



MEDIA RELEASE

Amanda Rishworth MP

Federal Member for Kingston

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Southern Adelaide Community Service Workers Closer to Equal Pay

More than 12,000 South Australian workers in the social and community sector are a step closer to achieving equal pay after the Gillard Government announced it will provide \$2 billion to deliver an historic pay rise to workers in the sector.

Amanda Rishworth MP, Federal Member for Kingston said “These workers, many of them women, are in critical jobs caring for people with disabilities, counselling families in crisis, running homeless shelters and working with victims of domestic or sexual assault. They make a difference every day and deserve to be properly rewarded for their efforts.

“This historic commitment from the Government will help 150,000 Australians, including 120,000 women, achieve the equal pay they deserve.”

Nearly two thirds of community sector workers have post-school qualification, compared to just over half of workers in other industries, yet the average full time wage is just over \$46,000 per year, compared to the average wage of \$58,000.

Ms Rishworth said “Workers in this industry have long been undervalued because their work has traditionally been seen as being associated exclusively with women.

“In 2011, it is unacceptable that women in full-time work earn on average one fifth less than men. In other words, women work nearly seven weeks every year for free.

“The Gillard Government is committed to achieving a fair outcome for workers in this sector whose work has long been undervalued.”

The Gillard Government will submit a joint proposal with the Australian Services Union to Fair Work Australia which, if accepted, will help close the pay gap between men and women and fund the Government’s fair share of wage increases for workers in the social and community services sector.

Ms Rishworth said workers in local community service organisations will benefit from the Government’s proposal.

Sue Christophers, Anglicare Manager at St Hilary’s Morphett Vale said “Community service workers in Southern Adelaide deliver essential services to those who need them most, and for too long our work has been undervalued. The Government’s support will mean we are recognised for the difference we make to people’s lives.”