



Nurses • Midwives • Mental Health Nurses
Respect our work.

Public Sector EBA Update No 36 - 24 January 2012

Victorian Public Sector Nurses, Midwives and Mental Health Nurses

Fair Work negotiations

Negotiations recommenced in Fair Work Australia on Monday 23 January 2012 with the Baillieu Government, the Victorian Hospitals Industrial Association (VHIA) and the ANF presenting revised positions to each other as requested by Commissioner Gooley.

The ANF presented a comprehensive revised written position in the form of the current EBA, amended to include key elements of our claim for improved ratios and conditions. Disappointingly, the Baillieu Government and VHIA only provided a verbal position to ANF and Commissioner Gooley. Obviously this is frustrating negotiations and our capacity to report back to members. The ANF has never been served with a written log of claims. The Baillieu Government's lawyers referred to its log of claims as a "state secret" in Fair Work Australia in late December.

ANF is following up with the Baillieu Government and VHIA to confirm their verbal position. The Baillieu Government's and VHIA's verbal position did not result in progress on resolving members' concerns on unlimited short shifts or the introduction of unlimited Health Assistants within existing ratios, or on wage increases.

Commissioner Gooley has relisted the negotiations for 9.00am Friday 3 February 2012.

Resignations

ANF officials continue meetings in all public sector workplaces to answer members' queries on mass resignations of public sector nurses and midwives, as well as other workplace industrial and professional issues.

As was apparent from our statewide meeting in December last year, many members see this as a rational reaction to any proposal that would see their professional obligations compromised, and their conditions deteriorate. It is critical that members attend the meetings in their workplace to discuss this issue.

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Other activities

The frustration felt by our membership has seen many members directly approach both the Health Minister, David Davis, and the Premier, Ted Baillieu. Perhaps the most significant of these was when our members at Frankston Hospital approached Health Minister Davis during a recent visit to their workplace. There is no doubt amongst those who saw the television coverage of his visit that it was a difficult time for the Minister. Mr Davis would have left Frankston Hospital that day with a better understanding about how strongly Victorian nurses and midwives feel about retaining and improving nurse/midwife patient ratios and maintaining patient safety.

Members are encouraged to keep up this dialogue with key Baillieu Government members, and those in marginal seats, to ensure they recognise the impact of their position.

For information about participating in the Respect Our Work community information stall on Australia Day at Federation Square go to www.facebook.com/respectourwork

New petition

ANF (Vic Branch) launched a new petition at the public sector Job Reps meeting on Saturday 21 January 2012. These petitions are a great way to start a conversation with people who may not know what the Baillieu Government is planning and may not know that nurses and midwives are still fighting to keep safe staffing levels to protect Victorians who need hospital care. You can download the petition at www.tiny.cc/7ayaz

New community flier

Members have letterbox dropped thousands of fliers in their neighbourhoods. This flier has been revised and is at the printers. We will advise members when it will be available for collection from the ANF office or your Organiser.

New advertising campaign

The ANF, with the invaluable assistance of our members, has produced a series of television advertisements that will go to air on Wednesday 25 January 2012 and continue through February. These advertisements will be available via our YouTube channel very soon.

The ANF has also commissioned a number of new static billboards throughout Melbourne and mobile billboards throughout regional Victoria. You'll also see our message on buses and trains. It is crucial to our success that the community recognises the deep-felt concerns of members and that the Government's funding cut-backs to the public health system, which will result in nurses and midwives being unable to provide care, are exposed.