

A message from Victorian mental health nurses

Dear patient/client/resident/relative/friend

Mental health nurses help improve people's quality of life and save lives.

You might have noticed the mental health nurse caring for you is wearing a red T-shirt. We're wearing red to highlight some important issues that affect our ability to provide safe, quality care.

For the past 16 years Victorian public hospitals have been staffed using mandated minimum staffing levels. Nurse/midwife patient ratios are a system that improves patient care and prevents under-staffing. These safe staffing levels have worked so well, they are now law. It is time ratios were expanded to all mental health wards, units and stand-alone inpatient facilities.

In mental health services people's access to nurses is dependent on the address of the health service. Members of the Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation (Vic Branch) seek to remove this nursing level inconsistency and instead ensure all clients across the state have access to the same quality of care.

We are also seeking, in the community mental health setting, community workload management provisions to ensure safe systems of care for clients and sufficient nurses to deliver quality care.

There's also another important issue we need to highlight. Victoria's mental health nurses are some of the lowest paid in Australia. We earn four to 20 per cent less each week than our NSW colleagues. The average Victorian mental health nurse earns approximately \$13,500 less each year than the same NSW nurse. Again our colleagues in Victoria's acute public hospitals have recently secured wage parity with NSW. It's time dedicated and skilled Victorian mental health nurses were rewarded with the same fair pay rise.

We're calling for ratios, better community workload management, and a fair pay rise equal to that which the government agreed to for all Victorian nurses and midwives working in the public sector. The Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation (Vic Branch) is currently negotiating with the Victorian Government and our employers to achieve these claims.

Please support our campaign for safe patient and client care and fair pay. Turn over for ways to speak out on Facebook and Twitter, by contacting Victorian politicians and writing letters to the media.

Thank you for your support!



VALUE > RECOGNISE > REWARD
Our Victorian mental health nurses

EBA campaign webpage: <http://bit.ly/MHEBAkt16>



**Australian
Nursing &
Midwifery
Federation**
VICTORIAN BRANCH

Speak out

Support, follow and share EBA 2016 campaign news on Facebook www.facebook.com/respectourwork and Twitter @ANMFVicBranch



#MHRatios, #RewardMHNurses and #ValueRecogniseReward

Support our campaign by speaking out about how important quality mental health care is to you and your family. Mandated minimum nurse patient ratios have been in place in the public acute hospitals and health facilities for 16 years. It's time they were introduced in public mental health wards, units and facilities. Community mental health nurses have an important role in preventing hospitalisation and helping clients stay well. Let the community and decision makers know safe, quality care depends on mental health nurses' ability to manage their workload.

Our dedicated Victorian mental health nurses are some of the lowest paid nurses in Australia. Support us on social media and contact your local Victorian MP and the media and respectfully ask the Victorian Government to introduce mental health ratios, caseload management and pay mental health nurses the same fair wage rise public acute nurses and midwives have recently secured.

Write a letter to the editor

Don't forget to write to your local regional or suburban newspaper.

The Age

Post: Letters Editor
PO Box 257, Melbourne VIC 3001
Email: letters@theage.com.au
Fax: 03 8667 2327
www.theage.com.au/comment/the-age-letters

The Herald Sun

Post: Letters to the Editor
PO Box 14631, Melbourne VIC 8001
Email: hsletters@heraldsun.com.au (no attachments)
Fax: 03 9292 2112
www.heraldsun.com.au/news/opinion/letter-to-the-editor

Call or SMS Melbourne talkback

ABC 774

Call 1300 222 774 or SMS 0437 774 774
Twitter: @774melbourne

3AW 693

Call 96 900 693 or outside Melbourne 13 13 32
Twitter: @3AW693

Call regional talkback radio

You may also have a local commercial radio station that takes talkback calls.

ABC Ballarat call 1300 303 468
ABC Central Victoria call 1300 813 911
ABC Gippsland call 1300 295 222
ABC Goulburn Murray call 1300 147 222

ABC Shepparton call 1300 977 222
ABC Western Victoria call 1300 594 222
ABC Mildura-Swan Hill call 1300 043 222
ABC South Western Victoria call 1300 001 602

Contact your local MP

Contact your local Victorian State Member of Parliament. To find out which state electorate you live in and your local State MP visit <http://bit.ly/findeleceba> then <http://bit.ly/findmpeba>

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