



**Australian  
Nursing &  
Midwifery  
Federation**

VICTORIAN BRANCH

# Newsflash

Friday 20 March 2020

## COVID-19 newsflash #2 Changes to ANMF (Vic Branch) operations

ANMF members are one of the most important workforces as the country prepares for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nurses, midwives and personal care workers are on the front line of caring for the community. Supporting you, your health and your wellbeing is critical for the ANMF.

ANMF is undertaking preparations to ensure we can continue to provide a seamless service and support to members during this challenging time. We also want to ensure we can continue to advise, support and represent members for non-COVID-19-related issues. This means ANMF is changing the way it operates to protect our staff, members and the public.

**From Monday 23 March**, the following changes will take effect as part of our preparation for staff to work remotely, if and when required, or in the event they become unwell and are unable to work:

1. Members will no longer be able to call the Member Assistance information phone line. Members must make all Member Assistance inquiries via our online form [anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance](https://anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance). These changes will enable ANMF to triage inquiries, and increase Member Assistance resources so we can respond promptly.
2. Members will no longer be able to call our Membership Department and all membership inquiries must be via [records@anmfvic.asn.au](mailto:records@anmfvic.asn.au)
3. Members who need to speak with a staff member, other than those calls in 1 and 2 above, will still be able to contact the Branch.
4. All member meetings, workplace visits, orientations and roadshows are cancelled.
5. Members are strongly encouraged not to visit the Branch office to meet with staff.

ANMF has also cancelled conferences, events and Education Centre courses (including the upcoming AOD workshops) scheduled up to 30 June.

Conference cancellations include the Working Hours, Shifts and Fatigue Conference (27 March), Health and Environmental Sustainability Conference (1 May), Mental Health Nurses Forum (8 May), the Midwifery Forum (21 May), Undergraduate Student Nurse/Midwife Study Day (22 or 23 May) and the Annual Delegates Conference (18 and 19 June).

Authorised by Lisa Fitzpatrick ANMF (Vic Branch) Secretary

Where possible we are working to offer some events online.

Nurses, midwives and carers, who have registered for our events and courses, have been notified individually and registration fees are being reimbursed.

The Enrolled Nurse Study Day on 24 July is still scheduled to proceed.

## Raising members' issues with DHHS

The Branch is monitoring the COVID-19 situation and the advice of Victoria's Chief Health Officer. We are also raising members' issues, particularly those that come through Member Assistance, with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). For example, DHHS is issuing advice to health service employers about providing special consideration for graduate nurses and midwives after ANMF raised members' concerns about a lack of accrued leave.

## Establishment of screening clinics

ANMF is in discussions with the DHHS, members and employers about the establishment and operation of COVID-19 screening clinics. ANMF's priorities are:

1. The health and wellbeing of members.
2. That members have access to appropriate PPE and information.
3. Appropriate and sustainable staffing arrangements and operating hours.
4. Set up and facilities to ensure broader workplace health and safety matters are satisfactory.

If you have any concerns or questions, please submit the Member Assistance online inquiry form [anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance](http://anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance).

## Workforce planning

The pressure on the nursing, midwifery and personal care workforce will increase. DHHS is consulting with ANMF on future planning to assist health services manage the increased demand resulting from COVID-19.

ANMF is heartened by the number of calls we have received from recently retired nurses and registered nurses, working outside the acute sector, asking how they can help. ANMF is investigating ways to facilitate their return to work or how ANMF could provide education sessions.

As more information becomes available, we will update members.

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