

Caroona Goonellabah Consultation

Dear Member,

As members are aware, HSU received a letter on the 30th of April stating 25 positions in Goonellabah were to go, and that a further 60 more would be affected. After media scrutiny, the employer sought to deny that this was the case. On Monday 6th May, the HSU met with senior Uniting management to discuss the proposed changes. In good faith, the HSU agreed not to take action on our WHS dispute, although we did not withdraw it at the time. We were told everything would be explained in meetings to be held on Friday 10th May. All parties agreed to continue consultation. HSU made it abundantly clear we held concerns about safe staffing levels.

Again in good faith, the HSU attended meetings on Friday 10th May held at all four workgroups. At all four meetings, we requested to hear from management which hours were decreasing and increasing in each stream as part of the move to the new model of care. At all four meetings we were met with responses such as:

“You can’t compare apples and oranges”.
No overall loss of contracted hours.
No overall loss of budgeted hours.
There will be lots of hours for everybody.

The meeting at Marima was particularly disappointing. One employee compared the current and proposed roster and remarked that there were as many as five hundred hours over a month to be removed from the current roster. It also appeared as if Uniting knew about this, as the response about those hours not being in the budget came remarkably quickly.

The HSU has no interest in budgeted or contracted hours. We simply want to be able to compare how many hours are going and from where, in order to ascertain the impact on our members. Sadly, it has to be said that your local HSU organiser and members walked away from these meetings with more questions than answers.

The Union has requested the following to be provided to us to ascertain what hours are going and where:

1. Current unpopulated rosters for Kalina, Marima, Jarman and central kitchen.
2. Proposed unpopulated roster for Kalina, Marima, Jarman and central kitchen.
3. Cuts by stream in hours and positions for Kalina, Marima, Jarman and central kitchen.
4. What risk assessments were done in the staffing formula.
5. What Uniting are doing to mitigate adverse effects.

If we don’t receive an accurate set of rosters to compare hours, the HSU will be initiating the dispute resolution process. This farce has gone on long enough. Uniting have an

obligation to consult with members and their representatives. All we have called for is a transparent process.

Members have also been receiving letters to attend meetings to discuss new rosters and, potentially, new contracts. Members are advised **not to sign anything** without seeking advice from your union. You can ring HSU Member Services on 1300 478 679 to receive support.

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