



NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION

MEDIA RELEASE

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Gilgandra backs nurses over patient safety concerns

Members of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) have been buoyed by the support they have received from local residents opposing cuts to nursing staff hours at Gilgandra Multi Purpose Service (MPS).

On Saturday 13 December, 14 nurses from the Gilgandra Branch of the NSWNMA held a street stall and spoke to the community about the adverse impacts of nursing hours being slashed by 12 nursing hours per day in September.

Many community members who spoke to nurses during the street stall were unaware of the loss of nursing hours at Gilgandra MPS and agreed to voice their concerns over the reductions.

Approximately 80 people attending the stall agreed to immediately write letters to the local Member for Barwon, Kevin Humphries, while other community members indicated they would raise their concerns directly with the MP.

Sonia Bonham, President of Gilgandra Branch of the NSWNMA, said the members would like to thank their community for talking to them and for their show of support.

"The nurses will continue to fight for better standards of care for the local community of Gilgandra to ensure the delivery of safe patient care," Ms Bonham said.

"More residents can join in by writing to their local state MP and let him know that the people of Gilgandra deserve the best possible care when they are patients in the MPS.

"We need improved nurse-to-patient ratios to deliver better health outcomes for our patients and to prevent unnecessary deaths – the amount of international research supporting this is overwhelming."

The NSWNMA is supporting the nurses' actions against the nursing hour reductions as well as their efforts to highlight concerns directly with Western NSW Local Health District (WNSW LHD) management to reverse the decision.

General Secretary of the NSWNMA, Brett Holmes, has rejected assertions made in local media by the General Manager of WNSW LHD's Northern Sector, which implied nursing staff and the NSWNMA had agreed to the new staffing model during consultations prior to its roll-out.

"We participated in consultations on behalf of our members in good faith and repeatedly objected to any reduction of nursing staff hours at Gilgandra MPS," Mr Holmes said.

"Management of Western NSW Local Health District is deliberately misleading the Gilgandra community and surrounding districts by attempting to claim otherwise.



“We fully support our members in opposing these reductions, raising awareness of the situation with residents and encourage the local community to write to Western NSW Local Health District management and local state MP, Mr Humphries, to voice their concerns.”

***Photographs from the street stall held by Gilgandra Branch of the NSWNMA are attached.*

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