



What you need to know about the Queensland Health payroll debacle



An important message from the QNU's leadership team



Gay Hawksworth



Beth Mohle

While the Queensland Health payroll debacle was not a disaster of the QNU's making, your Union remains firmly focused on representing your best interests and finding solutions to this ongoing issue.

We continue to undertake high level negotiations, including seeking the assistance of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission and participating in regular meetings with the Deputy Premier and Director General to communicate issues to Queensland Health and seek appropriate resolutions to matters we identify.

Working through issues associated with the payroll debacle has been our ongoing priority and all available resources of the Union have been allocated to this area.

We have the collective strength of over 42,000 members and we can effect change. Most recently we have secured commitments from Queensland Health to ensure that no member is financially disadvantaged and to increase staff at the payroll assistance hotline as well as introduce onsite support staff dedicated to assisting you with payroll enquiries.

It is Queensland Health's responsibility to fix each and every individual pay error and it is critical that we all maintain pressure to ensure this occurs. To assist you to compare the pay you received to what you actually worked, the QNU has ensured Queensland Health produced a Time and Wages Report. Queensland Health is responsible for fixing any pay discrepancy you identify.

We will continue to support QNU members as this debacle continues but it is important that we are also able to maintain our focus at a broader level to achieve sustainable solutions rather than quick fixes and improve accountability within Queensland Health. For example, urgent solutions must be found to address the additional pressure being placed on NUMs and roster co-ordinators.

It is important that we maintain a consistent understanding of the role of our Union versus the role of the State Government and Queensland Health. We have very different priorities – the QNU must not take on what is very clearly Queensland Health's responsibility and in the process ignore very important opportunities and challenges for members which are at the very core of our Union's functions.

The QNU's vision and mission statement calls on our Union to promote and defend your interests. We are doing and will continue to do just that. Rest assured you have a strong, influential and organised union at your side and we will remain there until this payroll debacle is fully resolved and beyond.

Gay Hawksworth
Secretary

Beth Mohle
Assistant Secretary



What you need to know about the Queensland Health payroll debacle

The following information has been developed by the QNU in response to some commonly asked questions from members.

Please keep this resource in a safe place and refer to when necessary.

Queensland Health hasn't paid me correctly this fortnight—how do I get my pay?

Queensland Health is legally required to reimburse you what you are owed. If you have missed out on wages and entitlements you should be active in claiming them.

Queensland Health must have a process in place at your workplace to immediately pay you by cash or cheque for any underpayment on your pay day (there should be posters in your workplace containing advice on how to obtain an urgent payment).

There are local payroll support staff in place who are dedicated to assisting you with pay issues. See the attached payroll personalised services model report for contact details (current as at September 2010).

Your line manager should also have the contact details of all local support staff members.

Don't forget that you can also call the Payroll Assistance Call Centre on 1800 239 074 (between 7am and 9pm seven days of the week).

You should attend to any pay problem in your normal work time. If you are too busy to attend to pay problems in normal work time then you should seek

approval to access overtime to address your issues. Your line manager cannot reasonably reject this request. If you are having difficulty accessing overtime for this issue please contact the QNU.

I got a cash payment from Queensland Health but then next pay it was taken from my wages. What should I do?

It's your money and Queensland Health cannot make deductions from your pay without your agreement—if Queensland Health makes any deductions to your pay then you should seek to be reimbursed immediately.

Queensland Health are not authorised to take any money from your pay (including overpayments) until the payroll matter has been fixed and they have negotiated an appropriate outcome with you.

Follow the steps at the end of this document (page 7) to seek an immediate payment by cash or cheque.

Queensland Health has informed the QNU they are working on establishing a permanent solution within the system to prevent automatic deductions from occurring. Please contact the QNU if money has been deducted from your pay so we can escalate your issue.



I have been financially disadvantaged due to the payroll debacle. Will I be reimbursed?

Queensland Health has formally committed to ensuring no employee would be financially disadvantaged because of issues associated with the new payroll system.

