



15 September, 2021

## Increase our health workforce before it's too late

The NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) has renewed calls for the state government to fast-track the remainder of a nursing and midwifery workforce 'boost', following the release of hospital data outlining the widespread pressures across public hospitals.

The latest [Bureau of Health Information](#) quarterly report shows even prior to the extraordinary strain of the current COVID-19 outbreak, public hospital emergency departments were facing record-high attendances and patients were waiting longer.

NSWNMA General Secretary, Brett Holmes, said the April to June data further reinforced the urgent need for more nurses and midwives to be recruited to deliver the level of safe care every patient required.

"Once again we've got record numbers of people seeking urgent medical care at their public hospitals. More patients, arriving very unwell, and longer wait times are all an unfortunate recipe for poorer health outcomes," said Mr Holmes.

"Add to that a record number of babies delivered, and the highest number of elective surgeries ever performed for the quarter, and the unprecedented demand being placed on our health workforce is apparent.

"Our members have repeatedly called for nurse-to-patient ratios to be introduced across our health system to meet the ever-increasing demand, yet they continue to be ignored by the government.

"The government must bring forward the rest of its planned workforce 'boost' and better support the growing number of fatigued and burnt-out nurses and midwives who have continued to battle on under mounting pressures.

"Nurses and midwives across NSW deserve more than token acknowledgements by the government for their ongoing efforts.

"Nurses and midwives should be afforded adequate recognition for keeping our public hospitals open and deserve to be heard when raising serious patient safety or professional concerns.

"We need the right numbers of nurses and midwives, with the right skills, to be available at the right time – that includes shift-by-shift ratios across areas such as emergency departments, critical care units, maternity services and acute mental health units."

The NSWNMA is continuing to support nurses and midwives who are confronting the ongoing pandemic, as well as pursuing the shared goal of mandated nurse-to-patient ratios in NSW.

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