



Australian
Nursing &
Midwifery
Federation

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

ABN: 41 698 088 660
President: A. Rosborough
Secretary: J. Miragaya

23 October 2017

Mr Andrew Barr
Chief Minister and Treasurer
GPO Box 1020
Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Mr Barr

Re: Budget Preparation

The ANMF ACT Branch is the largest union representing the industrial, professional and social justice aspirations of Nurses, Midwives and Assistants in Nursing (AiN) in the ACT. Our members work across all areas of health, aged-care and community sectors. The ANMF ACT Branch provides the following comments on a without prejudice basis in relation to the priorities and commitments which the Branch would like to see reflected in the 2018-19 ACT Budget.

The ANMF ACT Branch is committed to supporting a well-educated, highly respected and competent Nursing, Midwifery and AiN workforce which provides the safest levels of care to the ACT and surrounding communities. The ACT Branch welcomes existing commitments to grow the nursing and midwifery workforce and encourages the ACT Government to continue to develop the workforce through:

- Financial commitment and proactive support to access high quality continuing education, focused on specialty areas of nursing/midwifery with a high demand for services and emerging areas of nursing/midwifery practice which address health care priorities. This includes, for instance, greater use of evidence-based, Nurse/Midwifery-led health care delivery and care coordination eg chronic illness management;
- Secure, permanent employment for nurses/midwives transitioning to practice to ensure an adequate workforce is secured for the future. Permanent employment for nurses/midwives demonstrates a commitment by the ACT Government to the future of Nurses and Midwives within the ACT health sector and is a means of both securing the right number of Nurses/Midwives and enticing Nurses/Midwives to remain in Canberra.

To ensure that the ACT community receives the highest levels of safe care, the ACT Branch urges the ACT Government to deliver on its commitment to employ 91 more Nurses/Midwives within ACT Health over four years, commenced in the 2016-17 ACT Budget, within an evidence-based, workload management framework. The framework must support a sustainable and healthy workforce which is able to respond to current and future demand for healthcare services. There is a significant risk of losing Nurses/Midwives from healthcare if they are not satisfied with their ability to deliver safe levels of care required by the nursing and midwifery profession and rightly expected by the ACT community.

The ACT Branch is keen to see the Government's ongoing commitment to preventive and primary healthcare and believes that this can be achieved through efficient and effective frameworks in which nurses and midwives provide care. That is, Nurses and Midwives working in all areas of healthcare should be enabled to work to their full scope of practice, supported by evidence-based healthcare frameworks. For example, the

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governance framework should be further developed for the Walk-in-Centres to provide for improved primary and preventive healthcare through the expansion of the scope of practice of Nurses.

Developing the Nursing and Midwifery workforce to support broad Government priorities should also be a focus of the 2018-19 ACT Budget. For instance, frequently the first point of contact for women and children in crisis due to family violence is a Nurse or Midwife. Nurses and Midwives can act as a trusted support and point of care coordination within the Government's commitment to tackling family violence. Similarly, targeted Government support to develop the scope of practice of Nurses and Midwives in the areas of mental health and drug and alcohol would assist with whole of Government initiatives to address the health and wellbeing of our most vulnerable and at risk people in our communities including the homeless, youth, people in financial distress and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Support to develop more Advance Practice Nurses and Nurse Practitioners within ACT Health and an ongoing commitment of funding to these types of positions should also be a priority.

The ANMF ACT Branch continues to have discussions with the Minister for Health and Wellbeing, Minister for Mental Health and the Health Directorate around ideas and priorities for developing a sustainable Nursing, Midwifery and AiN workforce which address today's healthcare demands and emerging health care requirements. The ANMF trusts that the priority areas and ideas outlined above provide a blue-print for further discussion in relation to the development of the 2018-19 ACT Budget.

Yours sincerely

Athalene Rosborough
President