



MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, 8 October 2018

PATIENTS TO HAVE THEIR SAY AS NURSES' CAMPAIGN ON OVERCROWDING RAMPS UP

Patients waiting in overcrowded emergency departments and inpatient areas at major metropolitan hospitals across Adelaide will this week be given the opportunity to provide their feedback directly to the Minister, as the nurses' campaign steps up this week.

Nurses in emergency departments and other affected areas across Adelaide will start handing out thousands of postcards addressed (postage paid) to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing, as nursing staff at Royal Adelaide Hospital meet this afternoon to determine other forms of action to prompt the Government to act.

Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (SA Branch) CEO/Secretary Adj Associate Professor Elizabeth Dabars AM says it is time the public were given a voice on the issue.

"The Minister has repeatedly heard from the nursing profession," Ms Dabars says. "Perhaps it will be through reading the handwritten pleas of our most vulnerable, sick and injured patients and their families that will prompt the government into action."

The postcards form part of a range of collateral including posters that will start to infiltrate public areas of emergency departments. In addition, public billboards will be installed from today joining the radio advertising that is already in place.

Hospital-wide meetings of nurses at the RAH, Flinders Medical Centre and Lyell McEwin Hospital will be held this week, commencing today at the RAH, to discuss taking action over chronic hospital overcrowding.

Ms Dabars will be meeting with members across all RAH wards at 2pm today to discuss other forms of action nursing staff may decide to take.

"This isn't just a problem for emergency department staff. It is an issue that demands a hospital-wide discussion to decide upon actions that could be escalated to focus the mind of the Minister and his government."

"The stress and fatigue is evident among nursing staff hospital-wide, which is why it is important for all members to be involved in decisions on what action to take."

For more than a week, the ANMF (SA Branch) has been publicly calling on the Minister to act on the solutions presented to him at a crisis meeting in September.

The ANMF (SA Branch) has ramped up its public campaigning on the issue amidst increasing reports of precarious situations in emergency departments. Lyell McEwin Hospital staff have reported being at almost double capacity, while a 98-year-old man was left ramped in an ambulance outside the Flinders Medical Centre for several hours last week.

ANMF (SA Branch) CEO/Secretary Adj Associate Professor Elizabeth Dabars AM will be available for interview at approx. 3pm today outside the RAH main entrance.

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