



NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION

MEDIA RELEASE

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Aged care nurse cuts prompt safety concerns in Parramatta

Aged care nurses at Thomas Street Lodge in Sydney's West fear residents' care and safety will be compromised again, following a restructure to cut overall nursing and care staff at the facility.

Members of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) were advised last month of Anglicare's plan to reduce registered nurse hours by 34 per cent a fortnight and carer hours a further 10 per cent a fortnight.

NSWNMA General Secretary, Brett Holmes, said the aged care nurses immediately expressed concerns over the adverse impacts to residents' care, their safety and associated workload issues for the remaining staff.

"Thomas Street Lodge is a well-known residential aged care facility in the Parramatta area and provides care for a number of residents with high-care needs, including specialised dementia care and other behavioural care needs," said Mr Holmes.

"Anglicare's planned nursing staff cuts would result in a loss of nine minutes of care per resident. It might not sound like much but in a residential aged care setting like this, nine minutes is significant.

"Our members have highlighted that daily showers or bath routines would be impacted, along with residents' meal times.

"Members have also expressed concerns for those residents who require observations every 15 minutes and others who require assistance to be turned every two hours to avoid pressure sores.

"The highly specialised nursing care provided to these acutely unwell residents cannot be underestimated.

"Anglicare has a duty of care to acknowledge that this is often a challenging care environment, as well as the increased risk of harm to residents and staff that such a reduction in staffing hours would result in.

"At the same time, we note Anglicare has implemented processes to restore care requirements and meet accreditation standards at Thomas Street Lodge, since taking over the facility from Ark Health Care in July last year.

"It would be remiss of Anglicare to compromise those care requirements and standards by drastically reducing nursing and care staff hours."

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