



NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Support builds in Wagga Wagga for registered nurses in aged care

Community support for registered nurses to remain on duty 24/7 in aged care facilities with high-care residents has continued to grow in Wagga Wagga.

On Monday, 7 September, members of Wagga Wagga Base Hospital Branch of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) will hand over more than 5,000 petition signatures, collected from the local area and across NSW, to Wagga Wagga MP Daryl Maguire.

Local nurses and midwives have urged the NSW Government to keep a legislative requirement for registered nurses to be on duty at all times in homes where residents have high-care needs. This state legal requirement is in jeopardy due to changes to Commonwealth aged care laws.

Assistant General Secretary of the NSWNMA, Judith Kiejda, said it is vital for quality of care that these requirements are placed permanently into NSW legislation.

"Following lobbying by NSWNMA members and community groups, the Minister for Health did enact an interim arrangement to keep the requirement while consultation with the sector occurred," Ms Kiejda said.

"It's evident from our local dedicated members who work in aged care in Wagga Wagga that the clinical care of high-needs residents would be put at risk if the state government chose to abandon this requirement.

"If there's no registered nurse is on duty, residents are often sent to hospital emergency departments for treatment that a registered nurse could have provided at the home. Unnecessary hospitalisations are distressing for residents, and puts pressure on stretched hospital resources.

"The roles of a registered nurse and director of nursing in nursing homes with high-care residents are vital to the NSW health system. Wagga Wagga Base Hospital Branch has done a fantastic job in raising awareness about this issue in the local community."

Branch members will encourage Mr Maguire to table the petition of 5,000 signatures in the NSW Parliament for further consideration of the issue.

***Media Alert: Branch members will attend Wagga Wagga MP Daryl Maguire's office at 3pm on Monday, 7 September, to officially hand over the petition of signatures. Media are welcome to attend.***

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