

17 January 2017

Dear Colleagues,

OUR PAY AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT ARE UNDER THREAT

My name is Shane Elliott. I have worked for ADHC for 30 years and have been a PSA delegate for 25 years.

For the last few years, we have been facing the privatisation of ADHC.

We always knew the NSW government was going to hide behind NDIS to run its agenda of getting rid of government services and we knew this was always going to be a hard campaign to fight.

It's now 2017 and we expect the NSW government to announce which private organisations have won the right to take over all ADHC disability services.

We currently have good pay and conditions, contained in our Award - Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2009 and the Community Living Award for Group Homes – thanks to the PSA and members before us who fought for these conditions. Now it is our turn to fight to protect these conditions in 2017 and into the future.

DO NOT BE FOOLED

As part of the transfer arrangement, you might have heard that there is a 2-year employment guarantee.

This guarantee does not mean that your job will not change. It is simply a guarantee of employment for 2 years. (Casuals and Temps will not have a 2-year guarantee).

DSWs are particularly vulnerable as a good percentage of our income comes from working penalty shifts.

Penalty shifts are not guaranteed. Our "Rostering Principles" are not guaranteed.

The new employer may seek to undermine pay and conditions. The peak body representing private providers has openly said that the private providers cannot match ADHC rates of pay and conditions of employment.

Currently, the NSW government has not agreed to a legally binding protection package.

The PSA is campaigning to protect our pay and conditions but the government is not listening.

The PSA is opposed to the privatisation of public disability services and will continue to resist the NSW government's plans.

We must all act together to put pressure on our employer - the NSW government - to guarantee that any new private sector employer will be legally bound to protect our pay and conditions.

Some staff take our annual pay increases for granted. They might think our July pay increases are automatic, but PSA members understand that everything we currently have, we have fought for.

The strength of our union has meant that ADHC staff have enjoyed decent rates of pay - a proper living wage - and good conditions of employment.

Pay increases in the private sector are not guaranteed.

In fact, your ex-ADHC colleagues in Home Care who transferred to the private sector in February 2016 were denied a pay increase in July 2016 by their new employer, Australian Unity. The PSA took Australian Unity to court and won.

The PSA is fighting for members' rights at work. Our union is the only line of defence between us and an unscrupulous employer.

If we do nothing, we will surely suffer the consequences of our inaction.

We are asking the NSW Government to drop the pretence that ADHC clients and their families have choice and control and actually give them a *real choice* on who they want to provide their services; not some lobby group somewhere, but the individual people and/or their family representatives.

For all those people thinking that privatisation & individual funding is the holy grail of disability services, ultimately no good can come from a system predicated on creating an underclass of workers to provide the sustainability and viability of that service.

You cannot stand by while they swap one social injustice for another.

The truth is we don't need fewer services we need more; we don't need disruption of existing services, we need to build collaboratively on what we already have! We don't need private 'for profits' driving down the cost of labour by paying less. We don't have enough staff now to provide the services people with disability need and we will need many more supported well trained workers into the future. We need both a strong government *and* non-government disability sector, and there has to be a place for job security, fair wages and conditions when implementing those services.

It's time to stand up and take strike action to protect ourselves, our families and the clients we care for, and in so doing, we might be able to convince the NSW government to act with a little decency. So please join me and our ADHC colleagues in standing up for what we know is right, our future and the future of care for people with disability.

Yours faithfully,



Shane Elliott

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To find out more about the campaign, go to www.psa.asn.au/adhc