



# NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION **MEDIA RELEASE**

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## NSW Labor commits to support better ratios rollout

Nursing and midwifery delegates of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association claimed a victory at their 69<sup>th</sup> annual conference in Sydney today, after successfully lobbying for political support in their fight for improved nurse-to-patient ratios.

The state's Shadow Minister for Health, Dr Andrew McDonald, received a rousing applause from the packed Rosehill Gardens Grand Pavilion, after he confirmed NSW Labor had agreed in-principal to employ more nurses and support the delivery expanded nurse-to-patient ratios to all areas not previously covered, under the party's Healthy Living policy.

Dr McDonald confirmed to the conference his party's policies for the next election were simple and already committed in writing.

"The first is more nurses doing more, the second is just telling the truth and the third is an opposition to the Americanisation and privatisation of the NSW health system," said Dr McDonald.

"When it comes to nurse-to-patient ratios, the nurses are right.

"This current government will not only not even use the word 'ratios', they won't even talk about it, we need to have a discussion because the health system is under threat."

During his address, Dr McDonald said it was imperative that the state government was accountable for its actions and transparent with the facts.

"There's an enormous amount of absolutely vital health information that is deliberately withheld from the people of NSW by this government," Dr McDonald said.

The Shadow Minister for Health reaffirmed NSW Labor's opposition to the privatisation of the state's public health system and drew attention to the state government's current plan for a private-operator to build and operate the new Northern Beaches Hospital at Frenchs Forest.

"How you can replace two public hospitals with one private one, is an experiment that is doomed for failure – it has never worked in the history of NSW," said Dr McDonald.

"Labor opposes the Americanisation of the health system, this tender could and should be stopped now."

General Secretary of the NSWNMA, Brett Holmes, welcomed the commitment given by the Shadow Minister, on behalf of 430 delegates attending the conference from across the state.

"It's a positive step forward in our fight for expanded nurse-to-patient ratios into all public health facilities and specialty units such as emergency departments, intensive care units, critical care, children's wards, community health and more country hospitals," Mr Holmes said.

"We need the government to take our claim seriously and ensure that our nurses and midwives are able to deliver the best possible patient care.



"Our resolve is to continue campaigning for this important claim in putting patient safety first."

The NSWNMA's 69th annual conference will conclude on Friday, August 1 at the Rosehill Gardens Grand Pavilion.

## **\*\* Media Alert \*\***

*Media are welcome to attend the NSWNMA's 69<sup>th</sup> annual conference in the Grand Pavilion at Rosehill Gardens, enter via Gate One (NB: Notices of motion and Association general business are closed to media). Highlights will include:*

### **FRIDAY, 1 AUGUST 2014**

**11.00am to 11.30am** – Lee Thomas, Federal Secretary ANMF and Annie Butler, Assistant Federal Secretary ANMF

**11.30am to 12.45pm** – Malinda Markowitz, Vice President of National Nurses United and Britta Houser, California Nurses Association

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