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MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS, NURSING, AGED CARE, POLITICS

Tony Abbott taking health care back to the 1800s

Australian Nursing Federation's Federal Secretary Ged Kearney said the opposition leader's proposed plans for hospitals was a backward step and would take us to a system akin to that of benevolent institutions of the 1800s.

His policies do not work in practice for today's communities and they will not deliver for current or future health care needs, she said.

We need a national health plan, a grand scale reform agenda not a system that creates small local and siloed hospitals that operate in isolation from each other and the broader Australian community.

"Mr Abbott's inefficient and expensive health policies will lead to a duplication of services, micromanagement and unworkable healthcare outcomes," she said.

"Although we respect the needs of all communities to have their say, the micromanagement of the healthcare system will not deliver improved health reforms to the scale Australia requires now and into the future.

Mr Abbott had his chance to reform the health system when he was Minister for Health under the Howard Government instead we saw that government strip the public health system of millions of dollars of Commonwealth funding, starving our communities' hospitals and limiting health care delivery.

Mr Abbott's plan also completely ignores the vital and important role of nurses in the Australian health system. His history as health minister under the Howard government showed that he had little understanding or respect for this country's hardworking nursing workforce.

The ANF has been involved in the thorough community consultation process under Labor, with the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission's recommendations. The ANF supports this process and is hopeful that it will deliver the necessary reforms our health care system needs," Ms Kearney said.

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