



MEDIA RELEASES
Saturday, 11 May 2012

**Nurses and Midwives Support Early Immunisation to Protect Against Disease
Outbreak**

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (SA Branch) (ANMF (SA Branch)) has today welcomed the announcement of the Federal Minister for Health Tania Plibersek to toughen their policy on childhood immunisation.

Nurses and midwives are the primary providers of childhood immunisation in Australia, having provided millions of them to children and families in community clinics and health care settings in metropolitan, regional and remote communities every day.

"The benefits of immunisation, and especially early immunisation, far outweigh the risks" said Adj Assoc Professor Dabars.

"We have seen in recent times a tendency in first world countries, such as Australia and the UK to become more afraid of the rare potential side-effects of immunisation rather than the known catastrophic consequences of the disease itself"

"Recently in the UK, this led to the outbreak of diseases, such as measles, that had for many, many years been dormant in the community. Unfortunately, children can and do suffer harm from these diseases, including deafness, disablement and in extreme cases, death."

"Literally thousands of concerned UK parents raced to get their children immunised after outbreaks of disease."

Indeed, the massive surge in demand from British parents relating to the measles outbreak created a worldwide shortage in 2013"

"Instead of waiting for infections to occur and spread through the community, as in the UK, let's take a best evidence approach and immunise now to guard against vaccine-preventable disease now."

"There are still cases of polio, smallpox and other serious diseases causing disablement and death in other countries."

"These diseases have not disappeared, they are simply dormant in our society as a result of immunisation"

"The risk of failing to immunise means that not only is the individual not protected, but it places at risk the broader community"

"For instance, there are many vaccinations new-born children can only have progressively. In the interim, until their full vaccination program is complete, they are highly vulnerable and at risk of infection by someone who has chosen not to vaccinate."

"Lack of immunisation is not just putting yourself at risk, it puts others at risk too."

"It is much better to prevent rather than react to the damage this can cause."

Parents are encouraged to book an appointment with a nurse through their local council, health clinic or other immunisation service.

Media enquiries: Adj Assoc Professor Elizabeth Dabars CEO/Secretary