



Denis Blackford
NT Branch Secretary

IN THIS ISSUE:

Message from the Secretary	1
Organiser's Desk	2
NTPS CA Taskforce	3
Job Delegate thank you	3
Staff changes letter	3
NTPS Nursing Career Structure (NCS) Review	3
NT Public Sector Nurses	4
Contacting the Branch	4
Professional Indemnity Insurance	4

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

Hello colleagues,

The **NT election** result in June has effectively endorsed the Claire Martin Government to continue with the direction it had been following during its first term. While the NT Government says health expenditure has increased by about 40% during this term, and there has been some focus on increasing nursing resources within the public sector, nurses practicing in many areas continue to face challenges related to insufficient resources.

When you scan the Government's health election commitments such as increased nursing positions for Alice Springs and Royal Darwin Hospital (75 extra nurses), more beds (24 at RDH as well as some at ASH), expanded community and midwifery services, they would seem significant.

These are essentially whole of term promises so they will rolled out over the life of this parliament.

The ANF NT Branch meets regularly with the health minister and through these meetings will better able to monitor the Government keeping these election commitments.

National **industrial relations** changes proposed by the Federal Government were the focus, in June, of the biggest union rally ever seen in Darwin. The ANF NT Branch joined other unions in protesting these changes the Howard government can make as they now they have control of the Senate.

The ANF, nationally, is part of a national union campaign to raise public awareness on how these changes will negatively effect the working lives of the majority of working Australians.

The ANF NT Branch is promoting this awareness at every opportunity and encourages all nurses to get involved. The first of these changes is expected to be will be introduced in September. For more information consult the ANF website www.anf.org.au, also the ACTU website www.actu.asn.au has more information. Look out for and be a part of the national campaign in the months ahead.

The **ANF National Biennial Job Delegates Conference** is being held in Darwin 20-21 October. This forum from all branches of the Federation will gather to debate contemporary nursing and health issues and develop resolutions and guide the Federal Executive in policy development. ANF NT Branch Delegates to the conference are: Lolita Wikander, RDH Renal Unit; Lesley Gay, Ti Tree Health Centre; Kathleen Hauth, Hetti Perkins Alice Springs Aged Care.

In closing, I would like to thank the nursing and medical staff of **Alice Springs Hospital** for the wonderful care and professional attention I received during a recent hiccup in my health status that occurred while visiting the centre in June - thanks to all who were involved in my quick recovery.

Be well, be safe, Denis.
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ANF NT Branch new premises - Casi House, Vanderlin Dr, Wanguri



MembersEquity
The Super Funds Bank

News briefs



Organiser's Desk

Angela Phillips
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The biennial NT Job Delegate (JD) conference was very successful with a record number of JDs attending. The speakers were well

received and guest speaker Michael Crosby, Director of Organising at the ACTU stole the show on the second day of the conference.

Three JDs were voted in as the NT Delegates for the ANF National Biennial Job Delegates Conference in October. We would like to take this opportunity to publicly acknowledge and thank our sponsors for their support. Without their support it would be difficult to run such a successful conference, so thanks go to HESTA superannuation, Members Equity and the NT Government.

Worksite visits will begin in August, with each work area being visited on a regular basis, and will continue through to the end of the year. The visits will be informal and either the ANF or JDs in your work areas will keep you informed of when the meeting will take place.

The Industrial Relations Campaign has been a major focus for all unions over recent months. It is important that all ANF members are up-to-date with what is happening and the ANF NT Branch will continue to send updates of the IR campaign through our JD network. 'Your rights at work' badges and stickers are available from the ANF office and from your workplace JD.

Information and communication are a challenge at times. Information is distributed through the JD in your work area or directly from the ANF office. We would like to continue this process and keep expanding the service. But we need your assistance, so if you do not have a JD in your work area and you are interested in becoming a JD or a contact person, please let the office know. The bigger the communication tree the better.

Dates to put in your diary this year:

Roadshow: 14-16 September 2005, Katherine
(Please note change of date)

Roadshow: 3-4 October, DPH, RDH

Roadshow: 10-14 October, Central Australia

Federal ANF Job Delegates Conference:
Darwin 20-21 October 2005

Remember the ANF Office or your JD can assist you with up to date pay and workplace conditions, Award or Certified Agreement enquiries, professional or industrial issues or in fact any query about nursing or we will point you in the right direction.



