

TRIM: NSHD/23/6693

Mr Gerrard Hayes  
General Secretary  
Health Services Union  
L2/109 Pitt St  
Sydney NSW 1215

**Via Email:** [info@hsu.asn.au](mailto:info@hsu.asn.au)

Dear Mr Hayes

**RE: Notification of proposed changes to Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital (HKH) Social Work Department roster**

I write with reference to proposed changes regarding the rostering arrangements related to the HKH Social Work Department extending to weekend rostering and on call allocations.

The HKH Social Work Department is a Northern Sydney Local Health District (NSLHD) team that provides interventions for inpatients, outpatients, families and carers.

Social Workers aim to minimise the impact of illness and hospitalisation through targeted services including psychosocial assessments, counselling, crisis and trauma support, advocacy, service co-ordination and resource education.

The recent redevelopment and expansion of clinical services at HKH has shown an increase in emergency department presentations and demand for a social work service to available more frequently.

In reviewing the current service model, the need for consistent crisis response has been identified. NSLHD is proposing to increase the amount of rostered shifts and on-call allocations to cover 7 days a week. As part of this proposal, the Social Work department would continue to cover all public holidays.

On-call rostering allows for on duty after-hours staff to access specialised and bespoke clinical skills to support in emergency situations. Specifically provision of social work crisis response will assist in domestic and family violence, child protection, miscarriage/stillbirth, sudden/unexpected death and traumatic injury.

*Northern Sydney Local Health District is located on the traditional lands of the Eora Nation*

All correspondence to be emailed or sent to: Northern Sydney Local Health District  
[NSLHD-Mail@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:NSLHD-Mail@health.nsw.gov.au) ABN 63 834 171 987

PO Box 4007  
Hornsby Ku-ring-gai  
Hornsby  
Tel (02) 9462 9955 Fax (02) 9462 1029



Currently, the Social Work Department are performing duties in accordance with the following roster and on call allocation

Day	CURRENT		PROPOSED	
	Rostered Shift	On Call Allocation	Rostered Shift	On Call Allocation
Monday	08:00-16:30	Nil	08:00-16:30	16:30 – 08:00
Tuesday	08:00-16:30	Nil	08:00-16:30	16:30 – 08:00
Wednesday	08:00-16:30	Nil	08:00-16:30	16:30 – 08:00
Thursday	08:00-16:30	Nil	08:00-16:30	16:30 – 08:00
Friday	08:00-16:30	17:00 – 06:00	08:00-16:30	16:30 – 08:00
Saturday	Nil	06:00 – 18:00 & 18:00 – 06:00	08:00-16:30	16:30 – 08:00
Sunday	Nil	06:00 – 18:00 & 18:00 – 06:00	08:00-16:30	16:30 – 08:00
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>

As demonstrated above, this change increases the total amount of shifts by two (2) and the total amount of on call allocations by 2. While there will be additional on-call rostering during weekdays, a key benefit to the service is a dedicated rostered staff member on weekend day shift, eliminating the need for on-call duties during weekend day shift. All night shifts will be covered by an on-call allocation.

In order to support this change, NSLHD are proposing to increase staffing levels by 1FTE to assist with covering the additional rostered shifts on weekends and on call allocations. This additional FTE will be classified as a Social Worker Level 3.

In addition, the creation of a casual pool to increase head count within the team can be established to assist with the extra shifts created as part of the change.

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Key benefits identified by NSLHD include:

- Clinical Lead coverage on weekend shifts;
- Increased access to Social Work resources for Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital;
- Effective management of incidents overnight;
- Assisting clinical colleagues across Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital and strengthening overall service delivery;
- Improved responsiveness and access to a crisis response 24 hours/day.

All HKH Social Workers are currently established against position numbers which identify them as Rotating Shift employees.

The staff group have been briefed in relation to this change, however formal consultation is due to commence from the date of this letter. Staff impacted by this proposal will have the opportunity to raise concerns directly with management and HR representatives.

NSLHD welcomes a 2 week period of consultation with the association. If the association or your members have any queries or concerns regarding this, please contact Gwen Hickey Rehabilitation and Aged Care Services, Outpatient Services and Allied Health Manager HKH via [Gwen.Hickey@health.gov.au](mailto:Gwen.Hickey@health.gov.au).

Alternatively, you may wish to contact Mr Brennan Wawrzyk, Senior HR Business Partner, at [Brennan.Wawrzyk@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Brennan.Wawrzyk@health.nsw.gov.au).

Yours sincerely



Gwen Hickey

Rehabilitation and Aged Care Services, Outpatient Services and Allied Health Manager  
Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital

15/02/2023

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