

12 April 2023

Mr Gerard Hayes  
General Secretary  
Health Services Union  
L2/109 Pitt Street  
SYDNEY NSW 1215

Via email: [Tracey.Gaddelin@hsu.asn.au](mailto:Tracey.Gaddelin@hsu.asn.au) and [secretary@hsu.asn.au](mailto:secretary@hsu.asn.au)

Dear Mr Hayes

**Re: Pharmacy Staffing – Cessnock District Hospital**

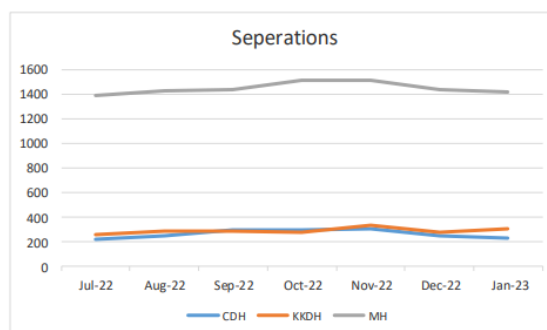
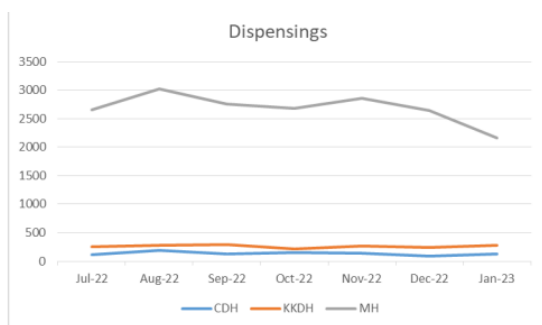
I am writing in response to the email from Tracey Gaddelin – Organiser, dated 9 March 2023, regarding Cessnock District Hospital – Pharmacy and apologise for the delay in providing our response.

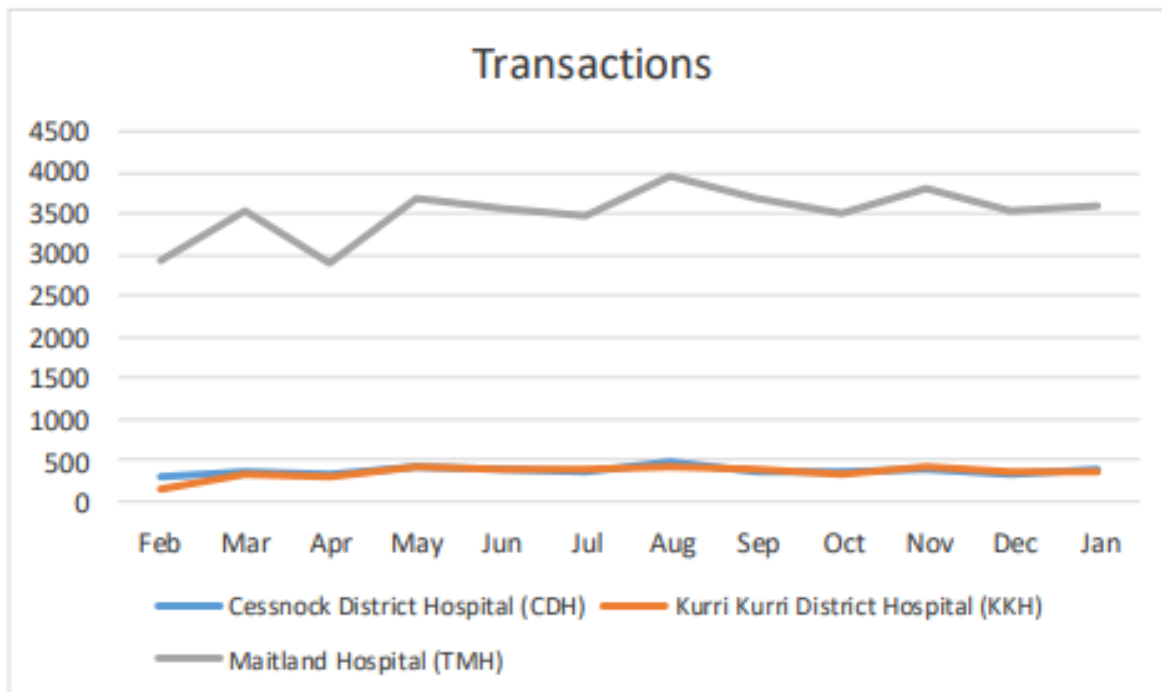
Hunter New England Local Health District (The District) proposes a revised staffing structure within Cessnock District Hospital Pharmacy Department. The current staffing profile for the Pharmacy Department is 1.0 FTE Pharmacist, 1.0 FTE Pharmacy Technician Grade 3 and 0.2 FTE Pharmacy Technician Grade 2 on a Wednesday.

