



NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION

# MEDIA RELEASE

General Secretary: Brett Holmes | Assistant General Secretary: Judith Kiejda

☎ (02) 8595 1234 | [f www.facebook.com/nswnma](https://www.facebook.com/nswnma) | [t twitter.com/nswnma](https://twitter.com/nswnma)

10 February, 2014

## Stockton Comes to Maitland with a Message for O'Farrell Cabinet

**Embargoed till 5.00am, 10 February, 2014**

General Secretary of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA), Brett Holmes, today said nurses would be at the forefront of a protest rally today in Maitland, where Premier Barry O'Farrell and his Cabinet are to meet at Maitland Town Hall.

"The O'Farrell Government has announced its intention to fully privatise all state disability services and threatened the Stockton Centre in Newcastle with closure," Mr Holmes said.

"This is extremely distressing news for many of the people who rely on the Centre, as well as their families and carers. Highly skilled nursing positions and other critical care roles will be lost forever if this goes ahead.

"Nurses will be front and centre in Maitland this morning, along with family members and other friends and supporters of the Stockton Centre, to let Mr O'Farrell and his Ministers know loud and clear what people in the Hunter think of this decision.

"It's a complete dereliction of the State's duty of care to some of our most vulnerable citizens. The Government is washing its hands of the severely disabled and handing them over to non-government care.

"Public sector disability care is rightly regarded as the highest standard and our disability care nurses are the best there is. People deserve the right to be able to choose the care that best meets their needs. This mad privatisation push robs them of that choice," Mr Holmes said.

"It's consistent with this Government's privatisation zealotry that has seen them hand over the new hospital at Frenchs Forest to private sector profiteers before it has even commenced construction.

"And the people of Maitland and the lower Hunter are right to be deeply suspicious of its plans for the new hospital to be built at Metford. The Government has refused to rule out handing it too over to private operators to generate profits from the sick and injured in the local community.

"We will be turning out in Maitland this morning with a crystal clear message for Premier O'Farrell and his Cabinet. Stop this privatisation madness. Stop turning our world class public hospital system into an American-style profit machine to benefit the wealthy few.



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

“And reverse this disastrous decision to abandon public care for our most severely disabled people,” Mr Holmes said.

*The ‘**Save Stockton Centre**’ rally will be outside Maitland Town Hall from 10.30am as Cabinet Ministers arrive to their meeting there at 11am.*

---

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Brett Holmes 0414 550 324