

9 February 2022

**Embargoed until Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

## Aged Care in Crisis – Action needed NOW

**Photo Opportunity ONLY : Tuesday 8th February 2022 at 10.30am, Parliament House Lawns in Hobart**

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmanian Branch (ANMF) and members will TOMORROW hold a COVID-safe Aged Care Protest at Parliament House in Hobart.

The ANMF Tasmanian Branch Secretary Emily Shepherd said the protest will voice members' frustration and anger over the Morrison Federal Government's continuing failure to protect aged care workers and residents.

"We are demanding immediate action to fix this ongoing crisis," Ms Shepherd said.

"We will stand together to condemn the Morrison Government's failure to protect residents, the nurses and care workers doing their utmost in a sector that has been overwhelmed by COVID-19.

"The latest outbreaks are continuing to claim lives in Australia's residential aged care homes."

Ms Shepherd said the situation is unacceptable and again demonstrates this Government neither understands aged care nor cares for those living and working in the system.

"Our aged care workers, residents, and their families, deserve so much better; they deserve dignity and respect.

"The country's aged care system is on the edge of collapse and Mr Morrison has let this happen. His Government has overseen:

- Dangerously unsafe staffing levels
- Inadequate supply of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Lack of rapid antigen tests (RATs)

- Failed delivery of booster shots
- Cynical cash 'bonus' incentives for poorly-paid workers, but no commitment to real wage increases
- A failure to act decisively on the Royal Commission's recommendations for mandated staff ratios
- Ministers Greg Hunt and Senator Richard Colbeck refusing to accept their responsibility for the lives of older Australians and instead deflecting blame for their failures onto the sector, the workforce, and even aged care residents themselves.

Ms Shepherd said these failures to protect older Australians in the current COVID-19 crisis follows a decade of neglect by the Liberal Coalition Governments.

“Registered nurses, enrolled nurses and aged care workers are furious. We will not stand by and watch nursing home residents and elderly Australians suffer any longer.

“Our aged care workers, residents, and their families, deserve so much better; they deserve dignity and respect.

“As we head to the Federal Election, the Morrison Government must do so much more if we are to have any real hope of fixing the crisis in aged care.”

~End

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