



MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, 8 October 2018 – 5.30pm

RAH NURSES AGREE TO WORKSITE RALLIES, LIMIT ELECTIVE SURGERIES

Rolling worksite rallies and limiting elective surgeries are among the actions Royal Adelaide Hospital nurses endorsed today in response to chronic overcrowding at city hospitals.

In the first of three hospital-wide meetings held by the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (SA Branch), several hundred nursing staff at the Royal Adelaide Hospital today voted unanimously in favour on a range of actions to help alleviate the whole-of-hospital pressure and prompt the government to act.

ANMF (SA Branch) CEO/Secretary Adj Associate Professor Elizabeth Dabars AM says the actions will take place from next week if the Government fails to implement a 'circuit-breaker' to ease the pressure on the state's acute health system.

"These are last-resort steps of fatigued nurses appealing to their Government to implement something—anything—to ensure they can continue to provide safe care to patients at the Royal Adelaide Hospital," Ms Dabars says.

She emphasises that any action undertaken will not be at the expense of safe patient care.

"This type of action is by no means the preference of the nursing workforce who dedicate their lives to providing the best care for their patients."

"Worksite rallies will be held during staff handover periods where there are double the number of staff, which of course ensures sufficient nurses remain in the workplace to provide appropriate care."

"Elective cancellations will be put in place, just as the Department does from time to time in order to ensure there are more available beds for urgent patient needs"

Ms Dabars says if the Government continues to drag its feet on implementing a circuit-breaker, RAH nurses have agreed not to participate in elective surgeries from Thursday 18 October.

"The Government needs to know that these actions are the product of extremely unhappy nurses, who feel as though they are left with no other means to protect their patients in order to prompt action on this issue."

The actions endorsed today will begin next Monday 15 October unless the State Government starts to relieve the pressure by implementing an urgent circuit breaker of additional beds in the system.

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