



17 November 2016

## **SAS Staff – Joint statement and bulletin**

### **School Learning Support Officers health care procedures update November 2016**

As SLSO members will be aware, the PSA and the Department of Education (DoE) have been consulting around a review of the health care procedures in schools for students with complex health care needs.

The PSA has raised the concerns of School Learning Support Officers (SLSO) with other unions to seek support to progress the health and educational interests of these vulnerable students enrolled in NSW public schools.

The NSW Teachers Federation (NSWTF), NSW Nurses and Midwives Association (NSWNMA) and Unions NSW all support the PSA in ensuring students who require complex health care procedures have qualified and appropriately trained staff to meet the needs of these students.

SLSOs are being asked to undertake health care procedures which demand a

level of clinical expertise. These demands are unreasonable and potentially can put the student health and the SLSO at risk.

The core role of SLSOs is to assist teachers in delivering educational programs in the classroom. SLSOs members have reported to the PSA that a substantial amount of their time is now being spent away from the classroom to deliver health care procedures.

SLSOs are not qualified to provide clinical procedures. For example, in a public hospital setting, best clinical practice requires catheterisation to be undertaken by a registered nurse or an enrolled nurse under supervision. This same level of best clinical practice is not being applied in NSW public schools. These students deserve better.

### **Unions join with PSA to demand better for Students Without a Voice**

Click [HERE](#) to find a signed joint statement by the PSA, NSWTF, NSWNMA and Unions NSW

committing to support PSA members by insisting the DoE put the best interests of these students first.

[http://psa.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/2016.09.26\\_Joint-Statement\\_PSA\\_NSWTF\\_NSWNMA\\_Unions-NSW\\_formatted-Approved.pdf](http://psa.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/2016.09.26_Joint-Statement_PSA_NSWTF_NSWNMA_Unions-NSW_formatted-Approved.pdf)

Students' health care needs in NSW public schools have increased and SLSOs have consistently raised concerns about the growing complexity of the procedures they are being pressured to deliver.

The PSA and the combined unions are alarmed that SLSOs are being requested to undertake health care procedures which demand a level of clinical expertise that cannot be realistically expected under the statement of duties and definitely don't adhere to best practice.

### **Health care procedures are voluntary**

In previous bulletins the PSA has explained to SLSOs the undertaking health care procedures is voluntary. In discussions with the DoE, it became alarmingly clear the PSA's view of voluntary greatly differs to the Department's.

### **Victimisation laws**

Victimisation means punishing or threatening to punish someone. It is against the law to punish or threaten to

punish someone because they have asserted their rights under the Award, make a complaint or refuse to do something because it is voluntary.

The NSWIRC advised the PSA and the DoE that the Industrial Relations Act clearly prohibits victimisation of workers. Examples of victimisation in schools involving health care procedures can be raised at the NSWIRC. The DoE confirmed at the NSWIRC that it would not tolerate victimisation of SLSOs. If you believe you are being victimised please contact the PSA.

### **We want to meet with you**

PSA Organisers visit schools throughout the year but are often unable to talk to SLSOs as they are in class. The PSA is concerned that sometimes vital information may not be communicated to our SLSO members. We strongly encourage all SLSO members to organise a PSA meeting either at your school or another location. Organisers can meet with you before or after school, and during lunch breaks.

This information has been sent to your personal address. Please let the PSA know if this suits you.

Any PSA member can arrange a meeting by emailing: [schools@psa.asn.au](mailto:schools@psa.asn.au).

