



media release

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Aged care sector to suffer as nurses face \$300 pay cut

THE Australian Nursing Federation is deeply disappointed at a decision by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission to reject a two-year delay to the award modernization process for NSW and Queensland nurses.

ANF Acting Federal Secretary Lee Thomas said this unfortunate result would slash up to \$300 a week from nurse wages and could result in many leaving the sector. About 15,000 nurses will be affected, 10,000 of those from NSW.

“This decision will impact hardest on the most experienced registered nurses in aged care cutting around \$294 from their weekly pay,” she said.

Ms Thomas said it was likely a percentage of these nurses would have no choice but to leave the aged care sector as they struggled to pay mortgages and keep up with the increasing cost of living.

“This is a great shame for the nurses who love their work and the older Australians who depend on them,” she said.

“The biggest losers here will be the residents, 70% of who have complex medical needs that require nurse expertise.”

Ms Thomas said the timing was out of step with demographic trends.

“Considering that Australia is facing a 56% rise by 2020 in the number of nursing home residents, this is not the time to be risking further staff shortages in the sector.”

“The ANF is very disappointed and will do everything in its power to make sure this doesn’t happen. We will be considering our options.”

“The federal government has supported the ANF’s application because it recognises the importance of keeping nurses in aged care. We ask them again to intervene to assist aged care nurses by increasing funding for wages in the 2010 budget. We need fair pay for aged care nurses and a good skills mix to look after vulnerable elderly Australians.”

Media inquiries

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