



31 August, 2016

## Lismore ED staffing issues resolved in final hours

Nurses have resolved urgent understaffing issues with management at the eleventh hour of negotiations ahead of tomorrow's opening of the new emergency department.

The NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) Lismore Base Hospital branch raised the issue with the Northern NSW Local Health District (NNLHD) last week and have spent the last few days negotiating for an additional staff member to be rostered on the overnight shift.

NSWNMA General Secretary, Brett Holmes said nurses were relieved to come to an agreement before moving into the new unit.

"Management has agreed to all seven requests from our members, which includes an additional designated 10 hour position on night duty without depleting the position normally allocated to the rest of the hospital. This position will be implemented for a four week trial period until 30 September. Following this, once we have a clear understanding of how efficient the new staffing model is, the branch and management will reassess staffing levels," said Mr Holmes.

"In addition, Executive Management will meet regularly with staff to review activity, models of care, rosters, patient flow and general issues that are of concern to staff.

"It's a huge win for patient safety and our members are continuing to stand up for the best possible care that they can deliver. With the right level of staffing, the new emergency department will be a better place to work and a better place for patients to be cared for."

Lismore Base Hospital's emergency department refurbishment is four times the size of the current unit and expected to experience an average 10 to 15 per cent increase in demand once it opens. The new design will add an additional six beds to the acute section and four beds to the short stay unit.

The NSWNMA and Lismore Base Hospital branch will review the experience of the trial in conjunction with management at the end of the month with a view to determine longer term staffing needs.

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