

MEDIA RELEASE

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**CEWA calls on WA to follow Victorian Example**

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The recent announcement ([media release](http://www.premier.vic.gov.au/component/content/article/10840.html)) by the Premier of Victoria, John Brumby, that the Victorian Government will back Fair Work Australia’s decision on the pay claim for community service workers, has set a strong example for other State Governments to follow suit.

“It is now time for the Barnett Government to make a similar statement of support for its own community service workers here in Western Australia” said Community Employers WA’s Executive Director, James Lawton.

The Victorian Premier has stated that their Government “will factor in any wage increases to our service agreements with community service organisations and ensure those wages are passed on to workers”.

Women, who make up over 80% of the community sector workforce, are paid 27% less than men in Western Australia, and this is significantly larger than the national average of 17%. In addition, after reaching the top level in the public service, the same base grade senior social worker will receive $29,210, or 57%, more than their equivalent in the community sector

“So far, the Western Australian Government has failed to put its money where its mouth is. In light of the example set by Victoria, employers are rightfully asking the WA Government for a firm financial commitment to address the underfunding in the sector and alarming inequity in pay for community sector staff.” said Mr Lawton.

“We are now calling on both the Federal and WA State Government to fully fund any pay increases to the sector that are passed through Fair Work Australia.

“Failure to do so will have a drastic impact on vital community services provided to those at disadvantage in the Western Australian community” said Mr Lawton.

A 30% increase in funding to non government, not for profit community services organisations in Western Australia is needed to increase the capacity of these organisations to pay fair and just wages to their staff and continue to deliver essential community services.

The current shortfall in funding equates to $198m per annum.

In Western Australia, Community Employers WA (CEWA) represents over 100 employers in the community services sector.

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