



NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION

MEDIA RELEASE

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Tamworth nurses and midwives still seeking support

The NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) has welcomed news that Tamworth MP, Kevin Anderson, has held talks with the NSW Minister for Health in relation to the ongoing staffing concerns impacting Tamworth Rural Referral Hospital.

General Secretary of the NSWNMA, Brett Holmes, said interventions by Mr Anderson and the involvement of the Minister – what the Association had sought many weeks ago – is a positive step forward.

“What we need to see urgently is action on the ground at Tamworth Rural Referral Hospital,” Mr Holmes said.

“There must be an immediate increase in staffing levels in both the maternity unit and the emergency department.

“Both of these areas have been critically understaffed for a long period of time, particularly on the night shift, and there is no doubt these issues were exacerbated by the relocation to the new building.

“Our members have been raising concerns about impacts to patient safety for many months with Hunter New England Local Health District (HNE LHD) management to very little avail.

“The practice of forcing highly-skilled nurses and midwives to work excessive overtime and extra shifts on an ongoing basis is unacceptable and extremely unsafe. The people of Tamworth and surrounding areas deserve much better from their local health service.

“The Association implores Mr Anderson to make sure the Health Minister overrides the LHD's obsession with being under budget and immediately turn its attention to delivering *'Excellence, every patient, every time'* – after all that is supposed to be Hunter New England's motto,” he said.

Mr Holmes confirmed the NSWNMA was yet to receive formal correspondence from local management which identified a genuine willingness to resolve the numerous staffing concerns that have been highlighted.

The NSWNMA said it would continue providing support to members of the Tamworth Base Hospital Branch until all issues are addressed.

The NSWNMA will return to the Industrial Relations Commission of NSW in coming weeks to discuss the disputes over staffing in the maternity unit and the emergency department.

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