

# Talks Start Government yet to respond

After three meetings, NSWNMA negotiators are still waiting for a response to your claim to put patient safety first by improving and extending the ratios/nursing hours system.

The Government has not authorised NSW Health to make any response to your claim. This means they have failed to apply their own policy that negotiations should start no later than three months before Award expiry dates.

Your claim seeks a new Award including extended ratios and a pay rise to keep pace with inflation – by the expiry date of 30 June. It was formally served in early March and NSWNMA stands ready to negotiate.

NSW nurses' and midwives' experience in 2010 shows that it will be very difficult to achieve a proposed new Award in the ten weeks left before 30 June – and that was before the new O'Farrell Government changed the wages law. This new law removes public sector unions' rights to genuinely negotiate and it prohibits backpay of any agreed wage increases.

## NSWNMA continues meetings but no offer in sight

Three meetings have been held in April. In those meetings senior Health Ministry representatives have asked your negotiators extensive questions about members' ratios claims in order to calculate how much the claim will "cost", but they did not have any authority to make a response.

The Ministry officials cannot tell us when they expect to be "authorised" by Government to make a response.

NSWNMA is prepared to keep meeting and advocating the details of members' claims, but there are now less than ten weeks until your Award expires.

It's time for the Government to put patient safety first, to show its real commitment to a new Nurses' and Midwives' Award, and convert the current "talks" to genuine "negotiations" on improved ratios.

### Help spread our profession's message to the community

- **Update your details**, with personal email address and mobile number so you're guaranteed to receive important information. To update, email [gensec@nswnma.asn.au](mailto:gensec@nswnma.asn.au), or phone 8595 1234 or 1300 367 962 (non-metro).
- **Participate in NSWNMA surveys** – information is powerful for NSWNMA negotiators. Our surveys receive ethics approval and you are never asked to breach patient confidentiality.
- **Register your support** to extend ratios at [www.morenurses.org](http://www.morenurses.org).
- **Connect with our facebook** page 'Ratios put patient safety first'.
- **Keep in touch** with the campaign as it unfolds at [www.nswnma.asn.au](http://www.nswnma.asn.au).
- **'Do your block'** with the community education pamphlet available from email [gensec@nswnma.asn.au](mailto:gensec@nswnma.asn.au), or phone 8595 1234 or 1300 367 962 (non-metro).

Remember – our profession's capacity to secure ratios improvements is dependent on your active participation in the campaign.