

17 January 2022

Mr Gerard Hayes
Health Services Union
L2/109 Pitt Street
SYDNEY NSW 1215

Attention: Jeremy Lappin – Industrial Officer

Via email: Jeremy.Lappin@hsu.asn.au and secretary@hsu.asn.au

Dear Mr Hayes,

Re: Dispute – Restructure of Lower Hunter Sector Maintenance Service and New Maitland Hospital

Thank you for your correspondence dated 7 January 2022 and the subsequent discussion via the Dispute Committee meeting held on the same date providing your members feedback and the HSU response including proposals for resolution; and further correspondence dated 12 January 2022.

On behalf of the District, I provide the following response:

Gardeners

***Your Proposal** : The HSU proposes that all current gardener positions are retained. That is, the two Maitland Hospital gardener positions and the two gardener positions at Kurri Kurri and Cessnock be maintained.*

It remains the position of the District that the requirement for gardening services across the Lower Hunter Sector (LHS) can be provided within the current resources of 1.6FTE which is proposed to increase to 2.0FTE and will form part of a centralised maintenance team that will be located at the new Maitland Hospital as identified in the proposed Maintenance Restructure for LHS. These positions will also be supported by the positions of Handyperson who are allocated to each site.

As you are aware the two gardeners (2.0FTE) currently based at the current Maitland Hospital are employees of HealthShare NSW and did not transition to the District in December 2021 when Security and Wardsperson were returned to the management of the District.

Unfortunately the District have been prevented from communicating with not only these two employees but all maintenance staff about the proposed LHS Maintenance Restructure due to the HSU invoking the dispute settling procedures under Clause 26 of the Health Employees Conditions of Employment (State) Award.

I am advised that the gardening requirements of the New Maitland Hospital will differ significantly from the current site. The New Maitland Hospital will benefit from the selection of plants and vegetation that will be low maintenance and, in turn, this will reduce the amount of hours required for gardening services.

At this time it is the District's position that the proposed Maintenance Restructure for the Lower Hunter Sector remains necessary to support the new facility maintenance requirements of the new hospital and that of the existing facilities.

Your request to be provided with the following documents cannot be met.

1. COVARIS Pty Ltd report
2. The report of the internal review by HNE Engineering and Management team
3. The report associated with the assessment of the gardening / grounds work

Yours sincerely,



Christine Osborne
A/General Manager
Lower Hunter Sector