

**Examples of comments by nurses  
from ACTU Working Australia Census data 2011 re insecure work**

*"Many people are not able to obtain full time employment anymore but rather are forced into contracted hours that are often not the hours sort after but rather a minimum. This causes insecurity with work and finances and puts more pressure on the average wage earner. This also impacts on the ability to obtain a loan due to insecurity of working hours"*

I have only just started this job and its part time. I was doing the last 10 months working 3 jobs, all casual, and many hours because too many jobs are only casual now.

*"I have recently returned to nursing after a break of 12 years. During my absence many changes have occurred. The most important is that my nursing qualifications are out of date and where once enrolled nurses could always find work, this is not so now. Although everyone tells you there is a lot of work out there. If I had the medication endorsement, yes I would find it easier to get a regular job. The endorsement course costs \$3,000, unless sponsored by employer. It is a catch 22 situation, and therefor i am in the unsatisfactory position of having to be 'on-call' 7 days a week in order to hopefully get 3-4 day's work a week. I can't get on with a life, any sense of certainty, until i find regular work and i can't get this until i upgrade my qualifications and i probably have 11 years left in the workforce..... that's all, not angry, just frustrated at the moment."*

*"My case was taken to Fair Work, where it has stalled, but we were hopeful of improving access to study leave and education for part time nurses. It seems incredible to me that a CEO will refuse to pay 2 days of study leave for a part time employee just because the education falls on a day other than their allotted day of work. How then, is anyone working nights or weekends ever likely to keep up their skills if they have no access to paid education on a pro rata basis?"*

*"I find my ability to only work part time due to preschool children often precludes me from promotion and other advancements."*

*"I work two permanent part-time jobs, have to work weekends to get more pay, am in final year of an undergraduate degree, re-entered the workforce after 20 years out of nursing (800 hours for no pay)."*

*"As a brand new nurse I have been shocked by how difficult shift work is and the lack of work opportunities within nursing that provide socially acceptable hours for reasonable amounts of pay. I also find it amazing that at the times nurses are doing the hardest work (i.e. morning shifts) is when they are being paid the least."*

*"We should have true family friendly work environments, not just on paper. We have a "work what you need until a child's 5th birthday" policy. However, the fine print says if the managers deem it possible, rarely do they! eg. We have mums and dads that want to do night shift only whilst children are young to save on cost of childcare and pregnant mums that are too tired for night shift....very rarely does our rostering reflect family friendly. I know of multiple staff resigning because our management (who either have no children or adult children) have made it too difficult to balance work with family commitments. We lose experience and family orientated staff because we are not family friendly in practice, just on paper. I am planning for a family, my partner is also a shift worker, childcare hours do not exist for many of our shifts and is expensive for employed families, so this is a stressful consideration for starting a family, we also have all grandparents working full time so family assistance is not possible."*

*“My response to hours I work may appear strange. I work some permanent part time shifts at my main place of employment then work nurse bank shifts to get as many hours as I can do over a fortnight. With young children 14,11,6 and a single mum I work flat out. The job climate has changed in the past 5 years whereby nurses can seldom get permanent part time shifts eg. week day mornings for set days. Employers have the power to employ you for a certain no. of hours and these can vary at their discretion. This is a disadvantage for the workers and has meant I am tied to my current job where I have the previous conditions of employment ongoing for the term of my job or until legislation changes. Parents of young families deserve set shifts not to be employed where their shifts can be at management’s discretion.”*