



# Cumberland Branch

## of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association

Monday, 19 December 2022

Wade Norrie  
 Director of Nursing  
 Cumberland Hospital

Via Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Norrie,

In a meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2022, of the Cumberland Branch of the NSWNMA, the following resolution was passed.

### **Mental Health POD - Westmead Emergency Department.**

The Branch raised concerns about the Mental Health Pod in our correspondence dated 25<sup>th</sup> July 2022, a copy of this correspondence is attached for your reference.

Since our correspondence the branch has been made aware that there have been several Work Health and Safety issues identified surrounding the safety of the Mental Health Pod which has the potential of resulting in critical incidents and the involvement of WSHLD Work and Health Safety Unit to resolve multiple issues raised only adds to our concerns.

Concerns that have been identified recently however not limited are.

- a) Faulty Code Black Button – not working when activated and not alerting staff in the Emergency department.
- b) Duress alarm tags not working when activated.
- c) Patients being placed in the Mental Health pod who may be medically unwell.
- d) Security staff assigned to the Mental Health Pod who have no VPM training and the use of security contractors.
- e) The assignment of AIN to the Mental Health Pod who may be working outside their scope of practice.
- f) Meal Break Provision as per the award.
- g) Attempted harm to staff using leads of equipment or other equipment that is essential in the ED.
- h) Observation and supervision of patients when the Mental Health Nurse are on their breaks.
- i) Draft Model of Care – yet to be approved and not endorsed.

In addition, the branch views the current staffing and skill mix in this Mental Health Pod is insufficient to provide a high level of safety and care of patients who present and are placed in this pod with acute mental health episodes and request a review of staffing be done as a matter of urgency. Our view remains that the Mental Health Pod should be at all times staffed with **2 Registered Nurses** at a minimum.

**Given the safety concerns The branch seeks in writing what action has been taken to resolve these concerns , no later than the COB (5pm) on the 10<sup>nd</sup> January 2023.**



# Cumberland Branch

of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association

Yours in union,

Handwritten signature of Frances Cavallaro in black ink.

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Frances Cavallaro  
Secretary



Handwritten signature of Nicholas Howson in black ink.

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Nicholas Howson  
President



**CC**

Shaye Candish – General Secretary NSWNMA (gensec@nswnma.asn.au)

Mark Murphy – NSWNMA Organiser

**BCC**

All Branch Executive, Delegates, Alternate Delegates & Stewards