Queensland Health has committed to paying financial costs and penalties attributed to a pay error including, but not limited to the following:

- » bank and financial institutional charges
- » additional interest charged arising from the inability to meet a payment caused by a pay error
- » council rates including utility discounts forgone (i.e. gas, water, electricity, telephone/communications)
- » lost interest earnings caused by a pay error
- » tax agent fees, where an amendment to the lodgement of a 2010 Income Tax Return is necessary due to a pay error
- » reimbursement for additional tax paid should back payment of wages be paid in subsequent tax period resulting in higher overall tax rate payable by the employee than if received in the year of earnings
- » any FBT liability incurred by exceeding the FBT exemption cap as a result of a pay error
- » additional tax imposed as a result of employee's salary sacrificing superannuation beyond the concessional cap as a result of a pay error
- » extra tax agent fees associated with the processing of two payment summaries (group certificates)

If you are required to produce additional evidence or information to support a claim that incurs a cost, this cost will also be met by Queensland Health.

To make a claim you should complete Queensland Health's reimbursement claim form which can be accessed through QHEPS or the Queensland Health website at www.health.qld.gov.au/qhpip/Docs/nfd_reimbursemntfrm.doc

What is the purpose of the Time and Wages Report?

The Time and Wages Report outlines all payments made to you from Pay 1 to Pay 8 under the new payroll system (8 March to 27 June 2010). It has been produced at the request of the QNU to enable you to check you have received the correct wages and entitlements, and/or are reimbursed what you are legally owed.

You should cross-check your own roster records or work diary against each pay fortnight identified in the Time and Wages Report.

The Time and Wages Report shows what the new payroll system has recorded as your working hours, wages, penalties and allowances for the eight pay periods between 8 March and 27 June 2010.

The report also includes:

- » any outstanding pay adjustments that were processed between 27 June and 25 July 2010 that are relevant to the eight pay periods detailed in the report
- » any lump sum payments for work performed prior to 8 March 2010 (under the old payroll system) that have been processed in the new system.

How do I use the Time and Wages Report?

The Time and Wages Report is a record from Queensland Health of all payments made to you from Pay 1 to Pay 8 under the new payroll system. It is essentially a combined record of eight of your payslips. If it is not an accurate reflection of what you have actually worked then chances are you have identified a pay discrepancy.

You should cross-check your own roster records or work diary against each pay fortnight identified in the Time and Wages Report. Make sure you read the explanatory brochure sent with your Time and Wages Report for details on how you can check the report.

You should use work time (either during your shift or as approved overtime if it cannot be done during a shift) to cross-check the Time and Wages Report against your own records.

All follow-up activity associated with your Time and Wages Report should also be undertaken in paid work time, or in approved overtime. Please contact the QNU if you are having difficulty accessing paid-time or overtime to address this issue.

It is important you check that you have been paid correctly as soon as possible after receiving your Time and Wages Report as additional resources provided by Queensland Health at the local facility level and call centre will not be in place indefinitely.

This is Queensland Health's fault – why should I waste my time checking the Time and Wages Report?

While cross-checking pay and roster records isn't a fun task, it is an important one for you to undertake to identify if you have been disadvantaged so corrections can be made.

While the employer must pay you in accordance with the law, pay errors are common and employees should always check that they have been paid correctly in accordance with the law. From the teenager who works in Woolworths to the miner working underground, many workers have a range of shift allowances, penalties and other entitlements to check on their payslips. Employees need to know what they should be paid for the work they have undertaken and they need to always check their payslip to ensure that they have indeed been paid properly.

Cross-checking the Time and Wages Report is simply an extension of what you should ordinarily be doing. Without checking this report you could be owed thousands of dollars without knowing it. You have worked hard to earn your pay and conditions so make sure you receive them.

What do I do if I identify a discrepancy in the Time and Wages Report?

If you identify a discrepancy between the Time and Wages Report and your own records you should, in the first instance, contact the local payroll support staff member who is dedicated to assisting employees with payroll enquiries. These staff members are identified in the payroll personalised services model report which is attached. Your line manager should also have the contact details of all local support staff members.

