



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**18 June 2020**

### **Petition for aged care nurse fair pay hits 10,000**

More than 10,000 Kiwis have signed a petition calling on Government to address Government underfunding that means registered nurses working in aged care earn around \$10,000 a year less on average than nurses in public hospital.

The New Zealand Aged Care Association (NZACA) launched the month-long campaign on 5 June. It invites New Zealanders to support pay parity for aged care nurses, by visiting [www.fairpay.org.nz](http://www.fairpay.org.nz) to sign a petition addressed to the Hon Dr David Clark, Minister of Health to fund the sector to match the salary packages received by nurses working in public hospitals.

NZACA Chief Executive Simon Wallace says the response to the petition has been strong and consistent over the last 12 days.

“The public are recognising that registered nurses working in aged care deserve to be valued equally to their peers working public hospitals. And it’s time the Government recognised this too.

“Last week’s report from the Independent Review of Covid-19 Clusters in Aged Residential Care stated that the Ministry of Health now acknowledges the substantive work of the aged residential care sector in preventing and managing the virus.

“Our aged care nurses and their teams have been at the frontline of this work, ensuring that out of more than 36,000 residents in 650 plus facilities around New Zealand, just 39 were affected by COVID-19. It’s time to value them for what they are worth.”

The amount of pay aged care nurses receive is directly related to the amount of funding rest homes receive from District Health Boards – a per bed, per day rate based on the level of care each resident is assessed for and covering a range of costs – including nurses’ pay.

“This funding undervalues the incredible skill and dedication of aged care nurses. They are in charge of multiple complex health conditions, as well as palliative and end of life care. They do not have the support of expert clinical teams available in hospitals. And they lead teams of health care workers who tend to the needs of our most fragile. “

The cost to Government of funding the sector to ensure pay parity for aged care nurses – an increase of at least \$10,000 per annum per nurse - would be around \$70 million.

“Given Budget 2020 has injected \$4.37 billion into District Health Boards there is plenty to go round and no excuse not to invest in aged care nurses and older New Zealanders.

“Our target is 15,000 signatures but we’d love more. We’re running this campaign until the end of June so head to [www.fairpay.org.nz](http://www.fairpay.org.nz) and have your say,”

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For more information

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