



media release

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Equal pay for nurses to improve workforce productivity

Paying aged care nurses and carers a fair wage will encourage more women into the sector and improve future workforce participation.

The Australian Nursing Federation has applauded the Prime Minister Kevin Rudd using the first of his Australia Day speeches to highlight the crucial issue of providing services to the nation's growing number of elderly residents.

ANF Federal Secretary Ged Kearney said she also welcomed the PM's call to increase workforce participation and said attracting more women into the sector would achieve a two-fold benefit.

"Paying aged care nurses and carers a fair wage would not only ensure nursing home residents receive the care they require but it would also swell the number of women working in a sector that desperately needs more staff."

"This would undoubtedly improve workforce participation in aged care."

"Australia is facing a 56% rise in the number of nursing home residents by 2020 so it is essential that we act today to protect the frail and elderly of tomorrow."

Ms Kearney said nurses were a vital part of Australia's future but we must pay them a fair wage.

"We need a robust aged care workforce. Any talk about economical productivity in the future is worthless if we can't properly look after the elderly."

"The 2010 budget needs to increase the wages of aged care nurses which are up to \$300 less than nurses in other sectors. We also need a good mix of skills to best look after nursing home residents."

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