



Media release **Wednesday, 14 May 2014**

Nurses and midwives call on State political parties to unite and oppose federal health cuts

The Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation (SA Branch) has called on the State Labor and Liberal Parties to unite in opposition to the federal budget cuts to health announced last night.

Adjunct Associate Professor Elizabeth Dabars said ' This year's federal budget saw an all out attack on health funding in almost all settings.'

'State public hospitals are under attack with the Australian Government essentially breaking its agreement with the states on health funding.'

'Last night's budget delivered by the Treasurer Mr Hockey means that agreement is in tatters and leaves the opening gap in hospital funding to the states.'

'At the same time the federal government made massive cuts to preventive health programs - with \$400m cut from these services over the next 4 years.'

At the same time costs for accessing health care services are to rise across the board.

Patients accessing GP services (or emergency care) will face a \$7 co-payment with the Medicare rebate to GP's cut by \$5 per visit. Prescription costs are also set to rise by \$5 per script meaning that a visit to the doctor resulting in a prescription will see an increase in out of pocket payments by the patient of \$12 a time.

'Telling state governments that they must meet their own obligations to fund hospitals, even if that means they are forced to increase taxation including the GST, ignores the complex inter-relationship between primary, secondary and tertiary level health services. It ignores the impact of social determinants of health.' she said

The Federal Government should reconsider its funding decisions on health and, in particular, the wrong decision to abandon a national partnership for the health care system as a whole.

South Australians deserve no less.