

## **HNELHD: Oral Health USCC Unconfirmed Minutes**

Dear Member,

Following recent concerns raised by members regarding leave entitlements within the oral health team, the HSU recently started a Union-Specific Consultative Committee (USCC) to address these concerns with management. The minutes from the recent meeting are attached for your reference.

If you have any further concerns, please contact your organiser or our Member Services Team on 1300 478 679.

In unity,



Gerard Hayes  
Secretary, HSU NSW/ACT/QLD

## Minutes of Staff Consultative Committee Meeting



**DATE:** Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2019  
**VENUE:** Room 3078, Newcastle / Teleconference  
**PRESENT:** Mr Nathan Mulley (Oral Health Service), Mr Jeff Paget (Oral Health Service), Ms Felicity Crockett (HR), Ms Cindy Paull (HSU), Mr Michael Kearns (HSU), Mr Matthew Ramsay (HSU), Kylie McClelland (HSU), Ms Lynne Russell (HSU)  
**TIME COMMENCED:** 10.00am **TIME COMPLETED:** 11.00am **MINUTES:** Linda Malaspina

ITEM NO	TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION / TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
	<b><u>Welcome and Introductions</u></b> <b><u>Acknowledgement of Country</u></b>	Acknowledgement of Country and introductions made by Nathan Mulley.		
1	<b><u>Present and Apologies</u></b>	Nicola Tull hopes to attend future meetings to represent New England area. HSU will advise of future attendee from Taree area.		
2	<b><u>Confirmation of Previous Minutes</u></b>	N/A		
3	<b><u>Outstanding Actions/Items</u></b>	N/A		
4	<b><u>Items for Discussion/Information</u></b>			
4.1	Long Service Leave	<p>Cindy Paull raised the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some members have requested long service leave for a 6 month period, while only half that amount has been approved. In some instances, members have been asked for a retirement date.</li> </ul> <p>Nathan Mulley advised the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the example referred to, the staff member was advised that before approving leave, the service needed to seek expressions of interest to determine if coverage was available for the entire period of leave applied for.</li> <li>Leave approval is not conditional or dependent on a resignation/retirement date. Primary consideration is appropriate coverage within the clinic to ensure service is not affected. If a staff member is resigning, we would like to know sooner rather than later purely for recruitment purposes, especially in rural areas, to provide more time to fill the position.</li> </ul>		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HSU advised it's inappropriate to ask staff of retirement intentions when putting in a leave form. They reported some members are feeling pressured. HSU feel that Oral Health appear to be withholding reply/approval pending a response regarding retirement. Oral Health are asking staff why they are taking LSL.</li> <li>• Nathan Mulley advised that Oral Health management have not declined leave and are not asking staff why they are taking leave, just their intentions regarding retiring. The staff in question have advised they either don't know or have no intention of retiring. In some cases, staff members have made a decision to resign whilst on leave which has then enabled recruitment to commence.</li> <li>• Nathan Mulley further advised Oral Health management do not sit on leave applications, this would not be fair. Whether staff plan to retire or not is not factored in to a decision, as is borne out by evidence.</li> <li>• Nathan Mulley advised that we look at how we can support staff leave, not decline it. Very few requests have been declined while he has been working in Oral Health. There have been negotiations around how long and when, but very few declined. It is about ensuring certainty for provision of service delivery.</li> </ul>		
4.2	Annual Leave	<p>Cindy Paull raised the following issue: With leave applications for the year having been requested in February, what is the timeframe now for approvals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nathan Mulley believes most if not all should have been approved already. If not, then within the next couple of weeks. Unless they are in areas where we are having trouble finding coverage. The only others that may not yet have been approved would be Christmas leave and most clinics are closed then. Nathan Mulley noted that with new leave process, we have received a lot of applications in a short time. There are still some requests to work through. Nathan Mulley to check and report back.</li> <li>• Michael Kearns asked how Oral Health manage multiple leave applications across the service, ie leave planning, namely further from</li> </ul>	Nathan Mulley to check on status of leave applications and report back to group	Nathan Mulley