You could also phone the Payroll Assistance Call Centre on 1800 239 074 (between 7am and 9pm seven days of the week).

Employees need to know what they should be paid for the work they have undertaken and they need to always check their payslip...

Can I talk to my NUM about discrepancies I identify in the Time and Wages Report?

NUMs and other line managers should only be an initial point of contact at the unit level to refer you to established processes to deal with issues identified with the Time and Wages Report.

The QNU has successfully argued for increases in staffing levels at the Payroll Assistance Call Centre and the implementation of local support staff members who are dedicated to assisting employees with payroll enquiries. These resources are in place to relieve pressure on NUMs and line managers as issues identified through the Time and Wages Report process are managed.

However, it is important you check that you have been paid correctly as soon as possible after receiving your Time and Wages Report as additional resources provided by Queensland Health at the local facility level and call centre will not be in place indefinitely.

My workload has increased as a result of the payroll debacle. What do I do?

As a result of the payroll debacle workload pressures have increased for NUMs, who are propping the payroll system up, as well as clinical staff, as their colleagues seek to have payroll issues resolved during work time (as they are legally entitled to do). Even increased absenteeism due to stresses associated with the payroll system has led to an increased workload for many members.

If you have identified a workload issue (using your professional nursing judgement) you should use the Business Planning Framework (BPF) to prioritise your work and to ensure the safety of nurses/midwives and your patients.

The BPF requires you to take action on the shift by prioritising clinical duties ahead of non-clinical duties. This could include closing beds until there is a safe skill mix, or identifying tasks that are a low priority or that will not be completed including:

- » TrendCare
- » monitoring door buzzers
- » answering telephones
- » filing
- » non-essential patient escorts
- » stocking
- » dealing with non-essential enquiries
- » moving equipment and beds
- » making beds
- » all data entry except patient documentation in a chart
- » attending meetings



To assist you to take action in accordance with the BPF you should refer to the QNU booklet *Nursing and midwifery workloads: a QNU guide to using the BPF* on the QNU's website at www.qnu.org.au/bpf-guide



Don't forget to complete the QNU's workload reporting form which is also available on the QNU's website at www.qnu.org.au/workloads

What is Queensland Health doing to make our payroll system more sustainable into the future?

Currently Queensland Health's key priority is to implement a new localised payroll operating model, a key recommendation of the KPMG report. This approach will hopefully ensure a better level of service is provided to staff through the establishment of a simpler and more responsive 'hire to retire' service in each payroll hub.

This model is anticipated to be implemented by the end of September 2010. The model will be piloted in two payroll hub locations – in Townsville and Meadowbrook on Brisbane's southside. It is expected this trial will ensure business processes are developed and tested and amended if necessary before the models are broadly implemented. Queensland Health has committed to communicating further details and any changes to business process with staff in these districts directly.

Under this new model two new payroll hubs at Mackay and the Gold Coast will be implemented.

Currently Ernst and Young is providing advice to Queensland Health on a better technical approach to rostering, be it under the current SAP and WorkBrain systems, or possibly an alternative system if the current one cannot be fixed. The QNU has been informed that representatives from Ernst and Young will consult with payroll staff and line managers about payroll and rostering processes before providing final recommendations.

Why hasn't more been done to fix this situation?

This is a systems issue which is the result of a sequence of human errors—of poor consultation, planning and a lack of protocols, as well as technical issues. There were

QNU staff and Activists are doing their very best to support members affected by this debacle.

no adequate system checks and balances taken before the system was rolled out to ensure it would work. There appears to be no quick solution or easy fix to get this payroll system back on track.

The error rate has reduced drastically over the past month which indicates the system is being stabilised. Until payroll systems errors are fixed however, the QNU will continue to put pressure on the government to use every avenue available to address this disaster. QNU staff and Activists are doing their very best to support members affected by this debacle.

The QNU haven't done anything throughout this whole debacle!

