



MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, May 5 2014

Call for investment in graduates on International Midwives Day

The ANMF (SA Branch) has called on the State and Federal Governments to work together to help new midwifery graduates find and secure meaningful employment.

The call comes on International Midwives Day, which is celebrated on May 5 across the world and this year focuses on the theme *Midwives – changing the world one family at a time*.

ANMF (SA Branch) CEO/Secretary Adj Assoc Professor Elizabeth Dabars said some estimates suggested that in 2014 alone, as many as 15% of nursing and midwifery graduates will be unable to find work.

“Without greater investment new graduate positions, we risk losing a generation of nurses and midwives as they are forced to find work in other fields,” Ms Dabars said.

“Graduates need to be in work now to develop clinical skills and gain specialist knowledge to replace the midwives that will retire in the coming years.”

As an example, Ms Dabars pointed to Ashford midwife, Dzintra Hockley, who has cared for over 52,000 babies and celebrated her 50th anniversary as a midwife just last month.

“Dzintra’s career embodies the theme of this year’s International Midwives Day – *changing the world one family at a time*,” Ms Dabars said.

“She is not only dedicated to her profession but she’s a vital link in passing on the knowledge and expertise to the next generation of midwives coming through the system.”

“But while a single career may seem like just a drop in the ocean to many, failure to pass on the knowledge and experience of midwives such as Dzintra will cause a ripple throughout the entire sector.”

Ms Dabars said there should be a coordinated approach between the state and federal governments in order to find solutions to the current crisis.

“It seems nonsensical for the Federal Government to financially support midwifery students as they complete their tertiary studies, but for there to be a complete lack of coordination between state and federal governments to ensure these graduates can secure jobs,” Ms Dabars said.

“Not only this, but the Federal Government is continuing to allow immigration levels to continue for overseas recruits. While we need a mix of skilled, experienced overseas recruits to meet the short term gaps in our skills, it cannot come at the expense of local graduates.”