

# O'Farrell Govt says no to nurses on extending ratios

The NSW Government has presented an unacceptable offer on your ratios and pay claim, at a meeting held today.

Two months after presenting your claim to put patient safety first, the Government has delivered a categorical 'no' to improving and extending the successful Award nursing hours/ratios system that nurses and midwives won through tough action in 2011.

Ministry officials asserted that the Government's wages law does not allow any extension or improvement to the Award ratios system.

The Government is content to hide behind its own law to avoid investing in improved patient safety.

Despite a clear 'thumbs up' from nurses who work in 'ratios' wards and continued efforts by members to engage their local MPs and community, the Government is flatly rejecting your Award claim.

## Pay offer not so super

The Government has offered nurses and midwives a 'cash' pay rise of 2.25% for July 2013 in a one year Award, or an alternative two year Award containing the same increase in 2013 and 2014.

This change to the Government's previous position of 2.5% wage increases per annum shifts the cost of the federally legislated 0.25% increase in employer-paid superannuation that comes into force from July 2013 onto employees.

Public sector unions, including the NSWNMA, will meet the Treasurer, Mike

Baird, tomorrow, to oppose this announcement, and a further report will be on the Association's website this Friday.

The pay offer has strings attached:

- if not 'accepted' by 30 June, there will be no 'backpay' paid when a settlement is eventually reached. The Government has changed the law to prohibit backpay being made, with the clear intent of forcing public sector employees into lower pay rises whilst also removing your union's legal right to genuinely negotiate conditions.
- it is discounted to shift the payment of increased superannuation from the employer to the employee. This means a loss of around \$8 each fortnight calculated on the base pay of a full-time RN8 (compared to the Government's previous policy of paying a 'cash' pay rise of 2.5% p.a.).

The Association has not agreed to this offer.

## Decision at Committee of Delegates next Tuesday

It is critical that your branch delegates to the NSWNMA Committee of Delegates bring your views on this offer to the meeting next Tuesday night.

A full report will be given to delegates and they will decide the next steps in your campaign. Your delegates' decisions will be reported to all members next week.