

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Government urged to support nurses delivering COVID-19 vaccines - ACN

The Australian College of Nursing (ACN) has today called on the Government to support the nursing profession in delivering COVID-19 vaccines in residential aged care facilities and residential disability facilities.

ACN CEO Adjunct Professor Kylie Ward FACN welcomed the Government announcement of the next phase of Australia's COVID-19 vaccination program but said the program failed to include support for nurses.

"For the past two years, nurses have worked at the frontline of our health and aged care systems to protect Australians and support our COVID-19 vaccination rollout efforts," Adjunct Professor Ward said.

"However, the new incentive payment announced by Government to support general practices and community pharmacies to administer COVID-19 vaccines to local aged care facilities and residential disability facilities does not extend sufficiently to the nursing profession.

"I am disappointed that once again the Government has overlooked the significant support the nursing profession has, and continues to provide, to the nation's vaccination effort.

"During the COVID-19 pandemic, nurses demonstrated our adaptability to quickly and efficiently lead a vaccine rollout across the country. In many circumstances, my colleagues worked long shifts in extreme weather to vaccinate our most vulnerable.

"The nation knows nurses have been leaders in the national vaccination strategy for decades. From schools, to councils, to RACF'S as we protect and serve throughout the lifespan, so why inhibit us now?

"Nurses are also highly trusted in our local communities and provide evidence-based advice to alleviate any concerns about the immunisation process or effects.

"The Government's *Strengthening Medicare Report* recommended a greater role for nurses in primary care, but talk is not action.

"Our message is clear, I encourage the Government to act on its vision of a person-centred care system and expand the eligibility of the COVID-19 vaccination incentive payment to nurses that support the health and wellbeing of residents in aged care and disability settings.

"I look forward to speaking further with the Government about their proposed implementation of the COVID-19 vaccine incentive payment and the critical role nurses play in protecting Australians who are vulnerable from the pandemic.

**For more information:**

Kirsty Waterford 0403 295 934

Email: [acn.media@acn.edu.au](mailto:acn.media@acn.edu.au)

**Notes to Editors:**

The Australian College of Nursing (ACN) is the national professional organisation for all nurses 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. An organisation not afraid to challenge industry issues affecting the nursing profession or Australia's health care, ACN 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's membership includes nurses in roles of influence, including senior nurses, organisational leaders, academics, and researchers.

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**CEO - Adjunct Professor Kylie Ward FACN - Bio**



**Kylie Ward. Policy Reformer. Nurse. For-Purpose Leader. Equality Warrior. Adjunct Professor. Transformation Specialist.**

Kylie is the CEO of Australian College of Nursing. She has led a program of transformation at ACN, which has now become Australia's beacon for Nurse Leadership.

She is a major policy influencer, advocate for women, children and equality.