



MEDIA RELEASE

Health Services Union SA/NT

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AGED CARE WORKERS REACHING BREAKING POINT

Frontline care workers employed by the Royal District Nursing Service (RDNS) are facing an insulting pay freeze and have shown their employer they will not back down and are prepared to implement a range of industrial actions, including taking strike action.

The Australian Electoral Commission confirmed that 75% of Health Services Union (HSU) members employed at RDNS SA voted in favour of taking protected industrial action.

The HSU said the best RDNS SA have offered during enterprise agreement negotiations is a pay freeze and a reduction in leave entitlements to a section of their workforce.

The length of the pay freeze depends on the role, with some workers potentially facing more than four years without a pay rise.

The workers have been striving for a fair wage increase and to maintain their employment conditions since the government privatised Domiciliary Care services to RDNS/Silver Chain Group in 2018.

Quotes attributable to Health Services Union National Secretary, Lloyd Williams

“These aged care workers and allied health professionals haven’t had a pay rise since 2019. Since then, they’ve been on the frontline providing care to our most vulnerable during a pandemic, and the best their employer can offer is an insulting pay freeze and removal of employment conditions.”

“Privatisation is the root of the problem here. Private providers get hold of these essential workforces and it then becomes a race to the bottom.”

“These workers deserve a fair pay rise that values their work in the community and keeps them from drowning under the cost of living.”

“We are continuing negotiations with RDNS SA but if the discussions aren’t productive our members are prepared to take action.”

“Striking is always a last resort, we don’t want it to come to that, but HSU members have now shown that they are ready to act if their employer refuses to value them.”

HSU National Secretary Lloyd Williams is available for further comments.

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About the HSU | The Health Services Union SA/NT is a specialist health union representing members working in the health and community services sector. Members are employed at over 250 worksites across South Australia and the Northern Territory including in public and private hospitals, Aboriginal health, pathology, aged care, disability services, and private practices.

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