



NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION

MEDIA RELEASE

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Concerns for patient safety at new Byron hospital

At a combined NSW Nurses and Midwives Association (NSWNMA) branch meeting, Mullumbimby War Memorial & District and Byron District Hospital branches unanimously agreed to inform the community of nursing staff's grave concerns regarding patient safety at the new Byron Central Hospital.

The facade and physical resourcing of Byron Central Hospital would lead the community to believe that it is a state of the art hospital equipped to provide safe effective patient care but the branches believe the community has been misled.

There is one vital ingredient missing - adequate nursing staff levels. The clear mismatch between nursing staff and patient numbers does not provide safe care for the number and complexity of the patients admitted. Nursing staff are stressed, exhausted, frustrated and extremely concerned about patients missing care. These concerns have been voiced to management with no acknowledgement or action to address the issues.

NSWNMA General Secretary, Brett Holmes, said the nurses needed community support to help highlight the issues and improve the situation.

"We're calling on the public to send a message to the Baird government that ignoring their right to safe patient care is completely unacceptable," Mr Holmes said.

"The nursing staff, therefore, have no alternative but to request community support to increase staffing levels in all areas of Byron Central Hospital so that they can do what they do best - provide safe, effective nursing care for their communities."

The branches will meet again during the week commencing 8 August. If there is still no response from Tweed Byron Health Service Group or Byron Central Hospital management at this point, escalated industrial action will be considered to protect the community.

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