



NEWS

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The feedback from nurses about the fixed nurse patient ratio has been mixed.

Cath Seaver Secretary

Many thought that this would be a good thing for nurses but a growing contingent are starting to realise that it could be an unmitigated disaster for the older and more experienced nurses. In this newsletter is a piece by one of our senior service providers Graeme Haycroft.

Graeme used to run a business which employed over 2000 people and he understands how managers think and work. He used to teach them. His argument is simple. The QNU has convinced the Queensland Labor Government to legislate nurse/patient ratios.

When you think about it, since the government owns Queensland Health, if they really wanted to have (say) one nurse for every four patients then all they really had to do was to tell Queensland Health to do so. It didn't really need legislation. But the real problem is that having to comply with a politician driven directive is going to cost big money.

Does anybody know any nurse who was actually asked about whether these nurse/patient ratios were a good idea or whether these ugly economic realities were even contemplated? We need to hear from you about what you think and what you want us to do about it.

Cath Seaver
NPAQ Secretary
secretary@npaq.com.au

One Nurse to Four Patients?

by Graeme Haycroft



We live in strange times. The Queensland Government has confirmed they can't trust their own Health Department to manage proper patient care in government run medical facilities. Rather than simply tell its hospital managers what ratio of nurses to patients it would like and be prepared to pay the bill, it decided to legislate this. Apart from party politics, why? Does the government now fine itself and pay a penalty to itself if it can't achieve its own goal?

This silliness on stilts simply adds another layer of unnecessary bureaucracy to a system already groaning with over administration. This mandatory one nurse to four patient ratio has been a core policy of the QNU for many years. My congratulations to them for achieving it. This use of their member's money to help the Labor Party achieve a political purpose was particularly masterful in that no one it seems has yet questioned whether or not this new policy will achieve its ostensible purpose of improving patient care and/or nurses working conditions. It is likely that it will make both worse.

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NPAQ were pleased to support the Nurses for Nurses Network this month.

On Thursday 11 August we sponsored lunch for 50 attendees at the Clinical Nurse in Aged Care Seminar on the Gold Coast.



above:
Cheryl Dezotti - Nurses for Nurses Network,
Cath Seaver - Secretary, NPAQ and
Sherri Davison, Winning NPAQ Member



NPAQ Feedback

In what way did we make it easy for you to deal with an issue?

To be able to tell my manager that I needed time for expert advice from the NPAQ gave me a chance to not have to keep discussing the topic.

Did we provide value to you as a member?
The NPAQ gave me incredible support and great value.

What would you say is unique about NPAQ?
I was able to get a very personalised service that did not encourage confrontation but mediation.

Would you recommend NPAQ to your friends and colleagues? **Yes**

Any other feedback? I would like to have the NPAQ represent me at the next EBA.

NPAQ Rating – How do you score us? **5**
(5 being excellent, 1 being poor)

*Thankyou
Cathy Madsen for your feedback!*

We would love to hear from you, go to www.npaq.com.au/feedback and let us know about your NPAQ Experience.

Want to promote the NPAQ in your local area or workplace?

As a professional association, we offer various avenues. *To arrange a visit, or request posters or brochures to be posted, go to*

www.npaq.com.au/marketing

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VIDEO HIGHLIGHT

Nursing Career Coach | Nicole Nash-Arnold
Accreditation 101

<https://youtu.be/KWHIgh77qVc>



Found us on Twitter?

<https://twitter.com/NursesPAQ>

Tweet away to share the interests of Queensland Nurses and Allied Health Professionals.

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As with all change: there are winners and losers. The winners are the QNU, the ALP, Queensland Health HR people and all the new administrators. The losers will manifestly be in particular the majority of experienced nurses and their patients.

The false presumption underpinning this change is that health and hospital budgets will be constantly expanded, but the reality is they won't. Government run health systems are subject to constant comparison with the more efficient private sector.

The taxpayers' pockets are not bottomless. Hospitals are really complex businesses with many facets. Practical nurse patient ratios differ markedly from sometimes one-to-one in intensive care to one to ten in more benign wards. Medical professionals and hospital management know what is needed and try within budgets to maintain safe ratios. This job has now been given to politicians.

This new QNU/Labor Government policy means that there is now a new overriding political imperative with many hard to administer complexities added to this already difficult task. Will these new ratios evolve and have to be maintained across an entire hospital and introduce a new set of demand distortions? It will be easier to do in large facilities but much more difficult in smaller ones such as we find in rural areas. Will they be forced to close? Do nurses have to keep new records for a whole new administration system of how many patients they are now supervising and is this being collated over the entire hospital/facility/region? No one likes to admit this but these new higher administration costs are going to have to be found within the existing budget structures. That means there is going to be huge pressure to reduce the unit nurse hourly costs.

There are about 10 basic pay levels of nurses further complicated enormously by varying specialisations many with their own pay levels. These mandated nurse patient ratios don't and couldn't possibly make allowance for these nurse skill levels so inevitably

hospitals will have to skew the nurse demographics towards younger less qualified and cheaper registered and in particular enrolled nurses. Nurses may well ask how much longer before AINs get included in the ratio?

So in summary you have the same budget. You have just increased administrative costs. You have cheap nurses and you have expensive nurses. So how else do you meet your budget other than by using a higher proportion of cheap nurses and lower proportion of expensive more experienced and qualified nurses?

This is where the HR people come in. It is likely somewhere between 10 and 20% of the older and more experienced nurses will have to be moved out of the system for these political nurse patient ratios to be met within budget. Be warned older nurses. You are in their sights and it is going to be extremely stressful. Whilst it looks like the younger nurses may be included in the subset of winners, when they get older, they too will be replaced by cheaper nurses.

