

Catholic Healthcare Dispute Update

Dear Member,

The campaign to save the 5th week of annual leave for those staff that work afternoon and night shifts during the week continues.

Along with pursuing the dispute in the Fair Work Commission (where a hearing will occur in mid-December), we are also campaigning publicly.

See attached letter that was sent to all Catholic Churches in NSW, seeking their support to save this important condition.

As members would be aware, any effort to reduce conditions of employment of aged care workers is inconsistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

To any member who attends Catholic Churches, we would encourage you to share the letter with your fellow parishioners.

With the EBA also unresolved, it is very important that we continue the campaign to ensure you get a fair pay rise and no loss of conditions.

Members are encouraged to:

- Speak to your work mates about joining the HSU online at www.hsu.asn.au/join or phone 1300 478 679.
- Sign our petitions that are circulating in workplaces.

With over 300 million dollars in net assets, Catholic Healthcare can afford a fair outcome in this dispute.

In unity,



Gerard Hayes
Secretary, HSU NSW/ACT/QLD

13 November 2018
GH:RS 181112

Dear Parish Members,

The Health Services Union represents Aged Care workers across New South Wales, the ACT and Queensland.

I write to express concern and to seek your assistance in relation to serious concerns I have in relation to the conduct of Catholic Healthcare towards its Aged Care Staff.

Though I understand that Catholic Healthcare is a separate entity to the church, I am concerned that the reputation of the church more broadly could be damaged by this conduct, especially considering the amount of attention that Aged Care is currently receiving.

The primary concern is that Catholic Healthcare has unilaterally changed the criteria of who receives additional Annual Leave for working unsociable hours. This change in criteria will have the effect that hundreds of Catholic Healthcare staff will no longer receive additional Annual Leave for working evening and night shifts. Catholic Healthcare is seeking to set a precedent on this issue, with no other Aged Care provider seeking to restrict access to leave in this way.

As you may be aware, Aged Care workers already suffer under low wages and demanding work that is physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually demanding. The additional annual leave they receive (1 week additional that is pro rata for part time staff) is a small compensation for working hours that takes them away from their family time. Family time that could include the evening meal, putting children to bed, helping with homework or getting children ready in the morning. An additional week of Annual Leave is compensation far more important than money, it is time spent with the family.

We are also concerned that the residents of Catholic Healthcare Nursing Homes will be negatively impacted with staff morale already low and only going to get worse with this decision. Our older Australians deserve staff who are happy and healthy to care for them, not staff who feel under-valued and unsupported.

Our concern is that this action by Catholic Healthcare reflects a wider issue where the true meaning of its Catholic mission has been forgotten. We would hope that a reminder of *Rerum novarum* and its teaching that '*If through necessity or fear of a worse evil the workman accept harder conditions because an employer or contractor will afford him no better, he is made the victim of force and injustice*' will help guide a resolution. Especially as this attack on leave appears to be specifically at odds with Pope Francis's teachings that '*Men and*



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women, he continued, are not created solely for work but also must enjoy a "healthy culture of leisure," which "isn't laziness but a human need.'

We would be grateful if you contacted the CEO of Catholic Healthcare, Mr David Maher by emailing him directly at dmaher@chcs.com.au or phoning [1800 225 474](tel:1800225474) to express your support for aged care workers and to ask Catholic Healthcare to show compassion and not reduce the annual leave for its staff.

Any questions about these issues of concern or if your parish would like to hear more about any issues related to Aged Care, email agedcare@hsu.asn.au .

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gerard Hayes', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Gerard Hayes
HSU NSW ACT QLD Secretary.