



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

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Public health promise to Northern Beaches locals broken

As activity returns to pre-pandemic levels inside Sydney's Northern Beaches Hospital, concerns are rife that private operator, Healthscope, is not living up to its commitments to the local community.

Despite the Berejiklian Government promising locals their new hospital would offer the same level of care as any equivalent public hospital in NSW, Healthscope is shifting away from the government's promise, just two years into their 20-year contract.

NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) General Secretary, Brett Holmes, said the Berejiklian Government's claims have turned out to be false, with Healthscope attempting to remove the protections of minimum nursing care numbers from the local community, which all other NSW residents receive.

"When Northern Beaches Hospital opened its doors in late 2018, patients and their families were assured access to equivalent public health care and private health services. Now, Healthscope is breaking that promise by cutting the legal requirement for minimum nursing hours and other important conditions" said Mr Holmes.

"Healthscope wants to remove minimum staffing requirements inside the hospital, pulling the rug out from under nurses and midwives who transferred across from the publicly-run former Manly and Mona Vale hospitals.

"Healthscope is refusing a ten-hour break between shifts for nurses and midwives, which aims to keep patients safe by reducing fatigue among the staff.

"Our members have also told us they're constantly missing breaks within their shifts now that elective surgery is returning to pre-COVID-19 levels.

"Healthscope will also strip back a host of other working conditions, including maternity and carers leave.

"The nurses and midwives at Northern Beaches Hospital want to continue providing a safe level of care to their community, but Healthscope's plan will only make that harder.

"Research clearly tells us that reducing the numbers of qualified nursing hours leads to poorer patient outcomes.

"This could mean less nurses, working more fatigued across the hospital," Mr Holmes concluded.

The NSWNMA is in talks over a new enterprise agreement with Healthscope, including members working at Northern Beaches Hospital.



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The NSWNMA is calling on Healthscope to live up to its promises to the government and the Northern Beaches community.

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