

Tuesday 20 September 2022

COVID-19 Update #74a public sector

Health System Winter Response

Move from Stage 3 to Stage 2 effective Monday 26 September 2022

As of Monday 26 September 2022, given the significant reduction in COVID admissions and staff furloughing, and reduced personal leave, the Victorian Health Department has advised hospitals that the Stage 3 settings cease, and Stage 2 settings commence.

What happens with ratios?

The use of 'extended team models' or 'surge workforce models' to help meet ratios should cease, and rosters should reflect the *Safe Patient Care Act 2015* ratio requirements of nurses and midwives.

Every practical effort must be made to not only roster to ratios, but to meet ratios on a shift-by-shift basis, particularly where absences are known in advance.

RUSONs and RUSOMs will still be utilised, but in addition to minimum ratio requirements.

What about extended shift lengths?

Health services should move away from utilisation of double shifts.

Extended rostered shifts (e.g. 12 hour shifts) can be utilised where necessary to maximise workforce availability.

What if we simply cannot find a nurse or midwife for a shift?

This occurred pre-COVID and is likely to always be an occasional feature of the system.

Where it is predictable and happening often, consideration should be given to reducing the number of beds that are available to be occupied. Members should communicate with their ANMF Organiser if your health service has not taken this step.

Stage 2 levers include public health services prioritisation of elective activity, including deferring of non-urgent activity.

Will I still be redeployed?

Redeployment should be limited to urgent needs only.

What about leave applications?

With a further COVID surge predicted in December 2022, now is the best time to maximise leave approvals to help address the accumulated fatigue of nurses and midwives. Every effort should be made to accommodate leave requests, and no application for leave should be unreasonably refused.

Need ANMF advice or support?

Members can complete an online Member Assistance inquiry form via anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance (scroll to the bottom of the page for the button).

COVID-19 stressed? You're only human

The free, confidential Nursing and Midwifery Health Program Victoria is run by nurses and midwives and provides support, counselling and referral. Learn more via <https://nmhp.org.au>. Phone 9415 7551 (business hours) or email admin@nmhp.org.au

Got a colleague not receiving ANMF emails?

Let them know they can re-subscribe via <https://anmfvic.asn.au/resubscribe>

Encourage your colleagues to join ANMF

Let them know they can join via <https://www.anmfvic.asn.au/join>

ANMF Job Reps and Health and Safety Reps are encouraged to display this newsflash on their workplace noticeboard.

Authorised by Lisa Fitzpatrick ANMF (Vic Branch) Secretary