

HSU Opposition to restructure of Team Leader/Service Coordinator Role

Dear Member,

Based on member feedback, the HSU has provided a response to Northcott on the restructure of the Team Leader/Service Coordinator Role.

Please see attached communication that has been submitted to Northcott Management.

As members can see, the HSU has stated our opposition to the restructure.

In addition, we have highlighted a number of issues with the restructure that needs to be resolved in the event the restructure goes ahead.

The HSU will continue to advocate for its members through any change process.

We can only advocate on behalf of HSU members, encourage your workmates to join online www.hsu.asn.au/join or phone 1300 478 679.

In unity,



Gerard Hayes
Secretary, HSU NSW/ACT/QLD

Subject: FW: Newsletter

Dear Glenn

The Health Services Union (HSU) makes the following submission on behalf of Northcott members impacted by the recently announced restructure. These comments are limited to the Team Leader role and its impact on residential settings.

The HSU acknowledges that the current structure was inherited by Northcott and has created inconsistencies across the organisation however it is the position of HSU members that rather than remove the Team Leader role, it should be expanded to all residential settings.

The HSU believes that the current structure, where Team Leaders work directly with customers and directly provide support and leadership to teams, delivers the best outcomes for both customers and disability support workers.

The current structure has been in place for years, proof that the NSW Government had faith in it. So much so that it was part of the transitional agreements with private providers that the structure was maintained.

Our members who have worked under this structure are very concerned that the proposed change will see some of the best disability support workers confined to administrative functions rather than working directly with customers and demonstrating best practice to other employees.

It is our belief that the proposed structure was determined by the cost savings it will deliver Northcott, not what is in the best interests of customers and employees. The HSU acknowledges that the current structure may be more expensive in the short term, however the cost savings associated with employee and customer retention surely warrants its maintenance.

However, should Northcott progress with its proposed structure the HSU makes the following comments:

1. **The remuneration offer needs to be increased:** The HSU believes the base rate offered to Service Coordinators is too low given their level of responsibility and the expansion of the role into other areas of Northcott service delivery.

The HSU believes that this will encourage Team Leaders to accept new Service Coordinator roles and creates an incentive for career progression for disability support workers.

The HSU also believes that all roles should be remunerated at the same level. Having a sliding scale, the criteria for which has not been clarified, will lead to bitterness at best, and potentially provide a disincentive to deliver improved behavioural outcomes.

2. **Limiting overtime does not make sense:** The HSU believes that Service Coordinators, following the proper processes, should be able to perform overtime when no other employee is available. That a more expensive, less qualified agency casual would be called in to cover overtime does not make financial nor operational sense.

To be clear this is not a grab for money, but rather a common sense approach to covering sporadic unforeseen gaps in the roster.

Further the HSU seeks clarification on the following:

1. The HSU understands that in one on one interviews Team Leaders were told they may be asked to work on “other products”. Can you please outline what this means and what training and support will be provided to new Services Coordinators?
2. The HSU requests the procedure a Service Coordinator should employ when a customer seeks support from a Service Coordinator that falls outside of the job description, simply what does a Service Coordinator do when a customer wants her to act as a disability support worker?
3. It is still unclear as to how many Team Leaders will accept the new role. Northcott has stated that it will retain any Team Leader who wishes to accept a Service Coordinator role. However, in the event that not enough Team Leaders accept, this may cause a review of the structure and work allocation for those who have accepted. As example a Team Leader accepts a Service Coordinator role on the understanding that she would be responsible for her existing residence only. What level of detail has been provided to Teams Leaders about the numerous possible outcomes in the end structure? Have Team Leaders been informed of the possible other residence they could be overseeing?

Regards