Michael Crosby, ACTU, and wife, with Janice Adams, HESTA (Right)



Libby Webb, Cath Hunter and Marlene Herron at the NT JD conference dinner



NTPS Certified Agreement (CA) Taskforce (NCAT)

The Taskforce is now into its second year with lots of activity on many fronts. Heather Traeger who is the Taskforce coordinator has been seconded part time to be the Branch Manager of the new Workforce Strategy and Clinical Learning unit with Greg Rickard as the Director. The Taskforce sits under this new directorate.

Paul Niuewenhoven is on a well earned holiday, catching up with family, friends and that elusive fish. The Nurse Practitioner (NP) Project that I am working on is progressing well. We met with the Department Executive who were very excited about the Project. They endorsed the progress to date and gave in-principle endorsement for NPs to have open prescribing rights.

Details of steering committee minutes and related information can be accessed through the Taskforce newsletter circulated monthly and the NTG 'Intranet' website. The ANF NT project officer on the Taskforce, Kirstie Hawkins can be contacted at kirstie.hawkins@nt.gov.au or on 8922 7025

[Kirstie Hawkins, ANF NT NCAT Project Officer](#)

Job Delegate thank you

The ANF NT Branch office would like to thank the JDs who have assisted us with our mail outs and at the RDH Orientation Days. Your assistance and continued support is greatly appreciated.

Staff changes letter

All ANF NT membership were contacted directly by mail to inform them of the issues around the staff changes at the Branch - Please contact the office if you have not received the letter.

NTPS Nursing Career Structure Review

The most recent meeting of the steering committee occurred on 20 July. Information about this and previous meetings can be accessed by contacting the Project Officer, Gloria Gopel, 2nd floor, Casuarina Plaza, through the Public Sector Nurses CA Taskforce newsletter and through the NTG 'intranet' website.



Kirstie Hawkins, ANF NT NTPS Nurses Taskforce Project Officer

ANF SA supports NT Branch

Acknowledgment and thanks to the ANF South Australian Branch for providing support during recent staff shortages at the NT Branch during some unanticipated leave. Lee Thomas, the SA Branch Secretary provided an 1800 number and email address for Central Australian members to access support and advice from their Organisers. As well as this, Lee visited Alice Springs with NT Branch Secretary, Denis Blackford in late July to talk with and meet members at Alice Springs Hospital movement.

NT Public Sector Nurses

Got a problem with entitlements, allowances or issues relating to your employment conditions? Your employer is obliged to provide these to you, answer your queries and resolve your issues.

Contact the DH&CS Human Resources and Workforce Development Branch on 8922 7249. If you do not receive the answers or solutions you require contact us at the ANF NT office.

Visit our website: www.anfnt.org.au



TEMHS Members Meeting, July 2005

Exit letter copy to the ANF

Leaving your job or thinking of leaving your job because of issues with your employer and/or workplace? Why not think of sending a copy of your resignation letter describing your concerns and reasons for leaving. This will allow us to develop a database of evidence informing us why nurses are not staying in the NT - great information to put before employers, particularly at EBA times. Our fax number is (08) 8945 4171.

RDH ED Correction

The following opening sentence from last issue should read as follows: *Access block and security issues at RDH ED continue to confront nurses working in this area. Nurses have been contacting the ANF NT indicating that attempts by DH&CS to address the issue effectively are **not** working.*

The NT Branch would like to issue an apology for this omission.

The ANF NT has been advised that the processes promised by the Minister regarding improving RDH RD access block and related issues for the hospital, will begin in the first week of August.

When contacting the Branch

When contacting the Branch for assistance or enquiry, it assists us greatly if you can provide us with your ANF NT Branch membership number. This can be found on your membership card provided at the time joining the Branch and it is also on the ANJ front address sheet you receive each month as part of your membership benefits.

We will get back to you!

The ANF NT is the smallest and least resourced Branch in the ANF. Our small team, based in Darwin is responsible for the whole of the NT. Consequently we get many contacts from nurses everywhere with a variety of requests for information and support. If we are not there to take your call at the time, do not hesitate to leave a message. We will respond and acknowledge your message within a reasonable time frame. Our goal is to get back to you within 24 hours. If it is a work conditions related matter, your employer is obligated to provide this to you in the first instance. You never know they could have the answer? Nevertheless, we will always respond if you contact us.

Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) - Registration Requirements:

Recent changes to NT legislation pertaining to nurses has meant that it is now a requirement of registration with the Health Professionals Licensing Authority (New version of the NT Nurses' Board) to indicate that nurses have adequate professional indemnity insurance.

ANF membership covers most nurses in employment with its' PII cover. Nurses who work in some private contract arrangements earning more than \$20,000pa are not covered.