



Canberra
Health
Services



ACT
Government

Consultation Paper

Transition to 10-hour shift for General and CT
Radiography

May 2024



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1. Introduction

The Medical Imaging Department operates 24 hours, seven days per week, providing a wide range of diagnostic imaging services across three sites including the Canberra Hospital, University of Canberra Hospital (UCH) and the Weston Creek Imaging Service (WCIS).

The Medical Imaging Leadership group is continually evaluating diagnostic imaging needs of Canberra Health Services and optimising resource allocation and capacity management to support service delivery. As such, optimising clinical working hours is crucial for ensuring the health and safety of both patients and staff.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this consultation paper is to explore the potential benefits, challenges and considerations associated with transitioning to 10-hour shifts. The proposal aims to:

- modernise and simplify the Radiographer roster with a goal of increasing efficiency of rostering practices
- increase work-life balance and staff well-being
- optimise operational coverage provided to stakeholders
- allow easier transfer into a digital rostering platform
- minimise role sharing amongst modalities.

Consultation is required due to the proposed changes in the composition and operation of the Medical Imaging General Radiography shift and rostering model.

3. Current Model

Currently, all Radiographers working in Medical Imaging are rostered to 10 shifts per fortnight (7 hour, 21 minutes per shift), including on-call requirements after hours. The current model also includes at least four Radiographers per weekend being required to work all 10 shifts consecutively with two nights on 'close call' with a SEMI locked-in maximally varied cascading shift pattern to minimise the impact of fatigue breaks.

The exception to this is the X-Ray Team Leader shift pattern and nightshift pattern, which already operate under separate 10-hour shift models.

4. Rationale for Change

4.1 Operational Efficiency

It has become increasingly apparent over the last five to 10 years that the main Radiographer roster (shift work) is outdated and overly complicated for radiographers participating in the roster, roster managers, external stakeholders and the leadership group seeking information for coverage and strategic planning.



Building 5 will also introduce unknown challenges to the Radiography team as multiple rooms are required to be staffed within Building 5 and Building 12 at Canberra Hospital as well as UCH and WCIS and it is likely that multi-modality split shift rostering will become unpractical and inefficient.

Consolidating work hours into fewer, longer shifts may streamline processes and minimise transition times between shifts, smaller number of shift codes will also help building and transition to electronic roster, optimising resource utilisation and enhancing workplace efficiency.

4.2 Work-Life Balance

Introducing 10-hour shifts may enhance work-life balance for staff by providing longer periods of consecutive days off, potentially reducing burnout and improving overall job satisfaction.

5. Future Model

The proposal seeks to change to a four day per week, 10-hour shift structure. An equitable sharing of the days selected each week will be built into the structure; however, is subject to roster requirements.

5.1 Scope of the Future Model

The proposal will affect staff within the General Radiography 24/7 rotating roster pool. The General Radiography pool covers emergency, inpatient and outpatient x-ray, fluoroscopy, theatre radiography, mammography and mobile radiography. The proposal also affects the X-Ray Team Leader start and end times, which will be adjusted to start and end 30 minutes earlier than current.

The following groups are NOT included in this proposal:

- MRI shifts. However, staff working within dual roster MRI and General Radiography may be affected
- casual Radiographers
- nightshift Radiographers
- Medical Imaging Level 5 manager positions. However, can still operate clinically within the roster due to its flexibility.
- Medical Imaging Level 6 position

5.2 Physical Design / Structure

Proposed roster changes do not include changes to the physical design and layout of clinical space; however, are intended to prepare and assist transition to Building 5.



5.3 Benefits of the Future Model

The benefits of the proposal aims to:

- simplify shift times and duties
- improve coverage in all areas
- lesser shift codes easily translate into a digital rostering system
- improve work-life balance
- reduce fatigue
- improve availability of radiographers outside of rostered hours for access to cover unplanned leave
- reduce reliance on overtime

5.4 Key Considerations

Health and Safety: While longer shifts may reduce transition fatigue, there is a need to carefully monitor staff well-being and mitigate risks associated with extended work hours, such as increased susceptibility to errors and occupational hazards this could be mitigated by and ensure breaks are coordinated and managed by team leaders.

Workload Distribution: Implementing 10-hour shifts requires thoughtful consideration of workload distribution to prevent excessive strain on individual staff members and ensure equitable distribution of responsibilities.

Staff Feedback: Input from staff regarding their preferences, concerns and suggestions for shift structure changes is essential for fostering buy-in and identifying potential implementation challenges.

5.4 Implementation of the Future Model

Following review and feedback, the proposed changes outlined in this paper have been endorsed in principle by:

- Executive Branch Manager, Medical Services
- Director of Allied Health, Medical Imaging
- Deputy Chief Radiographer, Medical Imaging

Following the consultation process, final endorsement will be sought from the officers above.

Under the Union Engagement Policy, employees will be given full access to union officials / delegates and facilities during working hours to discuss the proposed changes on the



provision that work requirements are not unreasonably affected. It is envisaged the proposed changes will be implemented as soon as possible after the consultation period closes.

Steps	Actions	Dates
1	Letter and Consultation Paper to be provided to Unions	17 May 2024
2	Consultation period begins with all affected staff and Unions	17 May 2024
3	Staff forum	TBC
4	Consultation period ends	31 May 2024
5	Any provided feedback from consultation will be reviewed and any changes incorporated into the final paper within one week.	7 June 2024
6	Changes implemented	15 August 2024

During the consultation process, staff forums will be held to provide detailed rostering patterns under the proposed model. These forums will also be an opportunity for affected staff to provide input into the proposal. A summary of information discussed during these sessions will also be provided to affected staff.

6. Consultation Methodology

This proposal provides information in relation to Radiographers transitioning to a 10-hour shift. There are still details that need to be determined and your feedback, suggestions and questions will assist in further refining the proposal and rostering pattern.

Feedback can be provided via email to Brittany.Kent@act.gov.au.

Feedback is due by close of business Friday 31 May 2024.

We are seeking responses to the following questions:

- Do you support the proposal to transition to 10-hour shifts?
- Do you have any concerns about the proposal? If so, what are they?
- Do you have any other feedback you would like to be considered in relation to the proposal?



For further information relating to the proposed changes and subsequent consultation process, please contact Jonathan.Mainey@act.gov.au.

