

22 December 2021

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 – New Maitland Hospital (NMH): Proposed Security & Wardsperson Model

Thank you for your correspondence dated 15 December 2021 following the disputes resolution committee meeting concerning the proposed Security and Wardsperson Model for the New Maitland Hospital (NMH).

In reference to your preliminary views and request for additional information, I provide the following response:

Preliminary views of the HSU on the Proposed Restructure:

- 1. A reduction in security presence throughout the hospital of 5.5FTE is not justified and is unreasonable.*

The proposed structure is designed to split HSA duties into defined roles of either Security or Wardsperson for a defined roster period of 3 months. The benefit of this separation is to allow certainty of service for clinical departments who require continued wardsperson/portering capacity to maintain efficient clinical workflow. e.g. imaging transfers, ED to Inpatient units transfers. The separation of the security function allows defined responses to code blacks, seclusion events and planned security functions such as internal patrols.

The HSA Wardsperson on shift will continue to maintain their security licence. The HSA Wardsperson will function as effective escalation for scenarios where enhancements to the standard rostered security are required. Therefore the overall security presence is maintained within the building.

- 2. 7.1FTE Security Officer positions is not sufficient to undertake the work required of Security Officers and ensure the safety of the public, staff and Security Officers. This allocation of FTE would result in as little as 1 Security Officer being on shift at any one time.*

An increase of 1 FTE dedicated Security Officer has been provided, and will be recruited. In addition, the new position of 1 FTE Security/Wardsperson Manager who will need to be

a licenced security officer has effectively increased the number of qualified security trained staff.

A risk assessment undertaken by the Security Manager LHD has determined that this staffing level is acceptable. It considers the hospital infrastructure and location, including historical code blacks/seclusion events and benchmarking with other LHD hospitals to determine the appropriate Security Officer presence required.

In combination with the HSA on shift Wardsperson escalation capacity in the event of simultaneous code blacks and seclusion activities, the LHD has determined there is ample security presence to maintain safe and effective operations.

The District will undertake a continual review from the opening of the new hospital to monitor security/wardsperson activities.

3. An increase in Wardsperson FTE of 1.4 is not sufficient to address the uplift in work associated with a hospital with more than double the current footprint, extra duties associated with a larger morgue and viewing room, and extra duties associated with new MRI and CT machines.

The existing Wardsperson staffing complement is designed around the movement to NMH without an increase in bed numbers. Therefore the net movement of patients is not expected to increase relative to current the Maitland Hospital. This would include scenarios mentioned, such as mortuary.

Considering the size of the hospital, the New Maitland hospital is designed around a central lift core to allow for the efficient movement of patients. Current Maitland Hospital has a more distributed layout due to the continual additions throughout its history. In some cases, the travel times may be slightly increased relative to existing Maitland Hospital, by the order of seconds within each movement. In other cases, it is less. Overall the net effect impact is minimal.

Further, the separation of lifts into public and staff, along with the increase in the number of lifts, means minimal to no waiting. This contrasts with the current Maitland Hospital, where waiting in lifts is a significant pinch point.

4. We object to the proposal to use HSAs interchangeably as either a Security Officer or Wardsperson on a roster. That is likely to result in confusion about duties, disruption of reporting lines, and cause disharmony because employees may not receive their preference.

The proposal to have the HSAs work interchangeably as either a Security Officer or Wardsperson is on the premise of them retaining the salary of a HSA. While at the same time creating a new model that supports the recommendations of the "Anderson Review", which supports the move away from the hybrid HSA role to the distinct roles of Security Officer and Wardsperson.

An employee working in the role of Wardsperson will retain the salary of a HSA. It is expected that they will maintain a current security licence and can be scaled up into providing a security function if required. Business rules are under draft to manage this possibility.

The roster is constructed where the HSA will work a roster block of shifts in the role of Security Officer for a 3-month block and then rotate to working in the role of Wardsperson for a 3-month block. The roster has not been constructed where an individual would be rostered as a Security Officer for one day and then rostered to the next shift to work as a Wardsperson and then change to Security Officer again on the next shift.

If staff want to select their preference for a particular role e.g. Security Officer or Wardsperson, then it is the District's position that the individual should be remunerated at the classification of Security Officer or Wardsperson and not be remunerated at the classification of Health & Security Assistant.

5. Positions should be either full-time Security Officer or full-time Wardsperson.

If staff want to select their preference for a particular role, then it is the District's position that the individual should be remunerated at the classification of Security Officer or Wardsperson and not be remunerated at the classification of Health & Security Assistant.

6. We note any changes, for example members moving from HSA to Security Officer, should not result in a reduction in pay for current employees.

If the proposal to roster the current HSA's for a 3-month block as either a Security Officer or Wardsperson and then rotate in the next 3-month block to the other classification, they will continue to be paid at the rate of HSA.

If it is the preference of employees to work as strictly as either a Security Officer or as a Wardsperson, they would be remunerated at the level of salary applicable to those positions, which is currently less than the salary of a Health & Security Assistant. The employee would be entitled to three months' salary at their current salary of a HSA before being paid at the rate of a Security Officer or Wardsperson.

7. There must be sufficient employees in each position to cover the hospital's workload and to relieve for sick leave, ADOs, and annual leave etc. The proposed FTE appears insufficient.

The transition of Security Officers, Health & Security Assistants and Wardsperson from HealthShare NSW to the Maitland Hospital is effective from 20 December 2021. This included a budget transfer of salaries and wages and leave coverage.

The additional staffing of 1 FTE Security/Wardsperson Manager, 1 FTE Security Officer and 1.4 FTE Wardsperson, also carries a leave relief component.

Further Information Required:

- 1. Rosters or staffing plans which identify the proposed position/classifications working on each shift per day and each day per week, the duties associated with that position/classification, and the start and finish times of each shift for both Wardspersons and Security Officers.*

Please find attached the proposed roster information as requested.

As an explanation, the roster information provided shows the roster for a HSA Security undertaking Security duties, HSA Wardsperson undertaking Wardsperson duties and the roster for the dedicated 4.5FTE Wardspersons.

The roster tabs "Wardy+HSA" and "HSA+Security" shows the roster over a 3-month block for each of these roles where HSA Wardsperson will complete an 8-hour shift and HSA Security will complete 12-hour shifts.

We look forward to working with the HSU to resolve your members' concerns as we move to the New Maitland Hospital.

Yours sincerely,



Christine Osborne
General Manager
Lower Hunter Sector