



Because We Care Quality care for older Australians

Because We Care Action Plan for Members and Activists

A successful campaign relies on all kinds of support, from letters to newspapers and politicians to stalls at markets, to meeting with Ministers.

Every bit you do helps. Don't be fooled into feeling powerless and disempowered! These things you do MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Here is the action plan.

1. Hold a workplace meeting

Put up an agenda for meeting and ask for ideas and volunteers

2. Organise leaflets/posters/stickers/postcards

If you don't already have any of the *Because We Care* campaign material, call the Australian Nursing Federation (Victorian Branch) on 03 9275 9333 or fax 03 92759344 to organise some to be sent out or some things can also be ordered from the website; www.becausewecare.org.au

*Posters A4 and bigger can be downloaded off the *Because We Care* website.

3. Think about good places in local areas to hang posters, give out postcards, for maximum attention

For example:

- every GP surgery in your area (the Australian Medical Association (AMA) have stated they support the campaign)
- community health centres
- neighbourhood centres
- library
- chemists
- emergency departments
- local Member of Parliament (MP) front window
- Mayor
- local Council
- post office
- supermarkets
- malls and shopping centres, train stations
- RSL clubs, workers' clubs, pubs, rotary clubs, sporting event/parks

The list is limitless, some members are putting the posters up in their front yards, or attaching them to fences, etc.

4. A map of your local area off MAPIT

No one person can do this alone so if you have a vague plan organised before your workplace meeting you can then delegate to others.

ie. Who will go to all the GP's? Who can do the library? A map of the local area may be easy to divide the place up for letterbox dropping. It would be a waste of time and resources to letterbox the same street twice. Think about these things before the meeting.

5. Think about a good place for a stall on the street or in a mall.

The Australian Nursing Federation (Victorian Branch) is conducting community events in targeted electorates throughout phase II of the campaign.

6. Identify who your Federal MP is from this website

<http://apps.aec.gov.au/esearch/>

Identify your local MP from this website

http://www.elections.nsw.gov.au/state_government_elections/electoral_districts/electoral_district_s_earch

7. Write to your Federal and State MP!

Don't complicate things. There are several template letters already on the *Because We Care* website for you to use. Print them off and photocopy them 50 times for all of the staff, residents, their relatives, your family, friends, the community etc. Write a letter on behalf of all the staff at your workplace and get everyone to sign it (although separate letters are more effective). If MP's receive **letters and postcards from the community as well as nurses the message will be far more effective.**

8. Make an appointment and visit your State/Federal MP

Your MP is YOUR representative in Government. It is their job to listen to your concerns and attempt to remedy them, this is what they are paid to do. You are all 100% entitled to make an appointment and speak to them and indeed we NEED to do this type of thing if we are to succeed. If your MP is not informed they cannot act. Asking questions influences change.

- 1) Email or write to the MP to make a ½ hr appointment.
- 2) Pick no more than 3 people to go along, they can be relatives, residents, nurses, one of each.
- 3) Decide who will do the talking, allow about 15 minutes to present your

3 main points, then 15 minutes to discuss. Prepare what you will say (average age of an aged care nurse is 55, aged care nurse paid less than someone at Burger King, baby boomers will be hitting aged care soon), talk about facilities in your area, leave them with campaign material, don't just go in and whinge! Be constructive, offer solutions (increase funding, pay nurses what they are worth- they can afford to pay aged care nurses in Victoria the same as public nurses.)

Recommended 3 main points to talk about;

- 1) Right balance of skills mix and nursing hours (mandated ratio's for nurse: resident)**
- 2) Fair pay for aged care nurses**
- 3) Guarantee that funding goes to nursing hours and is accountable and transparent**
- 4) Remember rules of negotiation, flattery will get you everywhere. Mention things the MP has done that you agree with, praise them, put them in the right frame of mind to receive your message. It's a great idea to research your MP if you get a chance, research your electorate, how many baby boomers are in it? How many nursing homes?
- 5) Remind the MP how important this issue is to their electorate and seek a **commitment from them**. Ask them to write to the Federal Minister for Aging- **Justine Elliot**, expressing their support for the campaign objectives and raise these with her at a meeting and ask her what she is doing about the issues?
- 6) **Ask for a copy of the letter they send and the response they get.**
- 7) Follow up with your MP. Send a thankyou card, a campaign poster; invite them to your stall, your nursing home.
- 8) Keep the letters and postcards flowing into their letter boxes.

Good Luck and remember....

"Don't let what you can't do stop you from doing what you can." - *John Wooden*

<http://www.becausewecare.org.au>



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