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Authorised by B.Holmes, General Secretary, NSWNMA » GSC 131/2013 | 30 August 2013

# Tony Abbott to **remove** guaranteed pay rises for aged care

Coalition leader would take away aged care workers' chance at wage increases

At Wednesday night's third election debate, Coalition leader Tony Abbott said the delivery of improved wages for aged care workers should not be achieved through enterprise bargaining and should be put into a "general pool" of aged care funding instead.

An enterprise bargaining agreement is the only way to legally guarantee that employers pass the funding onto aged care workers in much needed increased wages.

## How the supplement works now under the Labor government

The current aged care supplement for increased funding potentially lifts wages of all aged care workers who are protected by an enterprise bargaining agreement.

To be eligible for the funding, aged care providers must boost wages for nurses to 3 per cent above the minimum rate within two years.

They would then receive a supplement that they would be required to pass onto employees.

This process guarantees that your employers are contractually obligated to pay you wage increases. Already in NSW, nurses employed by Domain Principal and Uniting Care have voted 'yes' to their increased wages, protected in an Enterprise Agreement.

## What may happen under a Coalition government

According to Coalition leader Tony Abbott, the funding would be reallocated within the aged care funding pool. Since this is not tied to an enterprise agreement, there is no guarantee that the funding will be passed onto nurses and other healthcare workers in the form of wage increases.

Since 2002, there have been many funding initiatives for aged care, but since they weren't tied to bargaining, consequently hardly any nurses saw the benefits.

The Coalition is yet to release its aged care policy.

Federal Minister for Ageing, Jacinta Collins said Mr Abbott had revealed he would "take the knife to the pay of Australia's 350,000 strong aged care workforce".

## What you can do

This election, vote for your right to guaranteed wage increases. If the Coalition and Tony Abbott get elected, they will place the \$1.2 billion into the general aged care funding pool. This will be the same as directly taking the money away from nurses and other care staff.

The New South Wales Nurses and Midwives' Association stands by the funding being tied to enterprise bargaining. It's the only way to legally guarantee that nurses and aged-care workers receive much needed wage increases.

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