



Media Release: Thursday 15 January, 2015.

## **ANMF WELCOMES BACKDOWN ON MEDICARE CUTS**

The country's largest health union, the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF), has welcomed a decision by the Abbott Government to scrap changes to Medicare rebates which were due to begin next week.

The ANMF's Acting Federal Secretary, Annie Butler, said she was pleased the new Minister for Health, Sussan Ley, had "clearly listened to concerns by health professionals" that the \$20 reduction in subsidies paid to doctors for patient consultations under 10 minutes, would result in the erosion of Australia's system of universal healthcare.

"This is a common sense decision by the Minister," Ms Butler said today.

"As nurses and midwives, we were extremely worried that these proposed changes would result in doctors passing on more out of pockets costs on to their patients.

"We are now calling on Minister Ley to consult with the ANMF and other health professionals about how we can work together to protect Medicare and the future sustainability of Australia's universal healthcare system.

"We are ready to engage, consult and talk to the Abbott Government on these issues.

"Medicare and universal healthcare are important issues for nurses and midwives, who work with Australians in every health setting, in every region, every day and night. "

Ms Butler said the ANMF will be writing to the Minister to request a formal meeting on these issues.

She thanked the Opposition, Greens, PUP and key Independent Senators for opposing the introduction of the cuts to the Medicare rebate.

The ANMF, with over 240,000 members, is the professional and industrial voice for nurses, midwives and assistants in nursing in Australia.

ANMF media inquiries: 0411 254 390.