



GPO Box 2170, Adelaide, SA 5001  
122 Pirie Street, Adelaide, SA 5000  
Phone: (08) 8205 3200  
Fax: (08) 8223 6509  
enquiries@cpsu.asn.au  
www.cpsu.asn.au

30 May 2019

Susan O'Neill  
Chief Executive Officer  
Flinders Medical Centre  
Flinders Drive  
Bedford Park SA 5042

Dear Ms O'Neill

**Re: Rotational Rosters, FMC Social Work Department**

The Public Service Association (PSA) provides the following feedback from AHP1 and AHP2 staff in the Flinders Medical Centre Social Work Department in response to the Southern Adelaide Local Health Network's (SALHN) proposal to implement rotational rosters in the Social Work area.

During our consultation with PSA members, AHP3 Social Workers were not present in the room as they had been involved in the decision making process. This feedback may therefore not represent the perspectives of AHP3 workers.

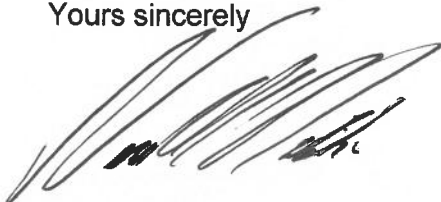
On behalf of our members the PSA seeks a response to the following issues and questions:

1. PSA members advised that some staff already work within this model. We seek clarification as to whether this proposal is intended to broaden this model across all staff.
2. The PSA request further information about why SALHN has decided to propose this change at this time. Members are concerned that a similar proposal was discussed and not implemented two years ago and decisions may be based on feedback that is now out of date.
3. The PSA understands that largely this proposal is from a human resources management perspective. PSA members have requested information around whether the proposal is based on any evidence based approach for rotational rosters in other hospital sites. Can SALHN provide examples of where a similar arrangement has been implemented for Social Workers?
4. An important aspect of Social Workers' practice is developing longer term relationships. Social Workers are concerned that transitioning every 6 months may affect patient care by compromising such relationships.
5. AHP2 members are concerned that speciality knowledge gained from working longer in certain areas will be reduced and may affect patient care.
6. Please provide clarity about how the model is proposed to work for part time workers?

7. PSA members have suggested an alternative solution to problems with backfilling which is to employ AHP1s on longer term contracts. The use of short term contracts means that AHP1s are in precarious employment and this then affects backfill. AHP1s would like the guarantee of a minimum six month placement so that they can further their skills. Another suggestion would be to employ a specific backfill role.
8. Social Work staff are concerned there may be inconsistent supervision if Social Workers are constantly transitioning. AHP1s have noted inconsistency in their supervision and have noted that they would find more consistent supervision helpful in their roles.
9. PSA Members would like clarification as to whether the proposed rotational rosters would allow staff a right of return to the area where they were previously attached. Members would like further clarification when this position is funded through that area.
10. PSA members would like to know if the intention of this proposal has any link to an introduction of seven day rosters.
11. Staff have raised concerns about the additional workload of regularly training new staff. If extra time is regularly expected to facilitate training this may negatively affect patient care.
12. Staff have noted there will still be a need for specialist knowledge outside the one AHP3 who is permanently placed in a team and who may be responsible for training a new staff member every six months.
13. Has SALHN considered the impacts of this proposal on working relationships with non-social work staff who work with Social Workers and relationships built with external agencies such as the Department of Child Protection.
14. Staff have requested clarity about whether AHP2's are encouraged to rotate after 2 years or are expected to rotate after 2 years.
15. Certain areas of social work have higher impacts of vicarious trauma. What supports are proposed will be put in place for workers new to these areas?

The PSA requests a response to the above issues and questions by 12 June 2019. Please direct any further enquires to PSA Organiser Catherine Story by phone on 82053289 or by email to [catherine.story@cpsu.asn.au](mailto:catherine.story@cpsu.asn.au)

Yours sincerely



**Nev Kitchin**  
**General Secretary**