The QNU is doing everything possible to support members affected by this payroll debacle.

Unfortunately, the remedies that usually apply with industrial disputes or wage and salary negotiations are not relevant here. That means the QNU has not been able to undertake more traditional forms of industrial action to seek resolutions to our issues (as there is no clear or easy resolution).

On numerous occasions the QNU has sought the assistance of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission to achieve much needed commitments from Queensland Health about critical implications of this payroll debacle (such as to ensure no nurse or midwife is financially disadvantaged as a result of this disaster, or to enable nurses and midwives to immediately address their payroll issue in the workplace through an immediate cash or cheque payment). Even these outcomes, while by no means sufficient, were the result of intense lobbying and campaigning on the part of the QNU.

The QNU Secretary and Assistant Secretary have also actively lobbied the Director General, the Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and other key stakeholders within Queensland Health, as well as met with the Premier. The QNU has even coordinated meetings between the Deputy Premier and Nurse Unit Managers (the people propping the system up). Your

Union will not allow this issue to become any less than number one priority at all levels of government.

The QNU's Member Servicing Centre staff continue to support nurses and midwives each day with their payroll issues, while organisers are working tirelessly on the ground to support and promote member action.

The QNU does not have access to the combined resources available to Queensland Health and the State Government. As such, it is important that our Union is able to maintain a focus at a broader level to achieve sustainable solutions rather than quick fixes and improve accountability within Queensland Health rather than shoulder the responsibility ourselves.

Queensland Health must not get off lightly. It is their responsibility to fix individual pay errors and it is critical that members maintain pressure to ensure this occurs.

The Minister for Health and the Director General should lose their jobs!

We all want those responsible to be made accountable for this disaster. It is up to government to ensure any and all Queensland Health representatives who failed in their duties regarding this debacle are held accountable. The people of Queensland will hold the government accountable at the ballot box.

Everyone wants this problem to be fixed yesterday! There is no political advantage to the government in this problem continuing one day longer that it absolutely has to so the sooner they fix the mess the sooner we will stop the pressure on them to do so.

Your Union will not allow this issue to become any less than number one priority at all levels of government.



Got a pay issue? What next...

If your pay is incorrect Queensland Health must have a process in place at your workplace to immediately pay you by cash or cheque for any underpayment.

If you require assistance you should contact the local support staff member who is dedicated to assisting employees with payroll enquiries. These staff members are identified in the payroll personalised services model report which is attached. Your line manager should also have the contact details of all local support staff members.

You could also phone the Payroll Assistance Call Centre on 1800 239 074 (between 7am and 9pm seven days of the week).

DON'T FORGET—you need to attend to any pay problem in your normal work time (or use approved overtime if it cannot be done during your shift).

Local contacts list

Personalised Service Model Features	Interim payment facility available	Rostering Support Available	AVAC and other payroll forms support available	Access to personalised appointment (Tier 1,2 or 3)	Lead Contact Name	Lead Contact Number
Cairns and Hinterland Health Service District						
Cairns Base Hospital	✓	✓	✓	2	Timisha Terranova	4226 6949
Cape York Health Service District						
Weipa Hospital	✓	✓	✓	3	Mia Waite Kay Bulst	4082 3667 4082 3792
Central Queensland Health Service District						
Blackwater Hospital	✓	✓	✓	3	Darren Halliday	4920 7800
Emerald Hospital	✓	✓	✓	3	Darren Halliday	4920 7800
Gladstone Hospital	✓	✓	✓	3	Darren Halliday	4920 7800
Rockhampton Hospital	✓	✓	✓	3	Darren Halliday	4920 7800
Central West Health Service District						
Baraldine Hospital	✓	✓	✓	2	Kathy Moulds Patricia Balderson	4650 4015
Longreach Hospital	✓	✓	✓	3	Kathy Moulds Patricia Balderson	4650 4015
Childrens Health Services						
The Royal Children's Hospital	✓	✓	✓	1	Shayne McCreath	3636 1229
Darling Downs - West Moreton Health Service District						
Ipswich Hospital	✓	✓	✓	1	Eleise Muller	3810 1142 / 0438 541 370
Toowoomba Hospital	✓	✓	✓	1	Henrietta Gough	0427 151 768
Warwick Health Service	✓	✓	✓	2	Jason Owens	4660 3963
The Park - Centre for Mental Health	✓	✓	✓	2	Michael O'Leary	3271 8553 / 0408 875 940

