

 **Nurses.** For you. For life.

Action Plan

There's a shortage of nurses in Queensland and it's affecting patient care.

We need to stem the flow of nurses from our health system and attract more to care for us. We need:

More nurses

Urgent increases to nursing numbers across Australia. An additional 14,000 nurses are required in Queensland alone by 2014.

Why?

Patient care will be jeopardised if more nurses leave nursing and not enough new nurses are employed. With the state's health system already thousands of nurses short the crisis is only set to worsen if recruitment and retention strategies aren't prioritised.

Safe workloads and skill mix

Better management of nurses' workloads.

Why?

More than 80 percent of nurses are stressed and struggling under heavy workloads, made more difficult by serious workforce shortages and an inappropriate mix of skills. Nurses are increasingly worried about making mistakes under this workload burden.

The right mix of nurses and their skills must be available to meet growing and more complex demands for nursing services.

Supportive and safe workplaces

Improved focus on the safety and support of nurses in their workplaces.

Why?

Nurses are increasingly victims of violence while at work and also exposed to significant workplace hazards.

Supportive workplace environments, including proper facilities and amenities, more responsive work arrangements and a culture where all health workers participate in the promotion of health care will help stem the flow of nurses from the profession. It must be shown that nurses are valued through a renewed and continuing focus on safe and supportive workplaces.

Quality and accountability

Regulation of all people performing nursing work and accountability for how government funding is spent.

Why?

Improved openness and accountability around health and aged care services will ensure patients receive safe and quality health services.

The community also has a right to see how their money is being spent by all providers of health and aged care services.



Equity

Nurses to be paid the same no matter where they work.

Why?

Nurses should be fairly paid for the work they do, just as patients should receive the same high quality of health care no matter where they go.

The re-establishment of consistent rates of pay across all sectors and states will ensure public and private hospitals and aged care facilities are all able to attract skilled nursing employees to their sector.

If not, there will be even greater shortages in those sectors or states which do not offer fair pay and conditions.

Education

Access to affordable education courses for current and future nurses that better prepare them to practise, as well as meaningful career structures to enable nurses to progress within their profession.

Why?

Supporting the education and skilling of current and future nurses will help meet the growing demand for more complex and varied nursing care, while meaningful career paths keep nurses in nursing.

Advocacy

Recognition that nurses are well placed advocates for patients and their families.

Why?

Nurses must be supported to continue to promote patients' interests through a partnership model of care. They need to have a strong voice in how health care is delivered, as well as to lead the health agenda to ensure quality outcomes for patients.

Without a nursing voice the diversity of perspectives needed to help guide patients safely through the health system is lost.

Innovative and sustainable care

Enhanced potential for nurses to deliver health care services through new and innovative nursing and midwifery models of care.

Why?

Enhanced emphasis on primary health care and health promotion and better integration of the health and aged care systems will help ease the burden on our hospitals.

Nurses want to keep people well, not just care for the ill.

*The term nurse or nursing is inclusive of midwife and midwifery.



Support the
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Action Plan

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Queensland Nurses' Union – the union for nurses and midwives 

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