



Media release

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Workforce planning a key issue for nursing experts ahead of International Nurses Day

The ANMF (SA Branch) has called on the State Government to act now to implement measures to ensure that the skills and experience of nursing experts are retained by the future nursing workforce.

The call comes on International Nurses Day, which is celebrated on May 12 across the world and this year focuses on the theme *Nurses: A Force for Change – A vital resource for health.*

ANMF (SA Branch) CEO/Secretary Adj Assoc Professor Elizabeth Dabars said that while the State Government's recent commitment to expand the number Nurse Practitioner roles was a welcome measure, a lack of succession planning means we will face a gap in experience in the coming years.

"Nurse practitioners are able to manage acute and chronic medical conditions by providing advanced assessments, initiating diagnostic investigations, prescribing medication and referring patients to other health care providers," Ms Dabars said.

"They truly act as a *force for change* in our health care sector, but the change will only be temporary unless further investment is made in succession planning to manage both the present and future workforce."

As an example, Ms Dabars pointed Nurse Practitioner Sally Hampel, whose knowledge and experience in her field is highly regarded by other nurse practitioners and health care professionals alike.

"Sally's work perfectly exemplifies this year's International Nurses' Day theme, proving nurses are both a force for change and a vital resource for health," Ms Dabars.

"But as Sally has noted extensively in her research, there needs to be an investment of time and resources to ensure that skills and experience can be transferred to future leaders."

Ms Dabars added that Ms Hampel's daughter completed SA Health's Transition to Professional Practice Program (TPPP), but was unable to secure employment in SA due to a lack of employment opportunities for new graduates within South Australia. She secured full time work after her first job interview interstate.

"This is just one of many examples where we have failed to support future nurses in gaining meaningful employment locally," Ms Dabars said.