

# Strong Community Healthy State

## *Strengthening the Non Government Community Services Sector*

UPDATE JANUARY 2010

### **What we have achieved to date?**

In 2007-8 the *Strong Community Healthy State* campaign group was successful in securing from the State Government Department for Families and Communities (DFC) a promise of 3% indexation for DFC funded organisations. However, we note that the current year indexation for DFC-funded organisations is only 2.25% and that variable 'indexation', most commonly less than 3%, continues to be paid by government agencies outside of DFC. Additionally, in 2007-8 the State Government committed to paying non-government agencies an additional 4% funding, spread over 4 years and specifically for staff-related expenditure only. Again, this additional 4% was not passed on by all government departments.

In 2009 the group achieved a commitment from the State Government to fund a workforce development project looking at key issues which inhibit attraction and retention such as lack of access to redundancy and long-service leave, alternative employment models and issues in accessing adequate training and career paths. This work continues into 2010 with the aim of presenting clear recommendations from the project to Government at the conclusion of the project.

We continue to work to secure a lengthening of the notification periods for funding intentions and to support the ASU's *Building Community Sector Health and Safety Project*.

Whilst acknowledging the commitment of the State Government, a long term and substantial investment in the sector is still required to enhance service delivery and reduce risk. As a matter of priority an urgent injection of funds is required to retain existing staff within the sector.

This is even more crucial with the arrival of the new national modern Award and the related pay equity case which will be following shortly.

### **Our next steps in achieving a *Strong Community, Healthy State***

In a historic decision handed down by the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission on 6 May 2009 the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission awarded wage increases of between 18 to 37% to Queensland community services workers.

This Pay Equity decision found that the work of the non government community services sector is undervalued in relation to public sector work and due to the fact that the sector is predominantly staffed by a female workforce, historically lower paid than male workers.

The result is that award rates in Queensland will increase by between 18% to 37% over 3 years and these increases started on 31 July 2009! **The Queensland Government has now funded that decision for a significant portion of the sector.**

This represents recognition that in order to continue to provide high quality services to vulnerable and disadvantaged people, addressing workforce issues like low pay which affect attraction and retention is imperative.

Our campaign is now asking both the South Australian and Federal Governments to support pay equity and the strengthening of the sector by committing to fund the outcome of the pay equity case which is being run by the ASU at a national level during 2010.

We also ask that the State Government maintains its commitment to working together with the *Strong Community Healthy State* campaign group towards all of its principles, the achievement of which are essential to building a strong sector able to provide high quality services to vulnerable South Australians into the future.

In 2010, through the community sector workforce development project, we will also investigate how employment models, access to training and conditions including leave and redundancy impact on the sector's ability to attract and retain staff. We ask that the State Government immediately act on recommendations developed through this project.

**NOW IS THE TIME For The Community Services Sector And Supporters To  
Work Collectively And Campaign For The Future Of Our Sector  
And For Vulnerable And Disadvantaged South Australians.**

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**WHAT CAN YOU DO?**

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- **Join our campaign to ensure that governments fund the outcomes of the pay equity case**
- **Look at the Strong Community Healthy State budget submission and adapt it for your own organisation**
- **As an employer support your employees' involvement in the campaign**
- **Get an update on the SCHS campaign at your board meeting**
- **Take a delegation from your organisation to meet with your local MP to talk about these issues**
- **If you haven't already, do formally endorse the campaign as an organisation or an individual: email your details to [sacoss@sacoss.org.au](mailto:sacoss@sacoss.org.au) to request a form**

For more information visit [www.sacoss.org.au/strongcommunity](http://www.sacoss.org.au/strongcommunity)  
or [www.asu-sant.asn.au](http://www.asu-sant.asn.au)

**More than a thousand workers and sixty seven organisations have endorsed the  
Strong Community Healthy State Campaign**

- *Aboriginal Health Council*
- *Adelaide Catholic Archdiocese*
- *AIDS Council SA Inc.*
- *Anglicare SA*
- *Anglican Community Care SA Inc*
- *Australian Greens (SA)*
- *Autism SA*
- *Baptist Care (SA) Inc.*
- *Baltic Communities Home Inc.*
- *Carers SA*
- *Community and Neighbourhood Houses and Centres Association*
- *CEA*
- *Community Living Project Inc.*
- *COTA - Seniors Voice*
- *Disability Advocacy & Complaints Service SA Inc.*
- *Eating Disorders Association*
- *Elizabeth Bowey Lodge Inc*
- *Employment Access - Kingston*
- *Goodwood Community Services Inc*
- *Hepatitis C Council of SA Inc*
- *Holdfast Bay Community Centre Inc*
- *Legal Services Commission*
- *Leveda Inc*
- *Life's for Living Inc*
- *Lutheran Community Care*
- *Lutheran Community Care — Mt.Gambier*
- *Amandus: Lutheran Disability Services*
- *Matthew Flinders Home Inc*
- *Mental Health Coalition of SA*
- *Mental Illness Fellowship of SA Inc.*
- *Mid Murray Community Support Services/CHIPS*
- *Migrant Resource Centre*
- *Migrant Women's Support and Accommodation Service*
- *Milang Old School House Community Centre*

- *Miroma Cottage Inc*
- *Mt Barker Family House Inc*
- *Northern Area Community & Youth Services Inc.*
- *Nunga Mimirar Inc.*
- *Offenders Aid and Rehabilitation Service Inc.*
- *Office of Senator Sarah Hanson-Young*
- *Panic Anxiety Disorder Association*
- *People Living with HIV/AIDS(SA) Inc*
- *Public Services Association*
- *Reedbeds Community Centre*
- *Schools Ministry Group*
- *Shelter SA*
- *Social Policy Research Group-University of SA*
- *South Australian Council Of Social Service*
- *South Australia Network Drug Alcohol Services*
- *South East Regional Domestic Violence Service*
- *Southern Domestic Violence Service*
- *St Johns Youth Services Inc*
- *Supported Residential Facilities*
- *Tappeiner Court Nursing home Inc*
- *Tenison Woods Aged Care Services*
- *Thebarton Neighbourhood House*
- *UnitingCare Wesley Adelaide*
- *UnitingCare Wesley Port Adelaide*
- *UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie*
- *Victim Support Service Inc*
- *West Coast Home Care*
- *West Coast Youth Services — Port Lincoln*
- *Whyalla Aged Care Service*
- *The Willochra Home, Crystal Brook*
- *Women's Housing Association*
- *Yarredi Services Inc.*
- *Youth Affairs Council of SA Inc.*