



NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION

MEDIA RELEASE

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9 June, 2015

Wagga Wagga backs call for RNs in nursing homes

The NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) is meeting with local nurses, academics and community groups in Wagga Wagga this week to discuss the important role of registered nurses in aged care.

The NSWNMA is calling on the NSW government to extend a legal minimum requirement for aged care facilities with high care residents to have a registered nurse rostered on duty, at all times.

Currently, the *NSW Public Health Act 2010* requires nursing homes to have a minimum of one registered nurse on duty per shift however, changes to the federal *Aged Care Act 1997* in July 2014 affected the state law which has prompted a review and put the minimum requirement at risk.

A Steering Committee is in the process of consulting with the aged care sector on behalf of the Ministry of Health and the Health Minister is expected to hand down a decision during the second half of this year.

Manager of Member Organising at NSWNMA, Lisa Kremmer, said residents in Wagga Wagga and the surrounding districts are encouraged to help lobby government over the issue and ensure quality of care is upheld in local nursing homes.

"Registered nurses provide skilled, clinical care to aged care residents with complex and high level needs. On site clinical care by registered nurses can prevent unnecessary hospital admissions and the added burden to our overstretched ambulance and hospital systems," Ms Kremmer said.

"We've collected thousands of signatures on our petition and we'd really like Wagga Wagga locals to help us achieve more than 10,000 signatures to ensure this issue is debated in the NSW parliament."

Community members are encouraged to [write](#) to Health Minister Jillian Skinner on the issue and to also circulate the [petition](#) amongst work colleagues, family and friends.

The NSWNMA is urging the NSW government to transfer the requirement for registered nurses and directors of nursing in aged care permanently into legislation, to ensure a minimum of one registered nurse is on duty at all times in high care aged care facilities.

NSWNMA Member Organisers Jeff Crebert and Rita Martin will be in Wagga Wagga on Tuesday (9/6/15) and Wednesday (10/6/15) to highlight the issue and seek community support for the retention of registered nurses in nursing homes at all time.

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