



Childcare position statement

1. Purpose

This position statement sets out the minimum responsibilities the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) considers governments and employers should meet to support workforce participation through the provision of childcare.

2. Definitions

Childcare can be informal or formal.¹

Formal childcare is regulated care away from the child's home. The main types of formal care are before and after school care, long day care, family day care, occasional care and vacation care.

Informal childcare is non-regulated care arranged by a child's parent or caregiver, either in the child's home or elsewhere. It may be provided by friends, family members, neighbours, nannies, babysitters or others, and can be paid or unpaid.

3. Context

Family friendly employment arrangements and childcare are essential for promoting equal opportunity and workforce participation.

They are particularly important for shift workers like nurses, midwives and assistants in nursing who rely on childcare to meet their employment obligations.²

4. Position

Government responsibilities

It is the position of the ANMF:

1. All governments must ensure childcare is equitable, accessible, affordable, and responsive to the needs of families, including dual and single parent families. This includes:
 - providing and funding enough childcare places in a range of settings to meet demand
 - providing subsidies to help eligible parents, particularly shift workers, with the cost of childcare
2. All governments must enable parents and caregivers to choose from a range of community and work based childcare services to meet their needs, including:
 - occasional care and vacation care
 - before and after school care
 - 24/7 services that meet the needs of parents who are shift workers
3. All governments must ensure childcare workers have the necessary qualifications and are appropriately remunerated – this includes paying penalty rates that recognise the crucial service they provide for shift workers.

¹ All definitions are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). See <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/6553.0~2017-18~Main%20Features~Child%20Care%20Use%20and%20Cost~19>

² Assistants in nursing refers to all care workers however titled.



Employer responsibilities

4. All new health and aged care facilities, whether public or private, should consider incorporating work-based childcare facilities in their plans.
5. All employers, including health services, should seriously consider the significant advantages of providing workplace childcare.
6. Work based childcare facilities should:
 - comply with the legislation, regulations and standards in the relevant state or territory
 - integrate well with other local child and family support services
 - cater for the social, emotional, psychological, physical and educational development of children in a safe environment
 - be responsive to the cultural and language backgrounds of all children
 - have a participatory management structure and decision-making processes that involve equal representation from parents, childcare workers, unions and the employer
 - allow parents to keep their child in the childcare service for a reasonable period after they have left the workplace if they need to.
7. Employers must not disadvantage or discriminate against employees who access childcare services or informal caring arrangements.
8. Employers must not disadvantage or discriminate against workers who are not parents or who do not have children in childcare through practices such as discriminatory rostering.
9. Employers should recognise the role of informal carers in providing childcare by extending access to family friendly work arrangements to informal carers.

5. Position statement management

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