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BUDGET 2019-20: MODEST MEASURES FALL SHORT OF HEALTH PRIORITIES

The Australian College of Nursing (ACN) has expressed disappointment at the lost opportunities in Budget 2019-20, particularly in the Government's failure to distribute additional funding to improving patient outcomes across the country.

"This modest allocation fails to appreciate the growing crisis in aged care, particularly in registered nurse staffing shortfalls and inadequate skills-mix training," Australian College of Nursing CEO Adjunct Professor Kylie Ward FACN said.

"This has been a priority issue for the nursing profession for many years. The appropriate health professionals should be available to those who require care, particularly our Senior Australians.

"The additional home care packages and assurance for those who are opting for home care support are a band aid fix to the issues which have been presented to the Royal Commission into Aged Care.

"ACN acknowledges the intent to address youth mental health with the promise of developing a national youth mental health and suicide prevention strategy. However nurses are often the first point of contact for patients and remain a vital source of relational support during the tenure of their care, particularly in remote and regional communities, which was not at all addressed today.

"As a member of the Close the Gap Steering Committee, ACN is committed to achieving the many targets that will lead to improvements in indigenous health, moving us closer to the principles of reconciliation. As nurses provide care holistically, the issues should be considered just as broadly.

"ACN will continue to advocate for solutions that are evidence-based and utilise the full scope of nurses' capabilities."

-ENDS-

For interviews, please contact Jessica Pham on 0403 295 934.

Notes to Editors:

The Australian College of Nursing (ACN) is the national professional organisation for all nurses and its aim is to ensure that the Australian community receives quality nursing care now and in the future. ACN is a membership organisation with members in all states and territories, health care settings and nursing specialties. ACN is also the Australian member of the International Council of Nurses headquartered in

Geneva. An organisation not afraid to challenge industry issues affecting the nursing profession or Australia's health care, ACN is a well-connected and educated national body that drives change with people of influence to enhance the delivery of health services to the Australian community. ACN's membership includes nurses in roles of influence, including senior nurses, organisational leaders, academics and researchers.

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