

MEDIA RELEASE

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National Day of Community Sector Action

Community Sector Gathers Across the Nation in Support of Pay Equity

Urgent workforce issues threaten the community sector's future capacity to provide high quality services to vulnerable and disadvantaged Australians. The wages gap between non government community sector workers and workers in the public sector and comparable sectors is now around \$20 000 per annum.

The South Australian Council of Social Service, the Australian Services Union, the Liquor Hospitality Miscellaneous Union, the Association of Major Community Organisations and numerous other organisations have been actively working over the past few years to secure better conditions for the sector and to address longstanding issues of attraction and retention.

On **Thursday 10 June** community sector workers, clients, employers, peak bodies and supporters will gather at **11.00am** in the Pioneer Women's Memorial Gardens (behind Government House) and around the country to voice their support for funding for the outcomes of an historic pay equity case being run by the Australian Services Union and supported by hundreds of organisations.

Australian Services Union Secretary Katrine Hildyard says "85% of community sector workers are women, incredibly committed to working with our most vulnerable citizens to really make a difference; the community sector is the fastest growing employment sector with the highest number of multiple tertiary degree holders. It is time for the work of the community sector to be valued, respected and resourced. The pay equity case and funding for its outcomes is the way forward on fundamental wage issues impacting the sector."

South Australian Council of Social Service Executive Director Ross Womersley says "SACOSS believes achieving pay equity is crucial for the sustainability of social services. The current pay equity case is likely to deliver a long overdue advance in wages for the deeply committed people working in the sector. Unless wages improve, organisations will not be able to attract and/or retain a skilled workforce. We know this will create pressure for organisations and it is therefore imperative that Federal, State and Territory governments commit to fully fund the outcomes of the pay equity case."

Chair of Association of Major Community Organisations John Haren says "The community sector is central to addressing disadvantage and is an essential part of our community 'safety net', working to reduce the worst effects of poverty and disadvantage; the community sector must be supported to attract and retain a skilled and sustainable workforce. We call on all levels of Government to ensure that funding for programmes covers the outcomes of the pay equity case."

"Thursday's action is all about achieving pay equity in this important section of the South Australian economy, which is at the forefront of delivering social inclusion to our state" Katrine Hildyard says.

For information and comment

For further information and to arrange interviews contact any or all of:

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