**Feeback from SSD HSU members in relation to the conversion of the 1FTE GAS 8 position to a 0.84 HSM 1 position.**

HSU Members

In regards to the proposed letter to he Hsu about the gas8 position being changed to a hsm1also it changing from a permanent full time position to a 8.4 position.

This position has been vacant for some time and has put an enormous amount of pressure on the staff  as the leading hands and acting leading hands are being taken away from they're own duties to for fill  the duties that the gas8 would normally cover.

Wollongong Management Response

Agree with this statement, therefore to provide consistency and maintain skilled adequate staffing levels on the floor ,the conversion of this position to a HSM 1 from a long term vacant position will fill this deficit and bring the department on par with other facilities. 2024 Has been most challenging as the position has remained completely vacant.

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HSU Members

Making this job a hsm1 over a gas8 is a higher grade position therefore cannot be a full time position due to lack of funding.  i feel the position needs to retain being a full time position as our leading hands have days off during the week to accommodate them working weekends and on those days the acting leading hands have to step up and deal with those responsibilities the gas 8 would normally deal with taking them away from they're own duties.

Wollongong Management Response

Whilst the role is not full time: we will aim to have the hours of the role between weekdays od Monday to Friday with flexibility across the fortnight with hours and coverage. The role should not require weekdays off to work weekends. While it would be ideal to have a full time position we will continue work to increase the FTE and will do so when we are in a position to. The 0.84FTE will allow a consistent permanent position to support that department (staff and manager). Historically the 2IC GAS8 position worked fortnightly weekends which left a shortage during weekdays Additionally, the department now has an Educator who can support the team in any absence of a 2IC, as can the manager.

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HSU Members

Id also like to propose that the starting time of the hsm1 position be different to the managers start time as both people have in the past started at 7am and finished at 3:30 pm which has served no purpose .  Previously our 2ic started at 6am and finished at 2:30pm and our manager started at 8:30am and finished at 5pm .-

Wollongong Management Response

Agree the purpose of the role is to provide leadership for longer time frames across the shift and we will aim to stagger start times between the Manager and the HSM 1 role. This would make the position more beneficial for operational needs, when there is greater activity within the department and staff require more assistance, troubleshooting, leadership and support.

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HSU Members

I feel the only down side to the change is that the position wont be a full time position and the staff wont receive the support they need on the days the hsm1 isnt on shift.-

Wollongong Management Response

We will continue to explore options to increase the role to a full-time position. As advised the aim is not to roster both the manager and the HSM 1 on the same days off to ensure there is a manager on site on weekdays, Monday to Friday, this will be in line with current practices regarding ADO’s for Manager, 2IC and Educator and ensuring days off do not overlap The final paragraph of the position description, the 2IC and Educator position descriptions consists of similar responsibilities during the rostered days off each position, wherethe other will be rostered on to support the department needs.   
Depending on the successful candidate, they may choose to work 5 days a week at shorter hours to provide move coverage and we will aim to recruit to this structure.

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HSU Members

Thankyou for letting me have a say in this matter

As it stands we have been without a second in charge (GAS8) for some time, this has impacted the dept in that we have had multiple people acting in various roles without any consistency. In having people step into these roles and the demands realised, I believe that this role has a full-time capacity and cutting it back to .84 would do the dept and the staff within, a disservice

Wollongong Management Response

We aim that by converting this role and advertising same that there will be more consistency across the department. While it would be ideal to have the position as a 1FTE- leaving the role vacant is not ideal as this is what has occurred and has a significant negative impact on the department affecting staffing numbers on the floor.

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HSU Members

Having two permanent supervisors that are absent on Thursdays, Friday's and often Mondays, during the 9-5 shift and a manager that leaves shift at 3.30 daily, a full-time Mon to Fri 9-5.30 HSM1 would add more consistency and reliability for follow up and liaising with theatre staff regarding the constant tray changes, trial sets and roster adjustments as well as allow a day to evening handover to late shift supervisor and staff.

Wollongong Management Response

We aim for the new HSM 1 role to be present on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays to fill tis gap. We will also aim for the shift times with the Manager to be staggered to provide that coverage.

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HSU Members

This will ensure these responsibilities are back to the relevant position, rather then the acting leading hands covering these tasks, in the absence of leading hands/supervisors, without remuneration for their abilities and ensuring they are covering their allocated role on the work floor instead of off doing higher duties and leaving their allocated duties for other staff on the floor to cover. Often being short staffed we are covering two and three jobs at a time because of this.

That is the aim of this proposal, to return staff to their roles consistently and the aim is that this position will allow experienced staff to fulfil their role and not be pulled from one role to another providing consistency for everyone in the department.

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HSU Members

That being said, it is my opinion that the current educator role could be made part-time for this HSM1 to be a full time position or even better that the two roles are blended into the one job, as you can see by the attached PD the educator role and HSM1 position cross over in duties and capabilities. This would save the dept money that may be put to better use on the work floor and enable employment of further part-time or casual workers to cover the short fall that seems to have become a constant.

Wollongong Management Response

Activity is increasing within the facility and the department and we operationally cannot reduce the FTE for the educator or the staffing profile as a whole, as that may placed extra strain on staff to train junior staff. We operationally cannot be in a position in 12 months’ time where we are required to increase out FTE after we have reduced it 12 months prior. The educator role took a significantly long time to establish and embed and operationally we cannot reduce the FTE for this role

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Additional Feedback provided direct to the Perioperative Management Team:

I would like to provide some positive feedback for the expressed 2IC position regrade from GAS8 to HSM1. I think it is a great idea and will be a great benefit for the SSD department moving forward . It will be a great opportunity for possibly a current staff going for the position to further there career and education in SSD. After reading the new position description I agree this position can no longer be a GAS8 and that a HSM1 fits the new role and reflects the responsibilities and duties expected of that position .

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In Summary:

Overall, there has been a good response from the Members of the SSD team. The long term vacant position has impacted staff on the floor significantly and it is aimed that the conversion of the GAS 8 position will have a positive impact on the department and create consistency with leadership within the department.

Laura Lanier

Nurse Manager Perioperative Services