11 November, 2014

**Gosford nurses rally for ratios of 1:3 in ED**

The NSW Nurses and Midwives’ Association (NSWNMA) is stepping up its campaign for improved nurse-to-patient ratios, particularly in emergency departments.

Members of the NSWNMA Gosford Hospital Branch, are calling on the NSW Government to extend nurse-to-patient ratios of one nurse to three patients (1:3) into the local emergency department.

Only selected wards in metropolitan public hospitals currently have ratios of one nurse to four patients in place, however, this does not include emergency departments. International research indicates that increasing the amount of nursing care leads to better health outcomes for patients.

Ken Langbridge, President of the Gosford Hospital Branch of NSWNMA, said local nurses and midwives were committed to safe patient care and a well resourced public health system.

“IT’s important the community in Gosford and surrounding areas is aware of what their local nurses are up against when trying to deliver safe patient care in our emergency departments,” Mr Langbridge said.

“Our branch members at Gosford are concerned about recent health funding cuts in the federal and state budgets and what that means for ratios of 1:3 being mandated across emergency departments.

“Nurses and midwives are the first to point out the adverse impact any form of GP co-payment would have on our already stretched emergency departments, as many disadvantaged members of the community were likely to seek treatment from public hospitals to avoid the financial burden.

“The NSW Government must make ratios in emergency departments a priority, so that our members can deliver the safest possible care to patients.

“We will continue campaigning around these issues and ensure that the community is well informed,” he said.

**Media Alert:** NSWNMA members from Gosford Hospital Branch will raise awareness of the 1:3 in ED ratios campaign with a visual display, **12noon – 2:00pm on Wednesday 12 November 2014**, on the grass verge off Racecourse Road, Gosford (between Holden Street and Hospital Road). The group will be seeking support from the community to write to their local State MPs and visit [www.backyournurses.org](http://www.backyournurses.org) or [www.facebook.com/safepatientcare](http://www.facebook.com/safepatientcare). Media are welcomed to attend.

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