



## MEDIA RELEASE

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# FLINDERS MEDICAL CENTRE EMERGENCY NURSES JOIN RAH COUNTERPARTS, AGREE TO ESCALATE ACTION

As ambulances continue to ramp outside jam-packed emergency departments across Adelaide, nurses at yet another major Adelaide hospital have agreed to escalate action in the absence of any Government-led 'circuit-breaker' to ease the chronic overcrowding.

Today's decision by emergency department (ED) nurses at Flinders Medical Centre (FMC) was made just hours after their counterparts at Royal Adelaide Hospital (RAH) met to agree on similar action. It is expected that nurses at other affected metropolitan hospitals will follow suit after meeting with the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (SA Branch) later this week.

ANMF (SA Branch) CEO/Secretary Adj Associate Professor Elizabeth Dabars AM says ED overcrowding at FMC has reached record numbers.

"Our members at Flinders Medical Centre are reporting having to manage up to 107 patients in an emergency department with a capacity of 53 patients," Ms Dabars says.

"To have an emergency department trying to look after more than twice the number of patients it's equipped to manage is an incredibly dangerous situation for staff and patients."

Members reported a 98-year-old man was ramped outside in an ambulance for four hours last night while an elderly lady collapsed on her way to bathroom after waiting for five hours.

ED nurses at FMC and RAH will call whole-of-hospital meetings with their colleagues next week to discuss and determine any localised strategies to help reduce the burden while the Government continues to drag its feet in implementing a system-wide solution.

All ED nurses have also endorsed a public campaign to rally widespread community support and reinforce to the Government that immediate relief is required.

"What's happening in our emergency departments is unsafe. What's happening in our hospital corridors is unsafe. And, most certainly, what's happening in ambulances ramped outside our hospitals is unsafe," Ms Dabars says.

"Of all the places people deserve to feel safe, it's in a hospital—and sadly, this is no longer the case in Adelaide."

"Our members too deserve a workplace where they can provide safe and appropriate care without jeopardising their professional obligations."

Ms Dabars says the ongoing crisis has some members considering walking away from the profession altogether.

"We're talking about highly experienced nurses who have spent years and even decades providing emergency care to South Australians and are now seriously considering changing careers."

“Our members have been enduring these working conditions for more than 18 months with little relief from the Government, so our public health system is at real risk of losing some significant expertise if something doesn’t change quickly.”

Ms Dabars again urged the Government to immediately act on the solutions raised in last week’s crisis meeting.

“We’ve given the Minister the answer to freeing up 150 hospital beds to improve the flow of patients into our hospitals—today is the day to make that happen.”

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