For immediate release:

**From the ward to the board; ACN launch new Nurse Leadership strategy**

Sunday 2 November 2014

**Adelaide:** The ACN (Australian College of Nursing) revealed its new major strategic direction as the *national organisation advancing nursing leadership*, for the purpose of improving the health care of all Australians, at the annual National Nursing Forum today in Adelaide.

ACN’s new vision will see it promote the unique role and perspective nurse leaders, and those aspiring to leadership, can play in providing solutions to healthcare challenges. This will be achieved by providing nurses, at all stages of their career, learning experiences and opportunities to prepare and enable them to lead change and contribute to a range of policy issues; equipping them with economic as well as health outcome perspectives.

Carmen Morgan, President of ACN, said the new direction will see ACN in 2017 positioned as the preeminent national body for nursing.

“We want to be known as a respected and influential shaper of public policy, known for its leadership and ability to produce and support nurse leaders.

“Nurses should be visible from the ward to the board. We want public, private and government health care decision makers to incorporate a nursing perspective at every level. ACN’s new direction will provide nurses with the opportunity to develop the skills they need to influence and steer decision making in these settings,” said Ms Morgan.

Adjunct Professor Debra Thoms, CEO of ACN, has led an extensive review of the organisation to ensure it can deliver on its new direction.

“We have a wave of reforms to implement such as the new state-based Forums, nursing leadership courses, online networks and communities of interest, a restructure, better engagement with our stakeholders, diversification of revenue streams and proactively working to raise the profile of ACN across Australia.

“For our members and health colleagues, we will bring about our new vision by providing platforms for connecting, sharing and learning - all skewed towards advancing nursing leadership with the ultimate goal of increasing the healthcare outcomes of Australians,” said Professor Thoms.

The new vision was met with a resounding level of support by the membership, some calling it a ‘brave new direction’ and ‘exactly what we need’.

Elizabeth Matters, Cardiotoracic Nurse Educator at North Shore Private Hospital, is excited about the organisation’s new strategy.
“I’m very pleased with this strong and clear focus from the ACN. It’s been in my experience that nurses, after about five years, look for opportunities on how they can improve, and learn to make more of a difference to their patients, and in their workplaces. ACN’s new direction provides a career pathway that has a real, tangible practical application.

“It also gives clarity as to why a nurse would be a member of ACN; it will certainly make it easier for me to recruit others to join,” said Ms Matters.

The ACN new strategic intent will be online at www.acn.edu.au from Monday 3 November 2014.

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Adjunct Professor Debra Thoms, CEO of ACN