The Nurses Professional Association of Queensland Inc. (NPAQ) believes nurses should hear both sides of these issues. It is clear to anyone with some corporate management experience, that whilst this has been a good result for the QNU and the Labor Party, most nurses and their patients are going to be worse off over time.

If you are a nurse who shares concerns and believes the way forward for better nurse working conditions is to take party politics out of the equation and look to reduce not increase the administrative burden, then go to the NPAQ website and give a hand to protect your career.

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QNU Resignation, it's easier than you think...



If you are a member of the Queensland Nurses Union and wish to resign, NPAQ membership will start from the date the QNU resignation takes effect and the NPAQ fee will commence on the 25th of the month following the last QNU payment.

The NPAQ PI Insurance policy will be effective from the date of your membership, however the policy has full retroactive cover for any issues which may have occurred whilst you were a member of the QNU but which you have not yet been notified or may not even know about. You will be totally protected in the change over.

The NPAQ offer 3 handy ways to get you on the right track, these include:

- [Advise QNU by Email](#)
- [Advise your bank of direct debit cancellation](#)
- [Let us resign on your behalf](#)

Together we will build a strong network of professional nurses and allied health professionals.

QNU abandons nurses by forcing them into 10 hour night shifts

Nurses at Queen Elizabeth II Hospital are being forced to work 10 hour night shifts as the Palaszczuk Labor Government/Queensland Nurses Union mandated nurse-to-patient ratio policy starts to bite.

Shadow Health Minister John-Paul Langbroek said patient safety was being put at risk thanks to a deal done between Labor and the QNU to legislate a mandatory minimum nurse-to-patient ratio across Queensland.

“Photos of rostering stations within the QEII expose the harsh reality of Minister Dick’s nurse-to-patient policy farce,” Mr Langbroek said.

“The Metro South Health and Hospital Service *CEO denied outright in Estimates yesterday that nurses were being forced onto 10 hour night shifts, but a picture tells a thousand words.

“The ultimate kick in the guts for hard working nurses is the admission from Queensland Health Director-General Michael Walsh it was all too hard to work out what shifts nurses were working.”

Mr Langbroek said the Queensland Nurses Union had rolled over for the Palaszczuk Labor Government and abandoned hard working nurses.

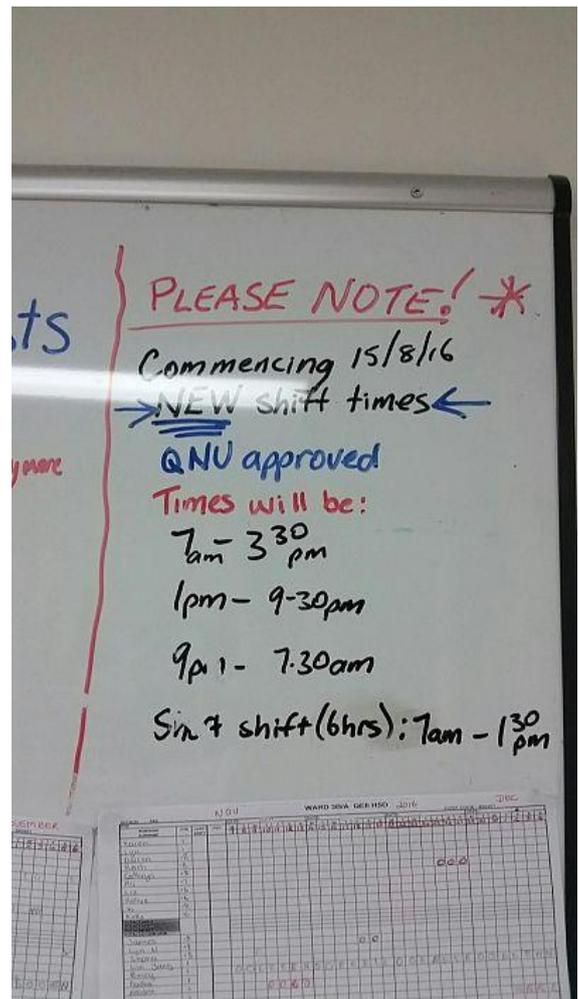
“Nurses are being forced into longer shifts to make up the numbers for Labor’s failed policy,” he said.

“Cameron Dick needs to stand up for the nurses and stop this practice of forced longer shifts and admit his mandatory policy is a farce.

“Nurses working longer hours are fatigued and could not only put their own safety at risk, but those around them as well.

“This is another case of a Labor Government asleep at the wheel while nurses suffer.”

article source
My Sunshine Coast



Picture of staff notice board at QEII Hospital showing QNU approved night shifts commencing next month.



Here is a Referral Gift for you and your friends and colleagues



Thank you for growing the NPAQ community

Our rapidly growing membership is mostly from personal referrals, so to show our appreciation for your valuable time and spreading the NPAQ message we are offering a Referral Gift.

If you refer friends or colleagues and they join, one month's membership \$ is refunded and your friend or colleague receives one month too.

- **Ongoing offer**
- **Refund \$ for every referral**
- **Referrals remain active forever**

Together we will build a strong network of professional nurses and allied health professionals.

It is really simple



1

Tell your friends/colleagues about us and this offer

We believe the real value of NPAQ is in the protection that membership guarantees. This gift offer is a "thank you" for telling your friends about us. Talk to your friends and colleagues or click below to use the digital referral system.



2

Your friends/colleagues join

We look forward to providing you with continuous support and sending lots of "thank you" referral gifts your way.



3

You both receive the referral gift

Refer a friend or colleague NOW



<http://www.npaq.com.au/referral.html>