Gold Coast Health Service District									
Gold Coast Hospital	✓	✓	✓	1	Marnie Lombardo	5537 0621			
Robina Hospital	✓	✓	✓	1	Marnie Lombardo	5537 0621			
Mackay Health Service District									
Mackay Base Hospital	✓	✓	✓	3	Cathy Roberts	4965 9416			
Whitsunday Health Service Proserpine Hospital Campus	✓	✓	✓	3	Cathy Roberts	4965 9416			
Metro North Health Service District									
Caboolture Hospital	✓	✓	✓	3	Barbara Latta	5433 8141			
The Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital	✓	✓	✓	1	To be advised	To be advised			
Redcliffe Hospital	✓	✓	✓	3	Garry Tweedie Janine Farr	3883 7620			
The Prince Charles Hospital	✓	✓	✓	1	Paul Thrupp	3139 5888			
Metro South Health Service District									
Logan	✓	✓	✓	1	Janet Pearson	3299 8065			
Princess Alexandra Hospital	✓	✓	✓	1	Kathleen Morrison	3176 2539			
Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hospital	✓	✓	✓	3	Kathleen Morrison	3176 2539			
Redland Hospital	✓	✓	✓	3	Kathleen Morrison	3176 2539			
Mt Isa Health Service District									
Mount Isa Hospital	✓	✓	✓	2	Aimee Power	4744 7162			
South West Health Service District									
Charleville Hospital	✓	✓	✓	3	Anne Thomas Judy Taylor	45051513 4616 6542 / 4616 6541			
Roma Hospital	✓	✓	✓	2	Anne Thomas Judy Taylor	45051513 4616 6542 / 4616 6541			

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Personalised Service Model Features	Interim payment facility available	Rostering Support Available	AVAC and other payroll forms support available	Access to personalised appointment (Tier 1,2 or 3)	Lead Contact Name	Lead Contact Number
Sunshine Coast - Wide Bay Health Service District						
Bundaberg Hospital	✓	✓	✓	2	Patrick McAuliffe	5470 5407
Caloundra Hospital	✓	✓	✓	2	Patrick McAuliffe	5470 5407
Gympie Hospital	✓	✓	✓	2	Patrick McAuliffe	5470 5407
Hervey Bay Hospital	✓	✓	✓	3	Patrick McAuliffe	5470 5407
Maryborough Hospital	✓	✓	✓	2	Patrick McAuliffe	5470 5407
Nambour Hospital	✓	✓	✓	1	Patrick McAuliffe	5470 5407
Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Health Service District						
Thursday Island Hospital	✓	✓	✓	3	Bruce Dunster	4069 0251
Townsville Health Service District						
Charters Towers Health Centre	✓	✓	✓	3	David Miller	4787 5562
The Townsville Hospital	✓	✓	✓	1 (Mon 12pm-4pm) 3 (all other times)	Laura Ake	4750 6784
Corporate Office						
Corporate Divisions (CHI, PSR, P&A, CS, OGD, HPID)	✓	✓	✓	2 and 3	Natalie King	3234 0837
Qld Health Shared Service Partner	✓	✓	✓	1 and 3	Kylie Portelli	0427 757 145
Clinical and Statewide Divisions	✓	✓	✓	2 and 3	Peter Thirkettle	3166 5141
Information Division	✓	✓	✓	2 and 3	Phillip Rizzo	3146 0632
Division of the Chief Health Officer	✓	✓	✓	2 and 3	Katrina Hale Alison Wiemers	3328 9690



The union for nurses and midwives

www.qnu.org.au