

## Goonellabah roster goes live

Dear Member,

As members will be aware, the new roster and model of care went live at Goonellabah on Monday 19 August. Prior to this, members had expressed concerns about the preparedness of the facilities, given the mix of skills and staffing. On 6 and 7 August, your local HSU organiser spoke to members across all three sites to collate these concerns and present them to management prior to implementation.

Members raised the following questions for management. The attached letter was received in response. The final point regarding what level servery staff should be paid could not be resolved and will need to be taken further.

The following issues were raised on your behalf:

1. Care staff in all facilities expressed concern that they will struggle to adequately train and mentor new care staff. Whilst they have mentored people before, most have had a Cert III and were just new, or there were only one or two new care staff at a time. Given the numbers of new care staff without qualifications, current care staff have expressed concerns care will not be adequately provided. Staff at Marima mentioned that there were extra staff in the short term, but what happens after that?
2. Discussions took place at Kalina and Marima about which services will suffer as a result of the new model of care. Cleaning was discussed. While some care staff knew they were expected to clean rooms as they go, others appeared either not to know or even to object to doing it.
3. Across all sites, there still appears to be lack of communication. Inconsistencies mentioned in point 2 are just one example. Another is a change in process with names on trays in Kalina: some staff knew names were no longer on trays, others didn't. This apparently led to a confrontation between staff.
4. Apparently new care staff have 120 hours before being allowed to provide care. According to staff there are only four 7.5 hour buddy shifts and staff seem to be unaware of where the additional 90 hours are coming from. Also, who is signing off on staff hours? Some thought it must be a Homemaker, but others said they could be asked. Some expressed concern they were working outside their scope by signing off on new care staff hours.
5. Paid training. Some staff appear to be paid while completing their Cert III, and others weren't. From what we can gather, if they are rostered on the day, they have been getting paid; however, if they haven't been rostered on they aren't paid. Uniting have made it abundantly clear Cert III training is mandatory if staff wish to keep their jobs, therefore the HSU contends this is mandatory training. Clause 54 is clear that staff need to be paid. Clause 54d should also apply for staff rostered to do training on their days off.
6. Servery staff are currently not getting breaks. They are concerned about workload with the new model if they are expected to provide care and cleaning too.
7. Staff have made it abundantly clear that they feel they do not have enough management, especially in Jarman and Marima. The HSU has asked staff if they

have spoken to their current manager regarding issues, but most say she has been too busy. It's completely unrealistic to expect one manager to run three sites, especially through workplace change such as this.

8. There has been an issue with Level 1 staff in serveries in Jarman for some time. While some of our members have had their pay level increased to Level 2 to reflect the work they are doing, many others haven't. In our opinion, role descriptions for Level 1 are clear. These staff are cooking full meals and hot breakfast. This does not fit the definition of light refreshments. Level 2 is clearly a closer definition to work performed.

The HSU will be on site on Thursday 12 September to speak to staff. In the meantime, members are urged to raise any issues they have with management first, as soon as possible. The Union will continue to support members through our member services branch – if you require individual support please call on 1300 478 679.

If you know someone that is not already a member, now is the time to remind them of the importance of one-on-one support throughout major workplace change. Non-members can join online at [www.hsu.asn.au/join](http://www.hsu.asn.au/join) or call the Union on 1300 478 679.

In unity,



Gerard Hayes  
Secretary, HSU NSW/ACT/QLD

# quick memo

**To:** All Staff Goonellabah  
**From:** Susan Clark  
**Date:** 20/08/2019  
**About:** Household service model

Dear all,

I am excited to announce that the roster changes for us to transition into the household service model started on Monday 19 August 2019! As we continue to work through the practice changes together and find out more about what our residents like and don't like, I want to take this opportunity to share and clarify some concerns that were raised with me by staff through the HSU (which may also be important to you).

The purpose of this memo is to provide you with the right information and hopefully clear up any confusion. Should you have any further questions regarding this information, I encourage you to speak with me or your Homemaker/Kitchen Team Leader/Deputy Service Manager.

