

To: Genevieve Wallace,
General Manager,
Concord Repatriation General Hospital.

From: Winston Cheung
Chair, Medical Staff Council,
Concord Repatriation General Hospital.
Email: [REDACTED]

7th May 2022

Re. Feedback, Issues and Questions arising from Concord Repatriation General Hospital Medical Staff Council Members Meeting, 5th May 2022.

Dear Genevieve,

The Concord Repatriation General Hospital Medical Staff Council members met on the 5th May 2022.

I intend to provide you with written feedback as soon as practical after these Members' meetings, so that you and the SLHD are aware of the issues, relevant to you and the SLHD, that have been presented and discussed.

Some of the points are just for your information, but some points may need a response from you at the next MSC meeting with the Executives.

The following is a summary of the key issues relevant for the Concord and SLHD Executives from the meeting on the 5th May 2022:

1 Change to MSC Meeting dates

After this month (May 2022), the MSC meeting dates will be moved to the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month, at 4pm, to avoid overlapping with the Clinical Council Meeting, and Division of Medicine meeting, and being too close to the Division of Surgery Wednesday meeting.

It is proposed that:

The MSC Members Meeting be held on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 4pm.

The MSC Meeting with the Executives be held on the 4th Thursday of the month at 4pm

Please let me know if there are any problems with that 4th Thursday.

2 Priorities from MSC members

There are many priorities, proposals and problems that the individual MSC departments will bring to your attention in due course. I have advised them that the lines of communication should still be directly between the departments and yourself.

The MSC plans to maintain a monitoring role in the first instance.

There needs to be a clear escalation plan articulated for the members if they have any problems with the way the priorities, proposals or problems have been addressed. Teresa was going to advise us of the escalation process.

Request for next MSC meeting:

Can you and Teresa please advise us of the appropriate escalation process if members have any problems with the way the priorities, proposals or problems have been addressed?

3 Nursing Staff

There is significant concern in the MSC about the health and welfare of our nursing colleagues.

It is understood that there have been many resignations from nursing staff in recent times and that there is a major shortage of nurses in all areas of the hospital. It is understood that the case is similar in all hospitals over the state.

The MSC considers the current staffing situation to be unsafe and is concerned about the quality of the care being provided currently at Concord because of the ongoing staffing problems.

The MSC has been made aware of instances where nursing staff have considered their treatment by various supervisors in charge of staffing to be unacceptable. Problems include staff being made to feel guilty for calling in sick, staff being wrongly docked pay, and general rudeness. All this is contributing to poor morale.

While it is recognised that there is tremendous stress in the system because of the staffing shortages, the MSC does not believe that this cedes the right for nursing staff to be treated respectfully and kindly by the people in charge of staffing.

Questions for next MSC Meeting:

The MSC requests to know how many shifts are currently not staffed with enough nursing staff, or are staffed with nursing staff who do not have the appropriate skills?

The MSC requests to know what the hospital is doing to ameliorate the current staff shortages?

What avenues for obtaining more staff (eg. agency staff) have and have not been utilised?

What is the long term strategy to improve nurse staffing?

Requests and Recommendations

The MSC requests that the Executive look at the relationship between nursing staff and staffing supervisors, and ensure that these relationships remain respectful and cordial.

4 Medical Staff

The MSC discussed some areas where there appears to be inadequate numbers of junior medical staff.

Individual departments will develop briefs and business cases to advise you of these problem areas in due course.

Please let me know if you have any queries.

The MSC looks forward to meeting with the Concord and SHLD Executives on the 12th May 4pm, and to continue our work to improve Concord Hospital.

Yours Sincerely,

Winston Cheung,
Chair, Medical Staff Council.