



27 August 2021

SW: MN 2021-68

Mr Gerard Hayes  
Health Services Union  
*By email: secretary@hsu.asn.au*

Dear Mr Hayes

I am writing to advise you of proposed changes to the Grafton Base Hospital, Operating Theatres roster which has the potential to affect several of your members'.

Northern NSW Local Health District has recently provided enhancement to the staffing FTE for the Operating Theatres in response to growth of the elective waiting list and the increase in the numbers of patients requiring emergency surgery in order to mitigate the large amounts of staffing overtime that had been experienced.

We are pleased to advise recruitment to these enhanced positions is progressing and we are now in a position to commence implementation of altered roster arrangements to accommodate these positions, to better manage the staff fatigue and reduce unplanned overtime. These proposed roster changes include extended operating times to 1830 hours and central sterilising hours to 2030 hours.

### Current Rostering Arrangements

#### Operations Assistants

- Morning shifts (8 hours) Monday to Friday with varied start times (0700, 0800, 0930 hours) Operations Assistants (OA)
- One OA rostered Saturday and Sunday, morning shifts (8 hours) with start time 0800 hours

#### Central Sterilising Department (CSD)

- Sterilisation technicians - Monday to Friday 8-hour morning shifts with start times 0730, 0800, 0900 hours and currently with the mobile CSD an early afternoon shift with a start time of 1030 hours
- Sterilisation technician – Saturday and Sunday 8-hour morning shifts commencing 0800 hours
- **Temporary** Central sterilising porter – this position will only be required whilst the upgrade to the current sterilising department is conducted and the mobile unit remains in use. The roster will continue to include a 0830 – 1900 hours shift for the transportation of equipment from the operating theatres to the mobile sterilising unit.

#### Administrative Officer – Stock Management

- This position has commenced and works 30 hours per week morning shift.

## Proposed Rostering Arrangements

The roster enhancements include the addition of a Health Service Manager (HSM) for the CSD 1FTE and an Administration Officer 0.79 FTE stock management.

### Operations Assistants

An adjustment of start times across the new operating time will occur utilising the same FTE.

- **No change** Morning shifts (8 hours) Monday to Friday with varied start times (0730, 0800, 0930 hours) Operations Assistants (OA).
- **No change** One OA rostered Saturday and Sunday, morning shifts (8 hours) with start time 0800 hours.
- **New** Afternoon shifts (1030 hours – 1900 hours or 1100 hours – 1930 hours or 1200 hours – 2030 hours). This shift will support the extended operating times and the management of patients during their theatre journey.

### CSD

- **New** HSM will work 0830 – 1730 hours
- **Time change only** Sterilisation technicians – Monday to Friday 8-hour morning shifts with start times 0730, 0800, 0930 hours and currently with the mobile CSD an early afternoon shift with a start time of 1030 hours. The existing 0900 start is proposed to move to a 0930 start time.
- **New** The rotating roster will include an evening shift (1200 hours – 2030 hours). This shift will ensure essential equipment is processed and sterilised at the completion of the planned operative day.
- **No change** Saturday and Sunday 8-hour morning shifts commencing 0800 hours.
- **Temporary** Central sterilising porter – this position will only be required whilst the upgrade to the current sterilising department is conducted and the mobile unit remains in use. The roster will continue to include a 0830 – 1900 hours shift for the transportation of equipment from the operating theatres to the mobile sterilising unit.

### Administrative Officer – Stock Management

- **No change** 30 hours per week morning shift.

Staff have been advised of these proposed changes during a ward 26 August 2021. In line with the consultative provisions of the Health Employees Conditions of Employment (State) Award 2019, I am writing to invite you to comment on the proposed changes to the Operating Theatre roster.

You may respond to the proposed changes by addressing any comments in writing to Ms Sharon Wright, Director Nursing and Midwifery, Clarence Health Service via email: [Sharon.Wright@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Sharon.Wright@health.nsw.gov.au) within 10 business days from the date of this letter.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me on 02 6641 8411.

Yours sincerely



**Sharon Wright**  
Director of Nursing & Midwifery  
Clarence Health Service