		<p>Newcastle where it is harder to backfill.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nathan Mulley advised there is a business process we follow. It is more of a challenge in some areas than others. That is why we asked for leave requests in advance this year. We then look at the demand in the clinic and other leave applications for the same period. Ideally we would match a dental assistant with a practitioner to balance ratios.</li> <li>• To cover leave we may need to look at expressions of interest; casuals; temporary contracts; part-timers increasing hours. We are currently looking at the concept of a permanent reliever. Potentially this reliever could be rostered for the whole year. If unable to approve a request, we wouldn't say no. We would have an initial discussion with the staff member about a workaround, alternative dates, etc. We still need to provide a service – this is our priority.</li> <li>• Felicity Crocket noted that from an HR perspective there are very few people with excess leave in Oral Health.</li> <li>• Michael Kearns noted that in previous work situations when leave was being managed from a central point, everyone in the workplace knew within 6 weeks their leave outcome for the next year.</li> <li>• Nathan Mulley agreed in principle but needed to report back. We have been having discussions with our Clinic Coordinators, in handing back responsibility to clinics. Our expectation is that leave requests don't come in a vacuum and staff will discuss with their clinics first. We are asking Clinic Coordinators to advise us if clinics can support leave or not. We make decisions on case-by-case basis taking into account decisions already discussed. That way everyone is informed.</li> </ul>		
4.3	Sick Leave	<p>Matthew Ramsay raised the following issue:  It was brought to the attention of the HSU that people were putting in sick leave requests for 1-2 hours for appointments during the day to be told they would need to take annual leave, as they were not sick.</p>		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nathan Mulley advised that this issue has already been dealt with and confirmed again that at no stage has he given either a written or verbal direction at all for this to happen. He is happy for staff to continue to request sick leave for 1-2 hours where they need to attend medical appointments as it minimises impact on service provision.</li> </ul>		
4.4	Carers Leave	<p>Matthew Ramsay raised the following issue, a late notification to HSU: One staff member at Raymond Terrace has notified that they could not take carers leave when their son was in hospital, as the hospital was taking care of the child, not the staff member.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nathan Mulley advised that the Leave Matters policy was clear regarding this issue. If in a formal care environment, there is no entitlement to carers leave unless there is a medical certificate from a practitioner as per Leave Matters policy. However, staff may choose to take another form of leave i.e. annual leave.</li> <li>Kylie McClelland noted that she believes it depends on the age of the child as well. Cindy Paull noted that from a parent's point of view, this is not fair.</li> <li>Nathan Mulley noted that the policy does not say you can't take leave. It's more the type of leave being taken. If a medical certificate from a practitioner is provided as per Leave Matters policy then we would be happy to look at it.</li> <li>Matthew Ramsay will send details of the Raymond Terrace staff member's leave request to Nathan Mulley for review.</li> <li>Cindy Paull advised that the HSU would put out a newsletter to members instructing them to get a medical certificate in similar circumstances. Nathan Mulley advised the HSU to consult the Leave Matters Policy. Reference should be made to the specific wording in the policy.</li> </ul>	Matthew Ramsay to send leave details to Nathan Mulley	Matthew Ramsey
5	<b><u>General Business</u></b>			
5.1	Update on Muswellbrook hospital redevelopment	<p>Jeff Paget gave an update and the following points noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Matthew Ramsay noted that the HSU have had very little consultation and</li> </ul>		

		<p>notification around this to date.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development is in the second stage.</li> <li>• Currently the dental clinic is located in grounds of public school.</li> <li>• No changeover date yet – expected to move in the next few weeks.</li> <li>• Service expected to start at end May.</li> <li>• 2 chairs in school site presently – will be a level transfer.</li> <li>• From cleaning point of view, we believe will be bigger floor space.</li> <li>• Cleaning will be supplied from HealthShare. HSU have members who do cleaning.</li> <li>• There is a concern that cleaning will not be up to standard.</li> <li>• Nathan Mulley believes Healthshare are recruiting staff for new build overall.</li> <li>• There have been monthly redevelopment meetings.</li> <li>• 3 site visits have been conducted this year. There are training rosters/calendars for staff. Fire training has taken place.</li> <li>• Nathan Mulley suggested Matthey Ramsay contact Wendy Hordern and Judy Bernasconi for more information.</li> </ul>		
6	<b><u>Other Business</u></b>	Please supply any agenda items a week in advance. Agenda will be sent out then. Minutes to be sent out as soon as possible after meeting.		
7	<b><u>Next Meeting</u></b>	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> June 2019, 10.00am		