

**INQUIRY INTO VETERINARY WORKFORCE SHORTAGE  
IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 24 June 2023

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Partially  
Confidential

I am a veterinary nurse of 7years having worked in a variety of general practice clinics.

During that time I have watched many staff leave our industry due to abuse from clients and practice owners, financial instability and burn out. I have tried to support many colleagues through burnout, compassionate fatigue and mental illness that has been exacerbated by the trauma and stress that comes with working within our industry.

I love the practicality of my job. Being able to use my experience and skills to assist animals with their medical, surgical, behavioural and overall care. I am skilled in pathology, radiology, anaesthetics and a long list of medical capabilities.

Due to experienced staff leaving or dropping to shorter hours in order to work extra jobs or manage stress; I was the only experienced nurse on shift today. I was pulled in every direction to provide my services to my vets and their patients.

I am paid less than a hospitality or food service worker. We do a job that in human medicine would need to be segmented to different specialties rather than performed by one person. Yet we are not paid a liveable wage. Many nurses I know need to work extra jobs just to make sure they can afford to pay their bills.

I am a skilled individual who goes to work knowing that I may need to help my beloved patients when they pass away because as much as we wish we could, we cannot save them all.

I go to work knowing that there is a high chance I am going to be verbally abused by clients when I have to tell them we have had another staff member off sick or leave so I can't fit their pet in for a consult that day.

I go to work knowing I may need to do a job that used to be shared between multiple people.

I have seen staff be injured over the years by scared animals that act aggressively. Inexperienced staff are still learning how to safely restrain however due to shortages they are often placed in situations where their assistance is needed.

We are tired. We are underpaid. We are undervalued.

We want a better future. We want understanding. We want to be able to provide veterinary medicine services with an adequate amount of staff to give the patients the best level of care.

I want to stop seeing my colleagues at breaking point because the industry we love so much has a broken system.