

## Mater Public nurses and midwives agreement now finalised



Nurses and midwives working at Mater Public will shortly be asked to vote on a proposed agreement to cover their wages and conditions.

The finalisation of the proposed *Mater Public Nurses and Midwives EB7 Agreement* comes as good news to the QNU and members, following months of frustrating delays.

### What's in the proposed agreement?

For full details on the content of the proposed *Mater Public Nurses and Midwives Agreement* members should refer to the full agreement which will be available throughout Mater Public.

The QNU's booklet *EB7: Important information for QNU members*, which was previously mailed to all Mater Public members, contains information on the key elements of the new agreement—this booklet can be accessed on our website at [www.qnu.org.au](http://www.qnu.org.au)

Key elements of the proposed agreement include:

- » 12.5% wage increase over three years consisting of:
  - 4.5% or \$34 per week (whichever is the greater) payable from 1 April 2009;
  - 4% or \$34 per week (whichever is the greater) payable from 1 April 2010; and
  - 4% or \$34 per week (whichever is the greater)

payable from 1 April 2011. (Note – should the proposed agreement be approved full back pay to 1 April 2009 will be payable at the new rate)

- » Increase of 4% per annum to specified allowances;
- » Increase to Midwives' annualised salary from 27.5% to 30%;
- » Increase for Enrolled Nurse (Advanced Practice) top of scale wage rate;
- » Improved arrangements for payment of professional development allowance;
- » Removal of junior rates for Enrolled Nurses under 21 years of age;
- » Improved penalty rates for Christmas Day;
- » Improved sick leave arrangements;
- » Change from "majority of shift" to "actual time worked" extended to include public holidays;
- » Maintenance of job security – no forced redundancies;

- » Access to "cash out" of leave entitlements in situations of demonstrated employee hardship in accordance with applicable legislation;
- » Mater-specific workload management provisions;
- » Commitment to collective bargaining and consultation with the QNU;
- » Preservation of all current award, enterprise agreement and human resource policy entitlements.

The proposed final Mater Public EB7 agreement is very similar to the EB7 agreement endorsed by Queensland Health nurses and midwives.

The wage outcomes and improvements in conditions are consistent with the Queensland Health outcomes.

### Why is there a separate consultation and ballot process to Queensland Health?

The *Mater Public Nurses and Midwives Agreement* will be finalised

under the new Fair Work Act which took effect from 1 July 2009. As the Mater is a separate employer to Queensland Health and in the federal industrial relations system, a separate consultation and balloting process with nurses and midwives has to be undertaken to approve any proposed agreement.

### What is the consultation and ballot process?

In accordance with the Fair Work Act, Mater must provide nurses and midwives with access to the proposed agreement for a period of at least seven days prior to starting the voting process to approve the proposed agreement.

The timeframe for the formal consultation and balloting is as follows:

- » **Monday 14 September: Mater to commence consultation**, including distribution of the proposed agreement to all nurses and midwives.
- » **Tuesday 22 September: Mater to open ballot** — Mater will post ballot papers to all nurses and midwives.
- » **Monday 5 October (10am): Mater to close ballot** — QNU is invited to scrutineer the ballot count.

Should the majority of nurses and midwives covered by the proposed *Mater Public Nurses and Midwives*

*Agreement* vote in favour of the agreement, it will be lodged with Fair Work Australia for approval.

Following approval by Fair Work Australia, Mater will process the first wage increase of 4.5% and will back pay this increase to 1 April 2009.

### Why has there been such a delay?

Mater has previously advised the QNU of intense discussions between Mater Health Services and Queensland Health over funding issues associated with both EB6 and EB7 agreements.

Mater advised the QNU that they would not finalise any nurses and midwives agreement until the funding issues with Queensland Health were resolved.

Mater also sought to negotiate alternative professional development arrangements and an alternative classification structure to that contained in the Queensland Health agreement for nurses and midwives.

These matters were reported to members and based upon members' feedback further negotiations have now resulted in both the professional development and classification structure for Mater nurses and midwives being consistent with that applicable across Queensland Health.

### Professional Development transitional arrangements

As part of the alignment of the Professional Development provisions with the Queensland Health arrangements, Mater will cease accepting Professional Development claims for reimbursement from 30 September 2009. This is to allow for the calculation of the payout of outstanding professional development entitlements in November 2009.

The period covered in the November 2009 payment will include the calendar year 2008 entitlement and the first nine months of calendar year 2009 entitlement as at the end of September 2009.

### Need further information?

For further information about the provisions of the *Mater Public Nurses and Midwives Agreement* please refer to the QNU's booklet *EB7: Important information for QNU members*—on our website at [www.qnu.org.au](http://www.qnu.org.au)

Members can also access a full copy of the proposed agreement available throughout the Mater Public or by contacting the QNU.

Members wanting clarification or advice about the proposed agreement should contact the QNU directly on (07) 3840 1444.

 **Nurses. For you. For life.**

PUBLIC SECTOR EB7