

MEDIA RELEASE

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eS4W CONGRATULATES GILLARD GOVERNMENT ON HISTORIC COMMITMENT FOR SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY WORKERS

economic Security4Women (eS4W) congratulates Prime Minister Julia Gillard on her Government's decision to provide more than \$2 billion to deliver a pay rise to 150,000 of Australia's lowest paid workers in the social and community service sector – the vast majority of them women.

Kate Gunn, eS4W Chair, states that "The care sector is extremely important to the Australian economy. It not only provides a foundation for human infrastructure, but also creates positive spill-over effects for the wider Australian community by assisting in the maintenance of social capital and contributing to human development. The care sector which includes both paid and unpaid employment provides care, support and assistance to all Australians."

Sandra Cook, eS4W Deputy Chair commented "equal pay is one of eS4W's core issues and the Government's joint submission on equal pay with the Australian Services Union to Fair Work Australia to provide over \$2 billion to fund its share of any wage increases awarded is strongly supported by eS4W".

"This initiative from the Government reinforces our commitment to achieving equal pay for work of equal value for all employees. This is a critical component to increasing women's participation in the workforce and ensuring they can enjoy the benefits of economic security in their retirement," Sandra said.

Kate Gunn further states "that not only does this recognise the unfair wage disparity between women doing the exactly the same work in different sectors, but reminds us that gender is still very much an issue in determining the worth and remuneration of some workers."

This is a great day for women in the services sector and the care economy and we congratulate the Government on acknowledging the importance of equal pay for women.

eS4W is one of six National Women's Alliances funded by the Australian Government through the Office for Women, FaHCSIA. eS4W believes that economic wellbeing and financial security are essential ingredients to achieving equity for all women. The ability to achieve positive economic outcomes impacts on all aspects of women's lives including their family, education, health, employment, retirement, housing and personal safety and can enable women to make informed choices.

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