



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

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Lismore nurses upset over cruel paid parking blow

Local nurses and midwives have joined the angry chorus of health and community staff in opposing plans by Lismore City Council to reintroduce paid parking around Lismore Base Hospital.

The free, all day street parking scheme was introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic in good faith by Lismore City Council to assist the community accessing the hospital.

Members of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) Lismore Base Hospital branch believe Council's decision to cancel the scheme and enforce paid parking from next Monday (18 January) is premature and cruel.

NSWNMA Lismore Base Hospital Branch Secretary, Gil Wilson, said the backflip was extremely disappointing and clearly motivated to raise revenue for the council.

"We're barely into the new year, the pandemic is ongoing and already we've got nurses, midwives and all other health workers and hospital staff being treated like cash cows. It's a joke," said Mr Wilson.

"Have they forgotten that public sector workers were all slapped with a 0.3% wage freeze last year and we're staring down a 1.5% wages cap this year? We certainly haven't forgotten. As health workers, we're not exactly rolling in cash.

"On one hand, we had our Premier trying to gift us with front-row fireworks seats and now we've got our local council slugging us premium fees to park at our hospital – talk about robbing Peter to pay Paul.

"The council should do the honourable thing and maintain the free street parking scheme for the foreseeable future. They should not be punishing health workers and hospital visitors when we're still responding to a global health pandemic."

NB: NSWNMA Lismore Base Hospital Branch Secretary, Gil Wilson, is available for comment today on request.

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