



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

General Secretary: Brett Holmes | Assistant General Secretary: Judith Kiejda
P (02) 8595 1234 | www.facebook.com/nswnma | twitter.com/nswnma

6 April, 2016

Cuts to admin impact clinical services at new Byron Hospital

Byron Shire Community Health nurses who are relocating to the new Byron Central Hospital will be forced to take on administrative duties after management announced plans to amalgamate three full time Community Health Administrative Officer Positions into one Administrative team at the new hospital.

The proposed changes will have a negative impact on the nurses' workload and capacity to sustain their current clinical services to the community.

Lead Organiser of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA), Darius Altman, said the amalgamation of administration staff would add to clinician's workloads and take valuable time away from patients and clients.

"These nurses are trained in community health and shouldn't be expected to sacrifice valuable face to face time with patients to tend to non-nursing duties, such as patient registrations, taking appointment bookings and service enquiries," Mr Altman said.

"These cost-saving measures need to stop. Growing community demand for health services is already putting nurses under a great deal of pressure to deliver a high quality standard of care. Removing direct Administrative support for Community Health Staff only complicates things and puts patient safety at risk.

"We understand the need to streamline some services and staffing structures given three sites are being rolled into one but it's unacceptable to remove designated Community Health administration staff altogether."

"The Tweed/Byron area also has some of the lowest immunisation rates in Australia and the Byron Community Nursing Service is responsible for actively boosting these numbers. A large part of that work is undertaken by the Nurse Immunisation Coordinator. We have been advised that this may be the only part of Community Health service that is allowed designated administration support but this has not been formally clarified and the Community Health team is still unsure about how this position will function. Without admin support to this role, the government's 'No Jab No Pay' immunisation measure cannot reach its full potential to proactively reduce preventable diseases in the Byron area."

These are the services that the highly specialised Byron Shire Community Nursing team currently provide:

- Child and Family Health – home visiting and clinics for mothers and infants
- Antenatal Educators and Antenatal Classes
- Immunisation Coordinator – Clinics and counselling, all immunisation accredited nurses in the team
- School Health Services and Before School Screening, Asthma and Anaphylaxis training
- Audiometry Services – babies, children and adults
- Chronic Care- Cardiac and Respiratory and Pulmonary and Cardiac Rehabilitation Groups
- Men's Health – Prostate Cancer, continence and catheter care for men



- Diabetes Educator- Chronic and complex care and Gestational Diabetes management
- Palliative Care- support and care for people dying at home
- Wound CARE Specialists- Chronic and complex wound care provided in the home.
- Hospital Discharge – follow up care after discharge with wounds, breast drains, catheters
- Holistic assessment and referrals and care coordination
- Hospital in the Home- Intravenous therapy and IV Antibiotics

The Byron Shire Community Nursing team currently receive Admin Support for the provision of all these services but there is concern around how reductions will affect the ability to provide high quality care in the future.

The NSWNMA will continue to work with the Byron Shire Community Nurses branch to ensure the new Byron Central Hospital's Community Health facility, due to open early May this year, can provide a safe and reliable service to the local community.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Darius Altman, Lead Organiser, NSWNMA 0414 550 058

Danielle Mahoney, Media Advisor, NSWNMA 0488 015 317