



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

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No reprieve in sight for Griffith Base Hospital staff

Less than a week out from Christmas and the New Year, members of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) are worried about safe staffing levels in multiple wards at Griffith Base Hospital, compounded by up to 26 full-time equivalent vacant nursing positions.

Over recent weeks, members of the NSWNMA's Griffith Base Hospital branch have highlighted significant short-staffing concerns to Murrumbidgee Local Health District and pleaded for outstanding job vacancies to be filled urgently prior to the busy holiday season.

NSWNMA General Secretary, Brett Holmes, said the branch was disappointed the Local Health District hadn't addressed all of the critical staffing issues, particularly in specialty areas like maternity services, intensive care, operating theatres and the emergency department.

"The Local Health District has known about the nurse staffing issues inside Griffith Base for the past six months and while some minor changes have occurred to escalation plans, critical patient safety concerns linked to adequate staffing still remain," said Mr Holmes.

"Our members have told us there are up to 26 full-time equivalent nursing positions currently vacant, eight of those vacancies are within maternity services alone and we understand the hospital is reliant on 18 agency staff covering the remaining shortfalls across many specialty areas.

"The short-staffing has forced a large number of permanent part-time nurses feeling obligated to work additional uncontracted shifts and full-time staff working regular overtime, leaving management with little capacity to backfill any unexpected sick leave.

"Despite the branch raising these concerns repeatedly with little improvement, many of our members believe it's now impacting on their ability to deliver safe patient care.

"Our members are part of this community and they want to provide the best healthcare possible to the people of Griffith and the surrounding areas, but they cannot continue under these conditions."

Members of the NSWNMA Griffith Base Hospital branch have called on Murrumbidgee Local Health District to be proactive in its recruitment strategies and are seeking support from the local community.

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