

## Summary of Current Workload Management Activity in Queensland

Prepared for NRHA Rural and Remote Workforce Sustainability Workshop

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**Beth Mohle – Secretary, Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union (QNMU)**

The QNMU is currently engaged in significant activity in Queensland aimed at ensuring the appropriate management of workloads for nurses and midwives across all sectors.

The launch of our *Ratios Save Lives* campaign in 2015 particularly highlighted the issues of concern to nurses and midwives and the international and Australian evidence around safe staffing and skill mix and strategies. Further information on this campaign and the campaign claims can be found at [www.ratiossavelives.com.au](http://www.ratiossavelives.com.au)

The first tangible result of this ongoing campaign was the introduction of legislated minimum nurse to patient ratios in prescribed Queensland Health facilities from 1 July 2016. The legislation was passed in the Queensland parliament on 12 May 2016, International Nurses Day, making this state the fourth jurisdiction in the world to pass such legislation.

Ongoing work with Queensland Health to ensure safe staffing includes:

- An Independent evaluation of the introduction of ratios in Queensland lead by Prof Linda Aiken, University of Pennsylvania

- A collaborative review of the application of the existing workload management tool (the Business Planning Framework or BPF)

- An independent audit of staffing levels at maternity units

- The development of specific BPF addenda for the following areas: Rural settings, Remote settings, Offender Health Services, Emergency Departments, Paediatrics and Midwifery Services

The QNMU has also produced a *Safe Workloads in Midwifery (SWiM) Standard* to inform the significant body of work currently being undertaken in relation to midwifery as part of the implementation of the 9<sup>th</sup> Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EB9) with Queensland Health. Please find attached the SWiM Standard, a document supported by the Australian College of Midwives.

A significant element of the *Ratios Save Lives* campaign is our call for public reporting of staffing numbers, skill mix and outcomes across all sectors. This campaign is a long term one and although the first phase has focused on securing legislation in the public sector, we are seeking minimum staffing numbers and skill mix across all sectors. Intensification of campaign activities in private hospitals and aged care will occur in 2017.