

2016 enterprise bargaining with nurses and midwives

Victorian Government health services proposals

Bargaining Context

A High Quality Health System

The Victorian Government is committed to putting the health and wellbeing of Victorians first by working with Victoria's public sector nurses and midwives and other healthcare professionals to ensure the provision of high quality health services for all Victorians.

The Government is committed to public sector industrial relations based on consultation, cooperation and good faith bargaining, underpinned by a safety net of fair minimum employment conditions. The Government is committed to ensuring that enterprise agreements are negotiated respectfully, in good faith, and conducted in a timely manner.

The Government has legislated nurse to patient and midwife to patient ratios so that nurses and midwives will no longer have to bargain to keep ratios every time enterprise bargaining comes around.

Public healthcare in Victoria continues to face challenges through: growing demand; lifestyle choices and behaviours that are contributing to higher levels of chronic disease; people's changing needs and financial constraints that are unlikely to relax.

The 2015-17 public health sector enterprise bargaining cycle aims to meet these challenges through:

- Appropriately rewarding public health sector staff for the roles that they undertake;
- Jointly identify service improvement opportunities as part of negotiations; and
- Adopting modern terms and conditions that reflect contemporary practices and future directions.

Bargaining Proposals

General

The Government and employers propose the following key terms for a new agreement.

Duration of agreement

The Government and employers propose a four year term for a new enterprise agreement with nurses and midwives.

A four year agreement will provide certainty and stability of terms and conditions of employment for nurses and midwives.

Wages improvement

The Government's new wages policy, the *Fair Pay Guide*, assures increases of 2.5% per annum in improvements to wages and/or conditions over the life on an agreement.

An additional 0.5% per annum (delivering a total of 3% per annum increase) is available where employers and employees enter into a partnership to achieve genuine service delivery improvements.

Above 3% outcomes are only available where productivity offsets can be agreed.

Service Delivery Partnership Plan

Under government wages policy, employers will offer 0.5% in either salary or improved conditions, based on a commitment to achieve service delivery improvements. Service delivery improvements are to be jointly agreed between the parties.

Employers propose to discuss the following possible service delivery improvements:

- Improving OH&S outcomes.
- Adopting absenteeism best practice.
- Improving immunisation/vaccination rates.
- Improving discharge arrangements.
- Further reductions in the use of agency staff.
- Improving patient/resident satisfaction levels.
- Improved leave management.

A Better Work Place

The Government and employers propose to discuss the following changes that should make the workplace better for nurses and midwives.

Family friendly work practices

Employers propose to strengthen the current agreement to ensure all employees understand their rights and their ability to seek more flexible working arrangements.

Family violence provisions

A best practice model clause for family violence is proposed for inclusion in all Victorian public sector enterprise agreements.

Fitness for work

Employers propose the inclusion of a fair and transparent process to address and manage fitness for work issues.

Transition to retirement

Employers seek inclusion of a term that facilitates flexible work arrangements to transition to retirement by agreement between the employee and employer.

Casual conversion

Employers propose a casual conversion clause that enables either the employee or employer to request a transfer to permanent employment in defined circumstances.

Clause simplification and consistency

Employers propose a number of small changes to the existing agreement improve the clarity and consistency of the agreement clauses.

Organisational Change

Employers propose a new clause that will apply consistently across all Victorian public health sector employers.

Potential Productivity Offsets

Should increases above 3% be sought, employers would seek to discuss potential productivity offsets in a number of areas.

Minimum classifications in non-bed-based care settings

Employers would seek to discuss the current minimum classifications required in the current agreement above for a number of non-bed-based roles.

Rostering & Staffing mix

Employers would seek to discuss current roster arrangements and staff mix and any potential efficiencies that could be gained through alternative arrangements.

Future improvements

The Government and employers would like to discuss a number of further improvements to both the terms and conditions of nurses and midwives and the way in which they work – these may not be achievable during the life of the proposed new agreement.

Nurse/Midwife Unit Manager review

Employers propose to engage with employees and the union in a consultative and cooperative review of the Nurse/Midwifery Unit Manager classification and role.

Clinical classification structure – advanced practice

Advanced nursing/midwifery classifications have developed incrementally over time, without an overall, coherent structure.

Employers propose to engage with employees and the union in a consultative and cooperative review to determine an appropriate and sustainable

Occupational Violence and Aggression Coordinators

Employers propose to further discuss the approach to occupational violence and aggression and the potential for co-ordinator roles.

Professional development allowance

Employers are seeking to further discuss the quantum and form of the Professional Development Allowance.