

Entry Permit Holder Report

SafeWork SA

Application ID 19839628

Entry Permit Holder	
Full Name:	Bernadette Mulholland
Permit Number:	ET-22-03868
Union Represented:	South Australian Salaried Medical Officers Association
Worksite Entered	
Business Name:	Royal Adelaide Hospital Emergency Department
Industry:	Other Health
Address:	1 Port Road Adelaide SA 5000
Date workplace entered:	23 July 2024

I Bernadette Mulholland am of the opinion that the PCBU has contravened the WHS legislation relating to:

	Alleged Contravention	More information	Was the contravention rectified?
PCBU Alleged Contravention 1	Not maintaining safe systems of work	On attendance there were 83 patients in the RAH ED, 53 of the patients were on barouches in the cubicles waiting to access beds in the hospital, 17 of which were mental health patients some of these patients had been waiting days to access a bed in the hospital, one mental health patient had been in the RAH ED at the time 95 hrs and another 46 hrs. There are not enough mental health beds and resources. The environment knowingly agitates mental health patients causing the patient to lash out but the PCBU	No

		<p>has not done anything to address the unsafe environment.</p> <p>The high demand has led to ramping in the waiting room and ramping in the back of ambulances for patients.</p> <p>The demand gives rise to psychosocial issues including moral injury as the doctors cannot provide the care within the required time expected professionally. There was no known escalation process that addressed the current demand or the psychosocial injuries arising from the demand and access block for doctors.</p>	
PCBU Alleged Contravention 2	Not maintaining safe systems of work	<p>The doctors in the ED were concerned that even though an improvement notice had been placed on the site by SafeWork SA there had been no improvement and no safe systems of work when there is excessive demand. The doctors sought to understand how SafeWork SA knowing the environment was impacting both physically and mentally on the doctors working within the ED can consider it safe. The drs feel the regulator has let them down.</p> <p>Doctors stated that clinicians were increasingly becoming desperate in trying to manage the situation and that the PCBU only provide rhetoric not solutions.</p> <p>The doctors said although the State Government had promised beds and staff they had seen neither. The doctors stated even though assaults and physical altercations occur regularly in the ED there is no change to the work or solutions put forward by the employer and this gave rise to mental health concerns.</p> <p>The doctors state because of the lack of safe system of work they feel demoralised and miserable.</p>	No
PCBU Alleged Contravention 3	Not maintaining a safe work environment	<p>The doctors dont feel safe with the access block and dont feel safe for patients that they look after are safe.</p>	No

		<p>The doctors are of the view that because of access block and inability to move patients to the right bed within the hospital and remaining in the ED, patients anger is increased and that some patients then lash out. This is particularly concerning for mental health patients which should be moved to the right beds and get the appropriate treatment within a few hours.</p> <p>The failure by the employer to provide sufficient staff and beds gives rise to unsafe environment in the RAH ED.</p> <p>The doctors state that because the employer does not provide a safe working environment they are angry and anxious that more clinicians will be assaulted in the RAH ED.</p> <p>The doctors state the pressure in the waiting room ramp and ambulance ramp gives rise to anger by patients and family and sometimes the waiting room in particular can be unsafe.</p>	
PCBU Alleged Contravention 4	Inadequate facilities or access to facilities	<p>The doctors state that because of insufficient beds in the hospital this gives rise in the RAH ED to an unsafe work environment and results in psychosocial injuries.</p> <p>The doctors stated that this led to inability to provide care to patients within their professional requirements and clinical expectations and this led to moral and psychosocial matters.</p> <p>The doctors state they are healers working in an environment that increases distress and harm for both the staff and the patients. How is that possible.</p>	No
PCBU Alleged Contravention 5	Inadequate monitoring of the health of workers and the conditions at the workplace	<p>The doctors advise that the safety in the environment has become increasingly worse over several years with assaults, delays in care, distress of their colleagues. There are no supports for the doctors in this</p>	No

		<p>environment for their mental and physical health..</p> <p>The doctors state that the employer is more focused on accreditation and ensuring hands are washed and mandatory training done rather than assaults, mental health issues lack of control by clinicians over their work space. The doctors state that the RAH ED is always in crisis and is constantly a high risk environment where the doctors on a regular basis are always worrying about their patients and their colleagues.</p>	
PCBU Alleged Contravention 6	Not maintaining a safe work environment	<p>The doctors talked about the increasing number of rats in their administrative area. The rats were eating the food in the doctors draws and defecating. One of the rats had been nicknamed "Basil" In one SLS provided it stated "I am concerned about my safety in a workplace (a hospital no less) that allows the bins to overflow."</p> <p>The employer advised the doctors that the employer did not pay to have personal bins at the desk and that these will need to be removed rather than address the rat problem.</p> <p>The employer could pay and ask the cleaners to clean the bins making the area safer but instead the employer wants to move the bins.</p> <p>The cleaners are only required by the employer to do certain things and fail to clean properly.</p>	No
PCBU Alleged Contravention 7	Not maintaining a safe work environment	<p>The doctors advised that the entire west wing of the RAH ED was closed and was more like a ward because of all the patients waiting for beds within the hospital.</p> <p>The doctors stated that general medicine also had many unwell patients and the flow was broken.</p> <p>The doctors also stated that although trainee doctors had been appointed for next year's rotation the employer had</p>	No

		<p>forgotten to send out the contracts and that the trainee doctors have taken up positions elsewhere and they are now scrambling for medical staff for next year.</p>	
PCBU Alleged Contravention 8	Work Groups	<p>The EPH met with the employer representatives and was advised.</p> <p>200 beds with aged care patients and NDIS patients who were well to go home but no place to go.</p> <p>Private beds in Burnside had been organised.</p> <p>Elective surgery was still reduced.</p> <p>A number of forensic patients were assigned to the RAH and not James Nash House due to insufficient beds in JNH and this would not improve until JNH is funded appropriately. There is a worry that the State Government is funding another 350 beds and some will require assistance at JNH but because of overflow more patients that should be in JNH will come to the RAH.</p> <p>There is little more that can be done.</p>	No