

**Submission  
No 73**

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

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The recent vet and nurse shortage has impacted the greatly in a negative way. I believe it is due to many contributing factors which include the following -

\* Wages: employees are starting to crumble with the cost of living pressures and not being able to keep up with it due our award rates, I am a veterinary nurse and the award rate for what our skills set includes, the risks we take and the hours we put in doesn't reflect this. I personally know myself and many other nurses who will never be in the position to own a home unless their partner supports them.

I know many young nurses who leave the field early on in their career for higher paying careers. As I am a tafe teacher we are also seeing less students enrolling into vet nursing courses due to the knowledge of low wages and being a difficult field to work in. The wages do not reflect the work that is required.

\* Client interactions - Many clients feel entitled to berate staff I find especially nurses as they are the easy targets. Clients feel they are paying for a service which they deem too expensive so have the right to yell and speak badly to staff.

I am finding these days people are fare less willing to put up with that behaviour and will leave the industry due to this.

\* Burn out- I am fortunate to now work in a veterinary hospital which does not over work their staff, we feel lucky to get lunch breaks and finish work on time. I have been in clinics that if you got to eat lunch you were lucky, you wouldn't get paid during your non existent lunch break, working 10 hours + a day, doing overtime for free, expected to go above and beyond because we love animals and cope abuse from clients.

I think burnout has alot to do with the culture of the workplace and the hours staff are expected to work. If staff feel supported, get their allocated lunch breaks to switch off and are not forced to do over time it would help

Employees should not have to be subjected to abuse from clients and put up with it. The workplace is an emotional field and mkst employees are empaths so being abused and spoken down to really affects mental health.

I can't speak for vets as I am a nurse however I have worked with vets for over 15 years and their award wages especially when new graduates is one of the lowest uni degree wages. Their wages are not reflected with the work they put in, the skills they have and the cost of the uni degree.

I believe in this industry we are still made to feel as though "if you love animals You will do...." work for free, stay back for free, put up with clients abusing you, your not in it for the money etc. This belief needs to shift as people aren't willing to put up with it anymore.