## **Training for new care staff**

*Concerns have been raised about the need to provide more training and mentoring support to the larger than usual number of colleagues who are new to their roles.*

Everyone will be learning on the job as we continue to transition to the household model and all staff will be expected to support each other during the transition as we approach our work with the needs of the residents at the centre of how we all work.

As discussed during consultation, Uniting believes in the staff who are transitioning from other roles into care roles. For many of these new care workers their existing knowledge of residents, and experience with living our Uniting Values, provides them with a head-start towards supporting the household transition. We also recognise that former hotel services staff bring with them a wealth of skills and experience from which existing care staff can learn and benefit.

**Uniting**



To assist during the transition we have initially rostered on extra staff. We accept that some time may be needed to slow down and rethink our approach to caring for our residents, and anticipate that it may take some time to see the benefits of the new way of working.

We are confident the changes will benefit our staff and residents and this is backed by the lessons we have learned and our achievements at Uniting's other 35 facilities where your colleagues have successfully transitioned to the household service model.

### **Cleaning duties**

*Concerns have been raised around Uniting's expectations around how Care Worker's will perform cleaning duties in their new roles*

We understand that people will adapt to change at different rates. We also understand that some of the details have not been worked out yet and this is part of the transition process.

It will be the responsibility of each new team, in each household, to work together and develop systems and processes that allow them to provide holistic care to our residents. This may involve challenging the way we have done things in the past. However, it is important to remember that common areas will be regularly maintained through rostered cleaning hours.

We believe that staff will use their passion to meet the opportunities created by the changes, be they cleaning or other tasks. As has been our experience with the changes at other locations, our staff and our residents will find that they all become comfortable in the new way of working with time.

### **Communication**

*Staff have reported some confusion in the communication they have received around the changes.*

There have been a number of meetings with staff to discuss the changes and these will continue after we *go live*.

Each Homemaker in the new model will hold regular huddles with team members to clarify their understanding of the changes and plan out the best approach to meet the resident. We encourage staff to ask questions and raise any issues with the Homemakers in the first instance. Homemakers and RNs will also hold regular huddles to make sure everyone is across our resident needs.

### **Training - buddy shifts and approving training hours**

*Concerns have been raised about the number of buddy shifts they are required to work before performing full duties on a shift. Additionally, concerns have been raised about who is responsible for signing off hours and payment for completing the Certificate III training.*

As discussed during consultation, we will be rostering new care staff on buddy shifts before they are rostered to carry out the full requirements of the care worker role. The number of shifts may vary depending on experience and skills. We will continue to take on feedback on how staff are managing through the transition and can adjust the roster to manage needs where required.

In relation to the *signing off* on hours for those completing the certificate III there is a straight forward process. Where anyone has concerns around how this applies to them, we can arrange an information session from our Learning & Development team regarding the expectations and process for signing off the hours. Should you feel you need this please tell your manager and we will arrange a time for this to happen.

All staff have been, and will be paid to complete the training. If you believe an error has been made with your pay, please contact your manager immediately so that this can be reviewed.

### **Meal breaks**

*Concerns have been raised regarding staff not getting breaks, and around workloads.*

If staff are not taking their breaks they should raise this with their Homemaker/Kitchen Team Leader/Deputy Service Manager in the first instance.

We believe that for the wellbeing of staff and residents that taking meal breaks is important. By informing us when you are not able to take breaks it will assist us with understanding any patterns as to why staff are not able to take breaks and for us to problem solve any barriers including workload issues. We encourage employees to raise their concerns with their manager or where required to myself where they have outstanding concerns. Early communication will result in a better outcome for staff and residents.

### **Service Manager is hard to reach**

*Concerns raised that 'Management' is too busy and difficult to contact*

We understand that it is important for staff to have access to a manager so they can raise concerns and share information. Goonellabah is a big campus and because of this, we welcome the new service model where staff have more 'touchpoints' to someone in the leadership team. In the new model, the leadership team includes myself as the Service Manager, Homemakers, Kitchen Team Leader and Deputy Service Managers.

As we move into the new Household service model we will work with all staff to make sure that they understand what each role is responsible for and what decisions they are able to approve to make so that not every decision needs to go to the Service Manager for approval. This will help you see decisions be made much quicker, which will help you perform your role.