



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

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Hard hats valued more than healthcare workers in NSW

The Berejiklian Government has delivered a shocking blow to thousands of public hospital nurses and midwives across NSW, slashing their hard-earned wages for twelve months.

Today, the NSW Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) awarded a 0.3% pay increase in the public sector wages case, rather than the 2.5% rise sought by the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) alongside other unions and previously promised by the government.

NSWNMA General Secretary, Brett Holmes, said the outcome was bitterly disappointing, with some members now forced to accept an increase of just 7 cents per hour or \$2.90 per week.

"This is a shocking outcome for thousands of nurses and midwives who have endured one of the toughest years of their nursing and midwifery careers," said Mr Holmes.

"This is further evidence that the Berejiklian Government does not value the vital work of nurses, midwives and other public sector workers.

"We maintain that nurses and midwives should have received their full 2.5% annual pay rise in light of the extraordinary work they've done, and continue to do, during the pandemic.

"Nurses and midwives have selflessly gone to work day and night, facing the prospect of becoming infected with COVID-19 themselves or taking that infection home to their loved ones and this is how they are repaid.

"It's left nurses and midwives with a bitter taste after all the hard work they've done to navigate through this pandemic, keeping our communities safe and our public hospitals running.

"The Berejiklian Government's argument that public sector wages must be sacrificed to pay for construction works in NSW is insulting and out of touch. They should be spending on public health, not taking it away at a time like this.

"Not only does this decision disrespect the hard work of our members, it sends a message to future nurses and midwives entering the public health system that they are not valued by their employer.

"Governments in Victoria, Queensland and South Australia have all backed their nurses and midwives, committing to well-deserved pay rises during this time, yet NSW has chosen to hard hats and high-vis projects instead.

"This process has also exposed the Berejiklian Government's unfair industrial position. The parliament rejected a regulation to freeze public sector workers' wages, yet the Berejiklian Government ignored the democratic process and deferred to the IRC.

"The Berejiklian Government's decision to cut wages growth is a cop out and will have a huge impact on local economies across the state.

"Our members will not forget this."

The NSWNMA will continue to campaign for better wages and conditions, ensuring the government has no choice but to deliver on safe staffing.



What a 0.3% increase means for nurses and midwives in NSW (based on Nurses and Midwives' State Award 2019):

Assistant in Nursing – 7 cents / hour or \$2.90 / week

Enrolled Nurse – 9 cents / hour or \$3.60 / week

Registered Nurse (5yrs) – 12 cents / hour or \$4.50 / week

Registered Nurse (8yrs) – 14 cents / hour or \$5.20 / week

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