

Gosford Hospital Sub Branch Endorses Action in Patient Enquiries Safety Dispute

Dear Member,

Today members met at Gosford Hospital and unanimously endorsed the attached resolution, taking further action in the fight for a safer working environment for members in the Patient Enquiries Department.

Every member has a right to a safe workplace, though it appears this is something that Central Coast Local Health District has forgotten. Only yesterday an incident occurred at Patient Enquiries during which members were subjected to verbal abuse from a disgruntled visitor, which included leaning on the counter and leaning into the work station.

Members at Gosford cannot and will not sit back and wait for a serious injury or incident to occur and say “we told you so”, especially if the incident could have been prevented by installing a protective screen.

Members at Gosford will receive a SMS about attending a special HSU meeting on Tuesday to show support for our members in taking this courageous action, just to win some basic safety in their workplace.

For those who can attend to show support, the meeting details are as follows:

When: Tuesday 18 December

Where: Outside temporary Patient Enquiries at J4

Time: From 7am

We will keep members updated with any further developments.

In unity,



Gerard Hayes
Secretary, HSU NSW/ACT/QLD

Resolution – Health Service Union, Gosford Hospital Sub Branch

This meeting of HSU members held today, Friday 14th December at Gosford Hospital notes the following in relation to members from within Patient Enquires concerns for safety;

1. Members contacted HSU Organiser about concerns with the removal of Perspex projective screen as part of the redevelopment and relocation of the Patient Enquires Department.
2. The temporary, until March, and the final location will have no Perspex protection
3. HSU wrote to CCLHD Chief Executive Andrew Montague, via email, outlining members concerns under the Work Health Safety Act 2011
4. Following these concerns being raised workers followed this up with issuing a Cease Work Notice with 11 out of 12 affected staff members signing.
5. Our members concerns relate to the feeling vulnerable to verbal or physical abuse without having a barrier between them at the public.
6. Our members reported even with the current Perspex they have been subjected to verbal abuse, personal threats, Perspex screen being kicked, punched and spat at.
7. A meeting was held with Workforce, WHS and Department Management
8. Following this meeting a set of interim agreements measures were agreed to for a period 2 weeks until Wednesday 12th December, later extended until 9pm Monday 17th December
9. These measures included, 2 staff rostered for all operation hours, increased security patrols, IIMS training for all staff, CCLHD to get quotes for jump wire not Perspex screen, policies updated regarding cash handling.
10. A petition was started calling on CCLHD CE Andrew Montague to immediately install a Perspex screen with over 200 staff signing in support of this matter
11. On Tuesday 11th December HSU Organiser received an email from Workforce advising that as of Monday (inclusive) the interim arrangement of additional staff will cease, and the other issues are still not addressed or waiting feedback over 2 weeks since these.
12. On Thursday 14th December a further email was received from Workforce advising a second duress alarm as been installed and the lighting issues have been fixed. However, in this email it was stated that there has been no evidence of safety issues since the move to J4
13. An incident occurred on 14th December where Patient Enquires staff were verbally abused and the person leaned into the work space, this incident required Security intervention.

As a result of the above this meeting fully supports our members from within Patient Enquires and supports their continued efforts to have a Perspex screen installed. Further we endorse the following action.

1. We condemn that Central Coast Local Health District lack of understanding and action by not installing a protective screen to ease our members safety concerns.
2. From 00:01 Tuesday 18th December the roller shutters at the temporary J4 location will remain closed indefinitely
3. From 7am Tuesday 18th December members will undertake all duties from behind the closed roller shutters such as answering phones and email
4. At 7am on Tuesday 18th December HSU members will hold a meeting outside the temporary J4 location to show support and unity for our Patient Enquires members.
5. We demand a written agreement between our members and CCLHD to confirm any further agreement reached
6. Immediately this meeting HSU issues a press a release regarding our action.

Moved: Janice Ross

Seconded: Jason Schmidt

Passed: unanimous