



NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Nurses and midwives ask Dubbo MP for support

Dubbo nurses and midwives are continuing their campaign for improved nurse-to-patient ratios throughout Dubbo Base Hospital, meeting yesterday with local MP, Troy Grant, to hand over more than 10,000 petition signatures from rural and regional areas.

Members of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) Dubbo Base Hospital Branch have been calling on the state government to expand nurse-to-patient ratios to ensure a safe and reliable public health system.

NSWNMA Organiser, Katrina Lee, said local branch members took the opportunity to highlight their growing concerns with Mr Grant during a meeting at his Dubbo office on Monday afternoon.

"There have been ongoing skill mix and workloads issues at the hospital and our local branch is seeking additional nursing/midwifery education staff to ensure all nurses working across all shifts are appropriately skilled to deliver safe patient care," Ms Lee said.

"As part of our long-running statewide ratios campaign, Dubbo branch members are also calling for ratios of 1:3 within the emergency department and improved nurse-to-patient ratios across all intensive care and critical care units.

"At the end of the day, it's wonderful to have a redeveloped public hospital but unless the facility is staffed adequately to meet the growing demands of Dubbo and the surrounding regions, our members will continue to be pushed to the limit.

"The evidence is clear: ratios save lives and make good economic sense. The state government can afford to do this and we're asking the Member for Dubbo to relay this message to the Health Minister."

For the past six years, the NSWNMA has been lobbying the NSW Ministry of Health for improved and expanded nurse-to-patient ratios across the state to no avail.

Ms Lee said Dubbo nurses and midwives would continue raising community awareness of the issue to garner local support.

"It took strike action and bed closures in 2011 to get the state government to listen to us and secure some ratios initially, however there are still many rural hospitals and important specialty areas, such as emergency departments, that don't have them," said Ms Lee.

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