



MEDIA RELEASE

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Nurses look to Facebook friends to demand action on employment

State's Nurses and Midwives have today launched a petition on Facebook calling on the State Treasurer, the Hon Jay Weatherill to urgently fund unemployed or underemployed nurses and midwives in South Australia.

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation, representing more than 17,000 nurses and midwives across South Australia has today launched an on-line Facebook petition calling on the Treasurer to budget for enough jobs for all nursing and midwifery graduates to complete their training and employ them following that training .

Adj Assoc Professor Elizabeth Dabars, CEO of the ANMF (SA Branch) said:

"We are calling on the Treasurer to provide for the employment of graduate nurses and midwives. At the moment, the future nursing and midwifery workforce is being short changed, which will also have the effect of short changing patient safety in the future.

" Only half of the nurses that graduated in South Australia last year [2012] have been employed, only 30% of nurses in Tasmania, and as few as 10% in Queensland.

"Nursing graduates in other states have the same problem with no or too little employment.

"We need graduates to be in work, developing clinical skills and gaining specialist knowledge to replace the nurses that will be lost as they retire over the next 5-10 years. We cannot just sit back and wait until they leave, as then it will be far too late. The next generation of nurses will simply not be there and will need an urgent financial investment then with an inferior result as the skills we need for the future cannot simply be learned overnight.

"At the moment, State Governments seem quite content to lurch from crisis to crisis as there are shortages of nurses. At this point, we have a unique opportunity to employ a small oversupply of graduates, and that opportunity is being lost by short sightedness.

"The ANMF (SA Branch) is calling on graduates, students, nurses, midwives, carers, and members of the community to sign this petition which can be found at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Australian-Nursing-and-Midwifery-Federation-SA-Branch/120442598117213>

"We will lose nurses and midwives very quickly in coming years as the baby boom retires. Meeting appropriate numbers, and skills of nurses per patient has numerous benefits... starting with less patient deaths!

"We have an underlying shortage of Aussie nurses that's getting worse, with graduate nurses making huge sacrifices to get qualified, at a large cost to them & the country, who then can't get jobs.

"This needs to change! Now!

"We are calling on the Government to fund more jobs for graduate nurses, & SHARE to keep the heat on this critical issue for nursing graduates, the profession, and the health of the public."

Media Comment: Adj Assoc Professor Elizabeth Dabars, CEO ANMF (SA Branch)