

Ensuring a safe workplace at Manning Hospital – Security Services

Dear Member,

This morning, the Manning Hospital HSU sub branch notified Hunter New England LHD and HealthShare that effective Monday morning, members are taking steps to provide a safe workplace for HSAs and patients. For months, Health and Security Assistants have been pushing for action on the issue of single officers having to transfer bed-bound patients and the inherent risk of injury to both worker and patient.

With a violent incident occurring in the past week in the Emergency Department, members again raised concerns about violence in Manning Hospital. Members have also taken steps to minimise any risk to HSAs around single officer responses.

On Wednesday this week, members met to discuss these issues and implement safeguards in order to prevent or reduce the risk of injuries or assaults to HSAs, health workers and patients within Manning Hospital. The notification to management reads as follows, and all HSU members are reminded that the strategies endorsed by members on Wednesday are to be adhered to by ALL HSU members.

1. Health and Security Assistant (HSA) members have attempted to have the work health and safety matter relating to the inherent risks of one person pushing bed-bound patients at Manning Hospital tabled at WHS committee meetings, only to have these meetings cancelled each time. The sub branch notes that injuries have already occurred to our members and have been subsequently reported. The sub branch notes also that a risk assessment has been undertaken by HealthShare regarding this practice and that the report recommends that a two-person bed movement strategy be implemented. To date, no discussions or actions have been implemented to support this recommendation. For the safety of our members and patients, as such:

Commencing 0600 Monday 16th December 2019, no HSU member at the Manning Hospital will move bed-bound patients on their own. All bed-bound patients that require movement throughout the campus will have no less than two persons pushing and guiding the bed.

2. Further, there is a serious safety issue for patients with active medical devices being transferred throughout the facility without appropriate clinician monitoring, and for the HSU members involved in their transfer. As such:

Commencing 0600 Monday 16th December 2019, any patient that has any active medical device in situ (including but not limited to intravenous therapy, cardiac and/or respiratory monitoring, oxygen therapy, drains, enteral and parenteral devices, etc.) will be required to have a State Registered Nurse to escort the patient when being transferred by HSU members within the Manning Hospital. If no nurse is available, no HSU member will be transferring the patient until such times as a nurse is available.

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