The current 1.0 FTE Pharmacy Technician (Grade 3) has requested a reduction in hours for 12 months. This will reduce the hours from 1.0 FTE to 0.4 FTE commencing 1 May 2023. Angela Towns, Director, Allied Health, Community & Integrated Care, Lower Hunter Sector, has approved this request.

As a result of this change, Robert Pearce, Director of Pharmacy – Lower Hunter Sector, reviewed Pharmacy workloads across the Lower Hunter Sector. This review identified that Kurri Kurri Hospital Pharmacy Department, which has a similar bed base and workload to Cessnock District Hospital Pharmacy Department, operates with a 0.6 FTE Pharmacist and a 0.6 FTE Pharmacy Technician Grade 2. At the same time, Cessnock District Hospital has a staffing profile of 1.0 FTE Pharmacist and 1.2 FTE Pharmacy Technicians.

The graphs below detail the activity in Cessnock, Kurri Kurri and Maitland Hospital Pharmacy Departments.





*Transactions is the sum of dispensing and imprest supply*

The proposed staffing profile for Cessnock District Hospital, to commence on 1 May 2023, includes 1.0 FTE Pharmacist, 0.6 FTE Pharmacy Technician Grade 3 to work on Monday, Thursday and Friday and 0.2 FTE Pharmacy Technician Grade 2 to work on Wednesday.

It is proposed that the remaining 0.37 FTE is distributed to Maitland Hospital. The Maitland Hospital Pharmacy Department has experienced steady growth over the past 12 months, with the additional resources to assist with managing workloads based on pharmacy needs.

Consultation continues with Cessnock District Hospital Pharmacy Department staff regarding the changes. This has involved consultation on workloads and a review of processes to facilitate operational efficiencies. The District has assessed that the workload at Cessnock District Hospital will be manageable within the proposed staffing profile. Management support will be ongoing up to and after 1 May 2023.

Bulk recruitment is underway for Pharmacy Technicians Grade 1, 2 & 3 across the Lower Hunter Sector. This recruitment is currently on hold and interviews will be held for the Pharmacy Technician roles once further discussions have been held with the HSU. The 0.2 FTE Pharmacy Technician at Cessnock District Hospital will be Grade 3.

Reporting lines will remain unchanged, and Mr Pearce will continue monitoring workloads to address any concerns.

If you require further details regarding this change, we are happy to arrange a meeting with the HSU to discuss further.

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**Health**  
Hunter New England  
Local Health District

If you require additional information, please don't hesitate to contact me at (02) 4087 2058 or Anna Dampney, HR Consultant at (02) 4985 3467.

Yours sincerely,

**Christine Osborne**  
General Manager  
Lower Hunter Sector

cc: Angela Towns, Director Allied Health & Community Care, Lower Hunter Sector, HNELHD  
Robert Pearce, Manager Pharmacy, Lower Hunter Sector, HNELHD  
Anna Dampney, HR Consultant, GMHS