAMPAIGN UPDATE 18, WEDNESDAY 8 JANUARY 2025

ST VINCENT'S PRIVATE EBA UPDATE

Bed closures commenced today – members stay strong in face of intimidation and misinformation from management

ANMF members across St Vincent's Private Hospital (SVPH) sites have today escalated their industrial action campaign with the closure of beds from 7am this morning.

SVPH management have responded today by asserting that this action is unlawful despite ANMF notifying SVPH of this industrial action over a fortnight ago.

ANMF strongly advises members that the bed closure action is lawful protected industrial action and can be continued.

ANMF has written to SVPH today seeking the retraction of this representation to staff on the basis that it is false and misleading. Further we have advised that ANMF Job Representatives will no longer be required to attend the daily bed meetings, and ANMF Organisers will instead be available to attend.

Members will be aware that bed closures are a well-known form of protected industrial action taken by nurses as a last resort in an enterprise bargaining campaign. Members are taking this action to progress their claims for safe staffing and workload provisions at SVPH in their enterprise bargaining agreement.

WHAT DOES THIS ACTION MEAN?

Bed closures mean you are withdrawing nursing labour to a point of care (particular beds) i.e. the bed is closed to the provision of nursing labour. ANMF members use the Bed Closed signs as a way to identify these points of care to ensure patient safety and transparency. Likewise, refusing to admit to a closed bed ensures that a patient is only admitted to a bed that is not affected by the protected industrial action.

Members are entitled to close up to one (1) in every three (3) beds, subject to the following exemptions: cardiac, neurosurgery, oncology, maternity/obstetrics, paediatric, neonatal and palliative care patients or emergency patients, patients in intensive care, high dependency and coronary care units or emergency patients where their condition is expected to deteriorate within 48 hours if they were not admitted to an inpatient bed.

HOW DO I TAKE THIS ACTION?

Members can participate in this action by placing a Bed Closed sign on up to one (1) in every three (3) beds – this means in a ward of 45 beds, up to 15 beds can be closed. If a ward is more than two thirds at capacity, beds can be closed as patients are discharged. On the handover sheet indicate which beds have been closed and ensure that the number of beds closed (and expected to be closed) are handed over to the next shift and the nurse in charge.

WHEN WOULD I REOPEN A BED?

As always, protected bed closure action should be done safely and professionally, by notifying the nurse in charge as beds are closed and ensuring the process (including



CAN MEMBERS TAKE PROTECTED INDUSTRIAL ACTIONS # 21, 22 AND 25 (BED CLOSURES)?

Yes.

In accordance with requirements in the *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)*, ANMF notified SVPH that ANMF members intended to exercise their entitlement to take bed closure industrial action from 7am on 8 January 2025. ANMF gave this notice on 24 December 2024.

No objection or other substantive communication has been made by SVPH despite the time between notification and commencement.

the situation or rationale for re-opening a closed bed) is clearly handed over to the next shift.

A bed must be reopened if needed for a patient within an exempted category or for an emergency patient where their condition is expected to deteriorate within 48 hours.

If the bed is reopened in these circumstances, this should be marked on the handover sheet and notification to the nurse in charge and next shift.

It is to be expected that the number of closed beds will fluctuate from shift to shift and from day to day.

WHAT DO I DO IF I FEEL INTIMIDATED IN AN INTERACTION WITH MANAGEMENT ABOUT THE ACTION?

Bed closure industrial action is uncomfortable and it is something that we hope members will not have to continue to do, in order to progress enterprise agreement negotiations.

It may be that you will have uncomfortable conversations with nursing leadership about which beds are closed and the consequence of that. Remember, patient safety is at the heart of what all nurses do, so if in doubt deliver care. Also, remember that the ANMF officials will be on the ward and available to support you during this action.

If you are subjected to unreasonable or intimidating behaviour and/or adverse action as a result of taking protected industrial action, please contact the ANMF immediately at anmfvic.asn.au/stvprivreport or by scanning the QR code.



We commend members on their unity and commitment to achieve safe staffing provisions in your enterprise agreement. We remain ready, willing and able to meet with SVPH to progress discussions in a collaborative manner.

GOT A CAMPAIGN ISSUE OR INQUIRY

If you need to get in touch with your ANMF Organiser please contact them via records@anmfvic.asn.au. If it is an emergency call the numbers below.

St Vincent's Private Hospital, Fitzroy

– Mim Harrison 0482 799 485
(relieving for Mitch Hoover)

St Vincent's Private Hospital, East Melbourne

– Mim Harrison 0482 799 485
(relieving for Mitch Hoover)

St Vincent's Private Hospital, Kew

– Narelle Hayes 0484 150 002

St Vincent's Private Hospital, Werribee

– Hailee Love 0488 555 792
(relieving for Mitch Hoover)