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***“The Best of Health”***

19 May, 2021

Mr Gerard Hayes, Secretary  
Health Services Union, NSW  
Level 2, 109 Pitt Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

***Delivered via email to:*** tom.stevanja@hsu.asn.au

Dear Mr Hayes,

**Re: Change of Patient Liaison Rosters**

Albury Wodonga Health (AWH) thanks you for your email of 14 May, 2021, regarding the proposed change of roster for the Patient Liaison Officers (PLO) based at Albury and Wodonga Campuses.

Following review it was identified that the AWH representative supporting the consultation process consulted only with your Victorian counterpart, HWU, on this matter. This was an unintentional oversight on the part of AWH and we appreciate Mr Stevanja raising this matter to our attention.

AWH wish to notify of the following proposed change of roster for the Patient Liaison Officers (PLO) based at Albury and Wodonga Campuses.

**Background**

In early February, 2021 concerns were received in writing by two of the three PLO team members notifying their direct manager of workload pressures during weekend shifts and the need to work overtime to complete task required workload expectations.

Upon receipt of the concerns, the department manager undertook a review of the PLO team member's functions on weekend shifts and how these differed to weekday work levels to ascertain why team members felt that the workload had increased since February, 2021.

During the review it became clear that PLO team members had, over time, assumed duties which should be undertaken by front office administration staff such as patient admissions and answering front office phone calls and emergency department error analysis. Further to this, it was found that the work that had accumulated from the two days (Thursday and Friday) during the week (which were not worked by PLO staff due to the requirement for weekend shifts) was accumulating on week days and leaving a backlog of work to be undertaken during weekend shifts.

### **Proposed changes**

Integration of PLO shifts from weekends to weekdays.

AWH believes this will address the concerns of staff within the PLO team, removing the requirement and expectation to undertake duties outside of the inherent requirements of their positions and allowing PLO team members to focus on key elements of their workload as described within their position description. Cost savings from weekend penalties would be utilised to implement an extra PLO shift on a Monday to mitigate risk of a single PLO team member being overloaded by workload build-up over the weekend.

### **Current situation**

Consultation has been undertaken with staff who would be affected by the proposed changes in rosters, commencing with the provision of written meeting requests to staff on 7 April, 2021, notifying them of proposed changes and inviting consultation. All staff were advised that they were welcome to bring along a support person or union representative and meetings were held with each of the affected employees on 13 April, 2021.

During these meetings employees were welcomed and encouraged to give feedback in regard to the impact, if any, of the proposed change to rostered hours and suggestions as to how the health service could otherwise support the concerns of the PLO team members prior to considering implementation of the proposed changes.

At 11 May, 2021 only two of the three employee's affected had lodged further written concerns (via email) with feedback and solutions for their concerns, aside from the loss of weekend penalties given by their manager, with the third team member (our NSW employee and your member) being followed up by the manager and discussing the process in person on 11 May, 2021, due to concerns by the manager that AWH had not received any written correspondence post the initial discussion and to ensure that all concerns / suggestions had been submitted, reviewed and responded to prior to a decision being made on implementation of proposed changes.

It should be noted that no decision has been or will be taken by the health service until consultation has been finalised. We look forward to your response to the proposed changes outlined in this letter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Virginia Boyd".

**Virginia Boyd**  
Executive Director – People & Culture