



media release

5 October 2007

Howard failing the health of Australia

In response to the release of an Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) report, the Australian Nursing Federation (ANF) condemned the Howard Government's continued under funding of public hospitals and its refusal to take responsibility for the state of Australia's public health system.

Ged Kearney, Assistant Federal Secretary of the ANF said, "We are appalled that the Howard Government continues to short change Australians by under funding public hospitals to the tune of \$1.6 billion."

The government's own report, released today by the AIHW, shows the Howard Government has cut funding by 4% to 41%, the lowest level in 11 years. The states have been left to pick up the shortfall increasing their contribution to 51%.

"The states are doing their part but the Howard Government is the one that has dropped the ball."

"The Howard Government has had 11 years and has failed all Australians and failed health."

The ANF claims the issues facing public hospitals are exacerbated by the Howard Government's refusal to address the systemic problems within health.

Nurses continue to struggle to deliver quality health care within a strained and under resourced system. As a result 30,000 nurses have chosen to leave the profession.

The federal government has long ignored expert advice on health care reform and refuses to take a national approach insisting on blaming state and territory governments for the health of Australia.

"The appalling under funding of public hospitals is only the tip of the iceberg. Australia's nurses want to deliver quality health care and this requires a government that will face their funding responsibilities and commit to national health reform."

Media inquiries

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