



## Media Release

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### Pay cuts for aged care nurses not on: ACSA

The \$300 pay cuts for Queensland and NSW aged care nurses are not on, Aged and Community Services (ACSA) CEO Greg Mundy said today. “It is not going to happen,” he said.

Mr Mundy said urgent reforms needed to cater for Australia’s ageing population were being overshadowed by a campaign of misinformation on pay rates.

“It is true that minimum pay rates for aged care nurses have changed under the Government’s modern awards,” he said. “However, the nature of the modern awards means the impact will be different in each state and different for each industry.

“In Queensland and NSW, the new minimum rates for aged care nurses are lower than those previously paid under state awards. For other states, the minimum rate is higher than rates in place before January 1. For Queensland and NSW aged care providers, that means they are entitled to make incremental reductions over the transition period until they reach the minimum rate – which would allegedly equate to a \$300 a week pay cut in five years time.

“In that time national wage case adjustments to minimum pay rates will erode that figure to a greater or lesser degree, depending on a range of economic factors. The \$300 “loss” only works if applied to the current minimum rate.

“It is also important to note that most nurses in these states are employed under enterprise agreements which preserve their pay and conditions – meaning they would not suffer a \$300 a week pay cut, now or in five years.

“Those nurses not covered by enterprise agreements, should first take any concerns about reductions in pay to their employers. Secondly, they can seek a take home pay order from Fair Work Australia through a personal application or with the assistance of their union.

“It is difficult to conceive that droves of aged care providers will be seeking to cut pay rates for their highly valued aged care professionals. Aged care providers face a continual struggle to attract and retain workers, a fact made worse by the international shortage of nurses and allied health workers.

“This year the Productivity Commission is set to embark on a review of aged care; the Government will respond to recommendations made by the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission; and Dr Ken Henry’s review of taxation will be revealed. This is our opportunity to properly plan for the future.”

**Media contact: Chris Hornsey 0419 513 432**