

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Yan to the Minister for Health:

Work Conditions

1. **How many work health and safety incidents have been reported by NT Health staff in the 2021/22 financial year? What was the severity of the incidents?**

Incident Severity Rating (ISR)	Total
ISR 1 - Severe	2
ISR 2 - Major	103
ISR 3 - Moderate	972
ISR 4 - Minor	1291
ISR 5 - Inconsequential	1380
Grand Total	3748

2. **How many of the work health and safety incidents were reported by nurses?**

The majority of incidents recorded in NT Health's reporting system "RiskMan" are reported by nurses as the majority of workforce within NT Health

RiskMan does not provide a reporting category that could provide a specific percentage.

The amount of administrative effort required for manual extrapolation is excessive and would result in undue diversion of resources from service delivery.

3. **Is there a mechanism for nurses to report fatigue/overwork/burnout in the workplace? How is it reported and how is it addressed?**

All staff are encouraged to report concerns to their immediate supervisors or team leaders.

All staff are encouraged to report all hazards, health and safety incidents, near misses in the RiskMan system.

NT Health has introduced the Wellbeing Index App which allows staff to monitor their wellbeing and risk of burnout with access to resources in the App.

There are regular information sessions held virtually relating to wellbeing initiatives including the introduction of rostered Peer Support Officers (PSO's) to provide an initial peer conversation around any areas of concern.

If an injury is believed to be caused by workplace conditions, all staff have access to report workplace injuries through workers compensation claims mechanisms, case management and return to work strategies.

All staff have access to Employee Assistance Program services to seek independent support on matters relating to both work related or personal situations.

If remote on-call nursing staff are called out to emergencies overnight, there are formal procedures and processes to temporarily reduce day services to provide fatigue management strategies.

NT Health governance structures include functional groups to address issues, risks, constraints and/or improvement strategies in the workplace. These include: Work Health and Safety, Safety and Quality, National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards forums, working groups and committees.

System wide initiatives include workplace audits, inspections, stakeholder consultation to identify risks, issues or performance concerns in the workplace.

4. What is the average length of a shift for a nurse working in an NT hospital and what are the break times per shift?

8 hours for day shifts and 10 hours for night shifts. Some areas have agreed arrangements with staff/management and the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation for 12 hour shifts.

As per the Enterprise Agreement:

- 8 hour shifts – 1 x 30 minute break and 1 x 15 minute break
- 10 hour and 12 hour shifts - 2 x 30 minute breaks

5. For a nurse required to work in full PPE, have breaks been adjusted to reflect the time it takes to remove PPE and put it back on? If so, can you please provide details? If not, why not?

Staff are entitled to leave the ward hourly for fluid/hydration breaks.

Staff are encouraged to go on PPE breaks every two hours though can have fluid/bathroom breaks as required.

The requirement to don and doff PPE is factored into break scheduling.

Breaks commence when the nurse has completed taking off PPE, and have their full break entitlement before donning new PPE.