

## **Federal Budget repackages, rebrands and re-announces.**

WEL Australia is disillusioned with all the missed opportunities here. There are no new measures to address critical issues impacting women in Australia – half Australia’s population. Economic inequality faced daily is pervasive and needs significant structural attention by the Federal Treasurer and government, not a continued tinkering with the problems.

The Treasurer’s “tax cuts” are of less benefit to women because of pay inequity. Far more women will receive a tax benefit of \$5 a week, not the higher cuts which will not help with cost of living pressures.

For unemployed women whose youngest child is over eight there is no help at all. NewStart has not calculated a standard rate rise and this group of women who live close to the poverty line and struggle every day to pay for food and shelter need welfare compassion.

Three-year-olds at pre-school have been neglected. There are inadequacies in the current child care subsidy. Also there is a need to improve pay and conditions for mostly female child care workers, to address women’s workforce participation.

The “*Delivering Skills for Today and Tomorrow*” initiatives simply transfer existing funds – we need targeted funding to improve women’s participation in trade areas of training dominated by men, in which there is a high skills demand.

WEL has long advocated for significant funding and service commitment to address the critical levels of domestic and family violence in Australia. The Federal Budget failed to extend existing commitments and address the need for long term funding for core services, especially women’s refuges.

It is important to look at key areas of domestic violence funding over time under LNP budgets. The 2014-15 budget committed \$144 M per year for capital works for domestic violence crisis

housing, but then funding was cut. So, returning \$75.4 M to 2019 budget still leaves us down over \$350 M on where we would have been without the cuts!

“WEL has called for significant change over the years in the key areas contributing to women’s inequality. Not much will change until we have a government willing to take comprehensive and continuing action with adequate resources dedicated to achieving solutions” concluded Ms Sobski, WEL Australia Convenor.

*Media Statement 3 April 2019 precis*