



NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION

# MEDIA RELEASE

General Secretary: Brett Holmes | Assistant General Secretary: Judith Kiejda  
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22 March, 2017

## Expansion of nurse to patient ratios overdue in NSW

Nurses and midwives have urged the NSW Government to improve the delivery of safe patient care across all public hospital settings and bring our state into line with Queensland and Victoria.

Last night, hundreds of NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) delegates passed a unanimous resolution calling on the government to deliver an expansion of the state's current nurse to patient ratios system.

General Secretary of the NSWNMA, Brett Holmes, said after six years of turning nurses and midwives away on this issue, it was time for the NSW Government to act and put patient safety first.

"Despite boasting the strongest budget and economic growth outpacing the rest of Australia, our state is now lagging behind Victoria and Queensland in the delivery of safe patient care," Mr Holmes said.

"Victoria and Queensland have committed to minimum nurse to patient ratios in their public health system Awards and preserved these in legislation, ensuring public patients receive the best care possible.

"It took strike action and bed closures in 2011 to get the NSW government to listen to us and secure ratios initially, however there are still many public hospitals throughout NSW that don't have them.

"It's also critical for ratios to be introduced into speciality areas such as emergency departments, intensive care and high dependency units, paediatrics, neonatal intensive care units, community and community mental health sectors.

"The evidence is clear – ratios save lives and make good economic sense. The government can afford to do this.

"It's time the government listened to frontline nurses and midwives and genuinely discussed improvements to staffing levels."

Mr Holmes confirmed the NSWNMA would continue to lobby the government, as both parties enter talks regarding public hospital nurses and midwives' pay and conditions over coming weeks.

*NB: A photograph of nurses and midwives from across NSW during the vote is attached.*

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