

12 May 2017

REGISTERED NURSES CENTRAL TO AGED CARE

The Australian College of Nursing is disappointed the NSW Lower House has failed residents of nursing homes by voting down the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party bill requiring one registered nurse (RN) to be on duty at all times in high care nursing homes.

“We believe regulation of nursing homes should at a minimum mandate a requirement that a RN be on-site and available at all times to promote safety and well-being for residents,” Australian College of Nursing CEO, Adjunct Professor Kylie Ward said.

“By denying those in nursing homes care led by a RN, the NSW Nationals and Liberals are essentially saying there are residents in our community who don’t deserve best practice care.”

The Australian College of Nursing holds the view that care delivered in nursing homes must be led by RNs. Due to the growing prevalence of co-morbidities associated with physical and cognitive decline, polypharmacy, and greater professional accountability, increasingly the nursing home population requires more complex care that can only be provided under the direct supervision of RNs.

The RN scope of practice enables the high level clinical assessment; clinical decision making; nursing surveillance and intervention; service coordination; and clinical and managerial leadership required to meet desired outcomes and to ensure the provision of high quality care.

RNs provide frontline leadership in the delivery of nursing care and in the coordination, delegation and supervision of care provided by enrolled nurses (ENs) and unlicensed care workers (however titled). The continuous presence of RNs is essential to ensure timely access to effective nursing assessment and comprehensive nursing care, and to the evaluation of that care.

“Australia’s ENs are highly skilled professionals and the Australian College of Nursing is a proponent of enabling all nurses to work to their full potential. We certainly believe ENs are a vital part of the aged care team.” Adjunct Professor Ward explained. “However, the availability of an RN provides nursing leadership and clinical supervision to facilitate and manage the increasingly complex health and well-being needs of people living in nursing homes.

“Australians deserve the best quality care we can give them. This week members of the NSW Parliament have voted to erode the level of care provided to some of the most vulnerable members of our community.”

“ACN will continue to work with the NSW Government to ensure residents of nursing homes receive the highest level of care, which can only be guaranteed by the constant presence of an RN.”

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Adjunct Professor Kylie Ward, CEO of ACN.



Australian College of Nursing

Advancing nurse leadership

Notes to Editors:

The Australian College of Nursing (ACN) is the national professional organisation for all nurse leaders and its aim is to ensure that the Australian community receives quality nursing care now and in the future. ACN is a membership organisation with members in all states and territories, health care settings and nursing specialties. ACN is also the Australian member of the International Council of Nurses headquartered in Geneva.

ACN, an organisation not afraid to intelligently challenge industry issues affecting the nursing profession or Australia's health care, is a well-connected and educated national body that drives change with people of influence to enhance the delivery of health services to the Australian community. ACN advances the skills and expertise of nurses to provide leadership in their contribution to the policy, practice and delivery of health care.

A membership organisation with members in all states and territories, health care settings and nursing specialties, ACN's membership includes many nurses in roles of influence, including senior nurses, organisational leaders, academics and researchers.

What is the role of ACN to media?

- ACN provides trusted, well supported information about Australia's health care system, the delivery of health care, nursing leadership and the nursing profession.
- ACN has a number of spokespeople within the organisation who can comment on Australia's health care system, the delivery of health care, nursing leadership and the nursing profession.
- ACN offers media with an alternative voice to that of an industrial relations perspective.

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- ACN is in-the-know and can comment on health care matters of interest.
- ACN can respond to media requests in a timely manner and with subject/clinical expert's available on-hand for further discussion.
- ACN regularly responds to government updates pertaining to Australia's health care system.

What role does ACN play?

ACN is here to act and deliver results as agents of change. They are working towards a brighter future through advancing nurse leadership to enhance the delivery of health care to all. The organisation provides nurse leaders with access to relevant information, support and education that will enhance Australia's reputation on the world stage.

Social media channels:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acnursing>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/acn_tweet

LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/company/australian-college-of-nursing>

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