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AUTHORISED BY LLOYD WILLIAMS, STATE SECRETARY



THE ONLY SPECIALIST UNION FOR DISABILITY, MENTAL HEALTH AND DRUG AND ALCOHOL SERVICES IN VICTORIA

G4S Security Staff at Forensicare take Industrial Action

For release Thursday 3rd August 2017

G4S security staff at Forensicare (Thomas Embling Hospital), Victoria's only secure forensic hospital, have commenced protected industrial action following a breakdown in negotiations for a new Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) with G4S, the hospital's security contractor.

G4S have effectively offered 7 days' personal leave per year when the National Employment Standards – the legal minimum- require a minimum of 10 days' personal or sick leave. They have also offered a pay increase below the rest of the public sector.

Forensicare patients have either been transferred from the prison system or court ordered to be detained for psychiatric assessment and/or treatment. The G4S security staff are critical to the safety and security of all visitors, staff and patients and perform duties of a correctional nature that are not performed by security guards at other hospitals.

On Friday 4th August, the night shift will stop work from 1.50am – 2.50am and the following day shift will stop work from 12pm-1pm.

HACSU members are also refusing to take on overtime and refusing to undertake pre-booked/non-emergency cuffed escorts until a fair deal is struck with their employer.

Quotes attributable to Paul Healey, HACSU Assistant State Secretary:

"Our members are frustrated to the point that they are taking serious industrial action. G4S are offering security staff who work long, stressful shifts a deal which sees less personal leave than the legal minimum requirement. It's insulting. They've proven themselves to be a very difficult employer to bargain with."

"We've been told that when HACSU members take stop work action, they'll be replaced by far lesser qualified staff. It just goes to show how poorly G4S value the work they do and the safety of clinical staff at Forensicare."

"We call upon The Minister for Mental Health, Martin Foley to intervene in the interest of treating mental health clinicians' safety."

"G4S must recognise the contribution our members make to ensuring Forensicare is a safe and secure facility, and to substantially improve their pay offer and conditions."

"Our dispute could easily be resolved if G4S negotiate in good faith and pay our members the wages and conditions that reflect the specialist nature of their work. However if they continue to bully our members, we will continue to take industrial action."

HACSU Assistant State Secretary Paul Healey is available for interviews on 0401 487 235.

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