



NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION

MEDIA RELEASE

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Aged care sector attention well overdue

The NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) has joined its national counterparts in welcoming today's election commitment by Opposition Leader, Bill Shorten, to begin the mammoth task of improving aged care in Australia.

General Secretary of the NSWNMA, Brett Holmes, said failings within the aged care sector were widespread and well documented, and it should not be forced to wait until after the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety concludes next year.

"It's no secret our country's aged care sector has been plagued by years of neglect by successive Commonwealth governments," Mr Holmes said.

"Right now, these harrowing and preventable failings are being exposed at the aged care royal commission, but there are numerous improvements that could be introduced urgently.

"We welcome the Opposition Leader's announcement as a positive step towards addressing the aged care crisis, in particular, recognising our long running campaign to ensure there is a registered nurse on duty at every aged care facility, on every shift.

"We urge the Liberal-National Coalition to at least match, if not improve on, what has been promised by the ALP today.

"We maintain that the crisis in aged care will not be fully fixed until there are mandated staff to resident ratios in residential aged care facilities.

"There's plenty of research and evidence to show that chronic understaffing in residential aged care is a key contributor towards the incidences of neglect and abuse of elderly Australians.

"The ALP and the Greens have now shown they are willing to give aged care some much-needed attention.

"For too long the Liberal-National Coalition has turned its back on the aged care workforce. It's time they stump up and genuinely direct funding to the delivery of care, rather than lining the pockets of the providers."

The NSWNMA is part of a national campaign calling on all politicians to support staffing ratios in aged care www.ratiosforagedcare.com.au.

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