



MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS, NURSING, AGED CARE, POLITICS

28 September 2009

Nurses applaud Ageing Minister's tough stand

Ged Kearney, Federal Secretary of the Australian Nursing Federation (ANF) today congratulated the Federal Minister for Ageing, Justine Elliot for sanctioning the Radford Private Nursing Home in Reservoir, Victoria.

Ms Kearney said the Federal Governments' tough stance would ensure aged care facilities understood they faced real consequences if they didn't meet minimum standards.

"The Minister has demonstrated she will act to enforce standards that protect elderly residents and for that she should be applauded.

"This case really highlights the need for reform in the aged care sector in Australia.

"It is crucial for nursing homes to have the right mix of staff and skills to ensure residents are cared for properly.

"This includes a minimum number of registered and enrolled nurses, particularly for residents with complex needs.

Ms Yvonne Chaperon Acting Secretary ANF Vic Branch also added the branches congratulations to the Minister and emphasised the need for licensing of all direct care workers in the sector. Licensing is important because it ensures quality and safety for residents in residential aged care said Ms Chaperon.

"Nurses across Australia have been working to highlight the importance of improved staffing and wages for aged care staff over the last six months through our *Because We Care* campaign," Ms Chaperon said.

Background

Australia today has some 2,800 residential aged care facilities providing care to more than 160,000 elderly people, 70 per cent of whom receive high-level care and 55 percent of whom are 85 years of age or older.

By 2020 the number of residents is projected to reach more than 250,000 – a 56 percent increase.

The **Because We Care** campaign is aimed at raising awareness and recognition of Australia's highly skilled and dedicated aged care nursing and care workforce, by focusing on:

- The right balance of skills and nursing hours so that nursing and care staff can provide quality care for every resident.
- Fair pay for aged care nurses and care staff.
- Recognition of the professional skills of Assistants in Nursing and care staff through a national licensing system.
- A guarantee that taxpayer funding is used for nursing and personal care for each resident.

Media inquiries: Ged Kearney, ANF Federal Secretary 0417 053 322
or Yvonne Chaperon, Acting Branch Secretary, ANF Victoria 0439 617 408

The ANF, with 170,000 members, is the professional and industrial voice for nurses and midwives in Australia.

Canberra Office

Unit 3, 28 Eyre Street Kingston ACT 2604 Australia
PO Box 4239 Kingston ACT 2604 Australia
(T) + 61 2 6232 6533 (F) + 61 2 6232 6610
anfcanberra@anf.org.au

Melbourne Office

Level 1, 365 Queen Street Melbourne VIC 3000 Australia
(T) + 61 3 9602 8500 (F) + 61 3 9602 8567
anfmelbourne@anf.org.au

ANF Journals

Australian Nursing Journal
Australian Journal of Advanced Nursing
anj@anf.org.au ajan@anf.org.au
ABN 41 816 898 298