

Real thanks for aged care workers means real change

The Health Services Union (HSU) is today calling for the Federal Government to deliver real change in the broken aged care sector as part of its annual *Thank You for Working in Aged Care Day*.

All aged care workers—carers, nurses, allied health professionals and assistants, cleaners, catering, and admin staff—are fed up with being treated as expendable and want more than symbolism and empty gestures.

This global pandemic has highlighted the chronic undervaluing and under resourcing of the aged care workforce, and focused national attention on the inadequacies of the system.

It is time for the Federal Government to deliver real change.

All quotes are attributable to Health Services Union National Secretary, Lloyd Williams

“Today and every day we say thank you to all aged care workers. But all the praise in the world doesn’t pay the bills and the systemic issues in aged care have been around a lot longer than this virus. Real thanks for aged care workers must be delivered in the form of real change from the Federal Government.”

“Real thanks means an immediate and significant pay rise for all employees working in the aged care sector, and a commitment to substantial increases to pay and conditions over the longer term.”

“Real thanks means a safe workplace, which includes two weeks of paid pandemic leave for all aged care workers – no matter how they are employed, along with proper infection control training and PPE.”

“For too long the aged care sector has only offered low hours, short shifts, and insecure work. Real thanks means secure employment as a default, supported by funding arrangements that limit the use of exploitative arrangements such as ‘zero hours contracts’.”

“Aged care workers are skilled professionals, but all too often they bear all the costs of developing their skills. The HSU demands funded ongoing training and professional development for all aged care professionals, which links to clear career progression and supports the retention of a skilled workforce.

“Aged care facilities are understaffed and workers are overworked and burnt out. At the end of the day it’s older Australians who suffer the consequences. Real thanks means aged care services have the right number of staff, with the right skills mix to deliver holistic care for older Australians.

“A properly and transparently funded aged care sector will lead to better pay and conditions for all aged care workers - only this will ensure the high-quality care that all older Australians deserve.”

ENDS

www.changeagedcare.org

HSU National Secretary Lloyd Williams is available for further comments.

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About the HSU | The Health Services Union (HSU) is a growing member-based union with over 90,000 members working across the health and community services sectors in every state and territory of Australia.

