

MEDIA RELEASE

8 March 2023

Women work almost seven weeks for free each year

International Women's Day – 8 March 2023

The Australian College of Nursing (ACN) is calling on Australian employers to continue to strive towards pay equity this International Women's Day.

Despite the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) reporting that the gender pay gap fell to 13.3 per cent in November 2022, the lowest level since records began, this means that women, on average, are effectively working 48 days, or almost seven weeks, for free each year.

The ABS data is calculated on base salary for full-time workers, and it doesn't factor in the wages of part-time or casual staff, bonuses, overtime payments or superannuation gaps.

ACN CEO Adjunct Professor Kylie Ward FACN said that as a proud nurse in a female dominant profession, it is disappointing that we are still fighting for equal pay in 2023.

"I'm proud to be a part of Australia's female-dominated nursing profession, with women comprising 89.8 per cent of the workforce," Adjunct Professor Ward said.

"But, working women deserve equal pay. It's as simple as that.

"Even in female dominated professions like nursing, the gender pay gap persists.

"We know women in health care often get paid much less per hour on average than men because they are more likely to be in part-time jobs or less senior roles.

"While the gender pay gap is trending in the right direction, the reality is, three years ago, it was 13.4 per cent, and we have only just caught back up. We still have work to do.

"Gender pay gaps are a reflection of the way we value women's and men's contributions in the workforce.

"We need to embrace flexibility and different models of working so women can thrive in the workforce and ensure that measures are taken sooner rather than later to make the necessary changes so that we do not fail another generation of women."

For more information:

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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 in collaboration with the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF). 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.