



Public sector mental health enterprise agreement. Campaign update # 2

18 February 2016

The ANMF represented mental health nurse members at the second negotiation meeting yesterday (17 February), held with the employer representatives the Victorian Health Industry Association (VHIA) and the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Health and Community Services Union (HACSU).

- 1. ANMF (Vic Branch) mental health sector log of claims – Nurse: patient ratios**
Our members' claim for workload management includes mandated nurse: patient ratios for inpatient services across Victoria in adult acute care; high dependency units (HDUs); secure extended care units (SECU); child and adolescent; infant psychiatry and mother/baby units; acute aged care; sub-acute psychogeriatric / aged residential; community care units and Forensic care for acute, sub-acute and rehabilitation.
The ANMF (Vic Branch) is pressing VHIA and the department about their attitude to including nurse: patient ratios in the mental health enterprise agreement. Mental health nurses deserve the same workload certainty as their counterparts in the general public healthcare sector and in NSW and Queensland which have mandated mental health nursing staffing levels. Our Victorian mental health members deserve to be valued and recognised for their contribution to the Victorian community.
The claim also addresses the issue of inconsistent staffing levels currently occurring across different area mental health services. To date we have had no definite response either in principle or to the ratios proposed.
- 2. Community mental health – ANMF (Vic Branch) is pressing our member claims that will assist with managing community mental health nurses' workloads.** Members are operating in difficult circumstances, characterised by workload pressure, increasing community demand, and imbalance of discipline-specific skill mix within teams. These issues need to be addressed to ensure appropriate care can be provided to the community to manage often complex mental and physical health needs. Discussions will continue next week regarding the longstanding issue of finalising the community workload management tool, a priority matter for our members. This will help members in managing workload pressures.
- 3. Service Delivery Partnership Plan (SDPP) –** As part of the Victorian Government's wages policy, an additional wage increase is available where the parties enter into an SDPP. The ANMF has provided a proposed SDPP to the department. This can be viewed on the ANMF campaign page anmfvic.asn.au/campaigns/2016/01/20/eba-2016. The SDPP mainly addresses areas where ANMF, in partnership with health services, can be more efficient, safe, productive and environmentally sustainable.
Discussion is continuing on the issue of documentation which is adversely impacting the workload and time available for mental health nurses to provide clinical care. ANMF (Vic Branch) has highlighted the unmanageable and inefficient practices associated with the volume of documentation, often duplicated, that nurses are expected to complete.
- 4. Employer log of claims –** Employers and the department have provided ANMF (Vic Branch) with their log of claims. These are changes that the government and your health service employers are seeking. The log of claims can be viewed on our website anmfvic.asn.au/campaigns/2016/01/20/eba-2016.
The ANMF continues to seek clarification about all the elements of the employer claim.
- 5. Community mental health services (Ballarat, Grampians and Inner South)**
VHIA has advised that these services do not wish to be covered by the Victoria-wide mental health enterprise agreement. The ANMF claim is for members in these health services to have the same wages and conditions as the state-wide agreement. Negotiations are continuing.
- 6. ANMF (Vic Branch) mental health members' meeting –** Come along to the members' meeting for the mental health sector at 2.30pm on Thursday 31 March to hear from us about the progress of negotiations and 'where to from here?' The meeting will be held at ANMF House, 540 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, in the Carson Centre room on Level 7. Put it in your diary or add it to the calendar on your new ANMF (Vic Branch) Diary App (anmfvic.asn.au/app). Please note that a separate meeting is being held for general public sector nurses on 23 March.

Don't sit on the sidelines, join the campaign, attend meetings and achieve the changes we deserve. Enterprise bargaining time is the most critical opportunity to improve our wages and conditions. Our strength is our membership. Most Victorian nurses are already ANMF members – if you haven't joined yet or you know someone who hasn't, please encourage them to join. Non-members can join online at anmfvic.asn.au.

If you don't have a Job Rep on your ward or unit, it's time to put up your hand and help the ANMF and your colleagues achieve our claims for 2016. Speak to another ANMF Job Rep or call ANMF Reception on **9275 9333** and a **Job Rep Pack** will be sent out to you.

ANMF will keep you updated via further campaign updates, our website, emails and text messages where appropriate. Please ensure your details are correct by logging into the Member Portal at members.anmfvic.asn.au.