

## **Joint media release. Public health care dispute. LHMU and QPSU**

Health practitioners across the state have rejected Queensland Health's offer to cut conditions for workers, particularly those in rural areas and in clinical supervision roles along with a pay offer of just 2.5% per year.

Health practitioners, members of the QPSU and LHMU, are standing up against cost cutting across public health care and are not ruling out taking direct industrial action in the coming weeks in protest against the cut in their conditions and real wages.

"There's not a worker in Queensland who would think it's reasonable or acceptable for an employer to carve at least \$240 out of their monthly pay packet and yet that's what public health workers are being asked to endorse," LHMU Queensland branch secretary Gary Bullock said today.

"It's also simply not good enough for the employer to be trying to slash a week off each year for radiographers and physicists that they are entitled to as compensation for their ongoing workplace exposure to radiation.

"Queenslanders expect and deserve quality public health services as well as enough health professionals to provide the services but the employer's current offer will simply ensure health professionals walk away to the private sector either interstate or overseas.

"All this at a time of national population growth and increasing demand for health services, as identified in federal Treasury's 2010 Intergenerational Report.\*"

"Queensland Health did the right thing by Queenslanders by investing in health practitioners three years ago and that reduced waiting lists but unfortunately an unfair wage offer and cuts to important working conditions has put those good gains at risk," QPSU Acting General Secretary Kate Flanders said today.

"A pay offer of 2.5% is effectively a pay cut and can hardly be described as fair when politicians are being awarded over 4 per cent increases within a year and the Reserve Bank estimates the average inflation over the next three years will be 3.05%.

"Right now, we know the employer wants to take a scalpel to health practitioners' regional and rural allowances, as well as student supervision allowances of \$10 a day.

"Additionally, the employer's also making a short sighted effort to rebuild a wall for HPs to scramble early in their careers as they progress past health practitioner level 3.2.

"The employer cannot reasonably explain why it's seeking to rebuild career barriers for health practitioners at a time when more and more Queenslanders are relying on public health services.

"It would be most unfortunate for tens of thousands of Queenslanders who rely on public health practitioner services if HPs walked away from public service careers because of unfair wages and conditions.

"While we acknowledge that the state government has been investing in health infrastructure, the bricks and mortar of hospitals and medical facilities, this won't treat patients.

"This doesn't provide the health professional to administer the CT scan or the highly skilled scientist who can look down a microscope and identify the mystery blood borne disease that has knocked a Queenslanders off their feet.

"Queenslanders expect and deserve better public health care services like better services for those living in regional areas and remote locations and better dental health care for schoolkids.

"We also need enough public health workers to provide vital public health support services, like physiotherapy, speech therapy and psychological care.

"HPs are not asking for anything more than fair and reasonable wages and conditions and it's not too late for the employer to focus on a jointly held, fresh vision for the future of public health care in the interests of quality services for Queenslanders."

## **Resources**

### **Analysis of formal QHealth offer to public health practitioners**

[http://www.hpstrongertogether.com/news\\_update\\_100906\\_offer.html](http://www.hpstrongertogether.com/news_update_100906_offer.html)

### **Federal Treasury 2010 Intergenerational Report**

<http://www.treasury.gov.au/igr/igr2010/>

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