



NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION

# MEDIA RELEASE

General Secretary: Brett Holmes | Assistant General Secretary: Judith Kiejda

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## NSW Health Minister acknowledges need for more nurses and midwives

NSW Health Minister, Brad Hazzard, spoke frankly with nurses and midwives at the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) annual conference today, recognising the role and responsibility of the Ministry to make sure local health districts are acting responsibly when it comes to safe staffing.

"I want to continue having discussions about how we get the staffing that is needed through the various hospitals and 15 local health districts (LHDs)," Mr Hazzard said.

"We have a very big system and it's a very complex system: fifteen local health districts with 230 hospitals and multi-purpose services. To try and make sure that each and every one of those are following policies and agreements in the Awards is challenging. As a Minister it's extremely challenging.

"I've indicated to the Ministry that they have to take a more active role in working with the LHDs to make sure that staffing arrangements are done in an open and honest way.

"Nurses are entitled to have the staff to do the job and that needs to be done in a transparent way. The Ministry takes on the role and responsibility to ensure the LHDs and individual hospitals are making sure staff are appropriately being employed."

Minister Hazzard also raised the issue of diluted skill mix - a widespread problem that the NSWNMA has been campaigning to improve as part of its campaign for ratios.

"A friend of mine who is a nurse said quite often an Assistant in Nursing would be put on in place of an Enrolled Nurse. There are a range of other issues and there are things we need to address and I promise you that I am going to continue those discussions with Brett (NSWNMA General Secretary) on your behalf," Mr Hazzard said.

Following his address, the Minister took questions from the floor and vowed to follow up concerns from members around staffing issues at their facilities.

"We can't always agree but I will listen and I will fight on your behalf".

NSWNMA General Secretary, Brett Holmes, thanked the Minister for the respect he has shown the Association and its members.

"I want to thank you for coming today Minister, and we look forward to continuing to have discussions. You've seen the passion of our members and the conviction around the delivery of safe patient care and doing that on a shift by shift basis. We need transparency, we need a guaranteed system and that's why we'll continue to campaign for ratios here in our public health system," Mr Holmes said.

Tomorrow morning, Leader of the NSW Opposition, the Hon Luke Foley MP, will address delegates and members.



The 73<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference concludes on Friday, July 27 at Rosehill Gardens Grand Pavilion, Sydney.

## **\*\* Media Alert \*\***

*Media are welcome to attend public addresses during the NSWNMA's 73<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference in the Grand Pavilion at Rosehill Gardens.*

### **FRIDAY, 27 JULY**

**10am to 10.30am** – The Hon Luke Foley MP, Leader of the NSW Opposition

**11.05am to 11.45am** – ANMF Federal Secretary, Annie Butler

*NB: Notices of motion and General Business items are closed to media. You can also follow the Annual Conference via social media, using [@nswnma](#) and [#NSWNMAConf](#)*

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