

15 April 2024

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

By Email: info@hsu.asn.au

Attention: Ms Tracey Gaddelin at Tracey.Gaddelin@hsu.asn.au

Dear Mr Hayes

Clinical Information Department – Tamworth Hospital

I write to advise of a proposed changes in our Clinical information Department (CID) at Tamworth Hospital.

You may recall that some years ago, November 2021, we shared the news with the HSU that the Hospital was moving to the implementation of the Digital Medical Record (DMR). This was part of NSW Health strategy regarding records management.

This transition has progressed successfully thanks to the work of our CID team and their supervisors and managers throughout this time.

The impact of DMR has been very positive for the availability and access to records and has also led to a need to re-consider the hours of staffing for the Department.

It has now been assessed that the Department can move to a 5-day, Monday to Friday operation. This is in lieu of having the Department staffed until 7.00 pm during the week and in lieu of the two x 6-hour shifts on the weekend.

Ongoing discussions have been undertaken with staff throughout this period. When workload and job changes have been identified and where staff have advised their preference for working in a regular Monday to Friday arrangement this change has been accommodated.

Further, discussions have been held with CID customers regarding the need for access to paper records. Customers, especially our Emergency Department, Switchboard, Nursing management (including After Hours Nurse Managers) and Patient Services, have all reported their support for the

proposed change and are happy to follow the current process to retrieve any needed paper records after hours - noting that the CID has never been staffed on a 24 / 7 basis.

Our customers have also confirmed that changing the hours of operation of CID to business hours will not adversely affect patient safety or workload in the hospital from their perspective.

As was anticipated with the implementation of DMR, the need to obtain paper records has decreased significantly with only four (4) 'out of hours' requests made since mid-December 2023 to date (4 months) and it is anticipated this will decrease further.

We now feel that the time is right to make the next proposed change to fully move to the Monday to Friday operation. Discussions with staff and customers has resulted in an assessment the work currently being carried out on weekends and in the evening can be done during usual operating hours.

This change will not affect the current numbers of staff nor their status nor their contracted hours.

Also, the current work rotations between the five (5) work stations remain unchanged. This is where staff regularly rotate around the work stations of:

- Reception
- Record Preparation
- Admissions Scanning
- Emergency Department Scanning
- Quality Checking

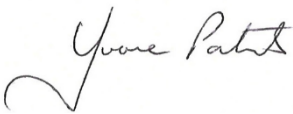
While working in a Monday to Friday arrangement staff will have the choice of flexible start times of 7.30 a.m, 8.00 a.m. or 8.30 a.m.

We are looking at finalising this last aspect of the move to DMR as at 1 June 2024.

We would welcome any comments or questions you may have about this proposal before that time.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me on (02) 6767 2015 or by email on Yvonne.patricks@health.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Yvonne Patricks
General Manager - Tamworth Hospital & Peel Sector
Hunter New England Local Health District