

Improvements to Hospital Security: Interim Report

Dear Member,

Recently the Minister for Health appointed the Hon. Peter Anderson to conduct a review into the safety of staff, patients and visitors in NSW Hospitals and make recommendations for improvements to security in hospitals.

On Tuesday afternoon the Minister for Health released an interim report for improvements to Hospitals with some 48 recommendations.

Generally, the report recommends numerous initiatives that the HSU has been advocating for a number of years and some of these recommendations include:

- Where Security Officers and Health and Security Assistants (HASAs) operate in one location, both groups should become one integrated team.
- More effective use of CCTV with an emphasis on prevention, response and evidentiary uses – not just evidentiary.
- Ensure security staff are not used for clinical specialising.
- Ensure clinical staff have a full understanding of the role of security staff
- Amendments should be made to the Health Services Act to set out the duties, powers, rights and responsibilities for security staff – although there is no mention of what those duties, powers, rights or responsibilities are.
- Amendments to the Security Industry Act to include a separate section for Hospital Security.
- A standardised uniform of dark trousers, white shirt and logo of 'Hospital Security'.
- Districts/networks should establish a pool of casual security staff.

It should be noted that this is an interim report and indicates that more work is needed to identify issues specific to regional areas and that further investigation is required with respect the issue of defensive type equipment for security staff based on experiences in other jurisdictions. It is our understanding that the Hon. Peter Anderson will be retained to complete this review and to address these issues.

The above issues were part of the HSU submission to the review, however, the HSU also requested funding for an additional 250 security positions to be allocated by the Ministry of Health on completion of risk assessments on a site by site basis. The recommendations only provides for risk assessments to be completed on a site-by-site basis and that any resourcing implications be made by way of submission to the Ministry of Health with no guarantee of additional funding.

At this stage, NSW Labor has committed to an additional 250 security positions for NSW Health if elected.

We await to see the NSW Government's response to these recommendations.

To see the full report, please go to the following link:
<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Hospitals/securityreview/Documents/pa-interim-report.pdf>.

In unity,

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

Gerard Hayes
Secretary, HSU NSW/ACT/QLD