



NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION **MEDIA RELEASE**

General Secretary: Brett Holmes | Assistant General Secretary: Judith Kiejda
P (02) 8595 1234 f www.facebook.com/nswnma t twitter.com/nswnma

Wednesday 29 August, 2018

Nurses at Blacktown Hospital fed up

Nurses and midwives from the NSW Nurses and Midwives Association (NSWNMA) Blacktown Hospital branch are calling an extraordinary meeting at 12pm **TODAY** to discuss concerns around a violent attack against one of their colleagues on Monday night.

Members will be calling for changes to hospital security, including swipe-access locks on doors to staff-only areas such as kitchens and bathrooms. In a show of support, members will also resolve to wear grey armbands this Thursday and Friday.

NSWNMA Assistant General Secretary, Judith Kiejda, said violence in our public hospitals is spreading from high-risk areas, such as emergency departments and mental health units, right throughout the hospital.

"Nurses should not have to fear for their lives and put up with violence when going to work to help people," said Ms Kiejda.

"There must be more measures in place to protect nurses and midwives when they're on the job, so their focus is on caring for patients, not the possibility of being violently assaulted."

The NSWNMA is looking into the appropriateness of security arrangements and the staffing levels at the time of the incident.

Staffing levels at the hospital have been an ongoing concern. From January to June this year, the NSWNMA uncovered around 1250 hours of missed nursing care across the facility as a result of poor staffing levels.

"Nurses and midwives held a rally just last week in protest of management's failure to address these understaffing issues and introduce a new nurse-to-patient ratios system," said Ms Kiejda.

"We're fed up with the current system because there is no mandated ratio for every shift on every day. When incidents like this occur, nurses need all the support they can get."

Ms Kiejda will meet with Blacktown nurses in their lunchbreak tomorrow and address the media following the meeting. Members will also be available to speak following the meeting.

WHEN: 12:30pm TODAY, Wednesday 29 August 2018

WHAT: Interviews and photo opportunity

WHERE: Grass area outside Blacktown Hospital entrance, near the corner of Blacktown Road and Baronta Street



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MEDIA CONTACTS:

Judith Kiejda, Assistant General Secretary, NSWNMA 0414 674 119

Cameron Ritchie, Media Advisor, NSWNMA 0414 550 358