

## Ward and Food Services walk off the job

Dear Member,

Members in Ward Services walked off the job for on 2 and 4 July 2017 for stop work meetings, as part of their campaign of industrial action to get the ACT Government listening to its workers who need a decent pay increase.

Food Services have also held stop work meetings and are talking to patients and their family members (as well as community members) about the campaign, and why they are staying on the job but stopping to talk about the value of the work they do.

The 2.5% wage offer does not compensate workers for the vital support they play in keeping the hospital running. In the words of one union delegate, Support Services are the engine of the hospital. As a result of this action the HSU has had media attention from ABC Radio, WIN News, ABC News Canberra and 2CC.

### **The Wage Offer Is Not Our Only Concern**

Members under the Support Services Enterprise Agreement have requested the ACT Government value their work by offering a minimum of 3% but there's much more at stake here. Family-friendly rostering provisions are at threat of being diluted. Many workers in Food Services have built their lives around their current rosters and changes to these will have a significant impact on their family lives. Many union members under this agreement work more than 26 Sundays a year, already impacting on their family life, and the HSU maintains a strong stance on maintaining the current clause.

### **What Else Is On The Table?**

The HSU is also seeking that tea breaks be enshrined in the Agreement. Members in Food Services on their feet all day plating food, preparing meals and washing dishes.

Wardspersons walk excessive distances in providing patient support, whereas Hospital Assistants are often required to cover multiple wards, also walking long distances. It makes sense to have ten-minute breaks enshrined in the Enterprise Agreement and, for the first time in years, ACT Health is starting to listen.

### **What Happened Next?**

The HSU issued notices upon both The Canberra Hospital and Calvary Bruce Public Hospital, notifying of three up-to-two-hour work stoppages on Friday 6 July for Ward Services at The Canberra Hospital and 8-hour stoppages at both hospitals the following week. As a result, the ACT Government sought to terminate the Protected Action Ballot. Doing so would prevent members from stopping all forms of work and wearing campaign material for three months. The HSU with the support of key representatives pulled together information to stop this from happening.

This is an example of an employer who has finally recognised the vital work you do but is still unwilling to address the underlying issues – low wage offer, risks of your rostering provisions being diluted, and lack of respect for Wardspersons. All workers under the Support Services Enterprise Agreement deserve better from the ACT Government and we will continue to fight until they hear our concerns.

Not yet a member? Now's the time to join. Visit [www.hsu.asn.au/join](http://www.hsu.asn.au/join) or call the HSU on 1300 478 679. We're stronger together.

In unity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gerard Hayes', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Gerard Hayes  
Secretary, HSU NSW/ACT/QLD