



## MEDIA RELEASE

July 30, 2009

### AGED CARE NURSES PUTTING THE PRESSURE ON OUR POLLIES

Politicians will be put under the pump today as aged care nurses push for better funding in Budget 2010.

Visiting Ministers, Senators and MPs will be asked to undergo blood pressure tests as they enter the ALP National Conference starting today at Darling Harbour.

The event forms part of the '**Because We Care**' campaign being run by the Australian Nursing Federation (ANF), working towards improved conditions in the aged care industry and quality care for older Australians.

ANF Federal Secretary Ged Kearney said visiting politicians will be asked to undergo the blood pressure tests, not only to ensure their good health, but to test their support for the important issues in aged care.

"Aged care desperately needs nursing staff with the right mix of skills and increased funding from the federal government, with greater accountability for that funding," Ms Kearney said.

The ANF will also launch its national postcard campaign at the conference.

The postcards bear the message "**Time to deliver for aged care in Budget 2010**", and will be taken to aged care facilities and the community in marginal seats throughout Australia.

The ANF expects that 100,000 Australians will send the postcards to their local MP to tell them it is **time to deliver for aged care in Budget 2010**.

ALP conference delegates and proxies will be asked to sign the postcards and send a message to their federal MP at the conference.

"One of the fundamental issues in our aged care workforce is the wage disparity, with nurses on average getting paid \$300 a week less than their colleagues in other sectors," Ms Kearney said.

"That's why we are putting the pressure on politicians today to deliver with greater funding in the 2010 federal budget.

"With aged care and the funding of the sector becoming a very important topic for many older Australians, it will no doubt be raised as a real issue at the next federal election."

#### Canberra Office

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#### ANF Journals

Australian Nursing Journal  
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### Picture opportunity

Event time: 8.00am – 10.00am  
Date: Thursday 30 July  
Place: ALP National Conference  
Sydney Exhibition and Convention Centre, Darling Harbour

### Media inquiries:

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### About the campaign

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

1. The right balance of skills and nursing hours so that nursing and care staff can provide quality care for every resident.
2. Fair pay for aged care nurses and care staff who are paid up to \$300 per week less than nurses in other sectors.
3. Recognition of the professional skills of Assistants in Nursing and care staff through a national licensing system.
4. A guarantee that taxpayer funding is used for nursing and personal care for each resident.

The **Because We Care** campaign involves the ANF's state and territory branches, including the QNU and the NSWNA – with the support of over 170,000 nursing members around Australia.

Already, as part of the campaign, more than 13,000 "charters" supporting the **Because We Care** objectives have been signed across the country, 1,200 people have joined a special **Because We Care** Face book group and countless conversations have begun in workplaces and around dinner tables throughout Australia.

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