

Australian health workers voice outrage over Gaza catastrophe

A doctor
1 July 2025

Over the past month, more than 2,000 health care workers from across Australia have signed an open letter to express their horror at the intensifying Gaza genocide and the refusal of the Labor government to take any action against it.

“An open letter from Australian health professionals: urgent call for government action in Gaza” was issued after hearing first-hand testimony, at a forum on May 28 in Wollongong, from doctors and healthcare workers who have served on the frontline in Gaza. The letter states:

We, the undersigned Australian health professionals—including doctors, nurses, midwives, pharmacists, dentists, allied health workers, mental health clinicians, physiotherapists and public health experts—are gravely concerned by the escalating humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza.

As medical professionals dedicated to preserving life and health, we cannot remain silent in the face of the ongoing blockade that is preventing vital medical supplies, food, and humanitarian assistance from reaching over two million people in desperate need. The health system in Gaza has collapsed. Hospitals are operating without adequate electricity, medication, surgical supplies, or personnel. Children are dying of malnutrition and dehydration. Entire families are surviving without clean water, shelter, or access to basic care.

The letter denounces as “unacceptable and distressing” the targeting of healthcare workers, with more than 1,000 healthcare workers killed in the Palestinian territories since 2023, according to UN estimates, and all healthcare workers in Gaza having been displaced.

We recognise the urgent efforts of humanitarian and medical organisations such as PANZMA [Palestinian Australian New Zealand Medical Association], who are working tirelessly under dangerous conditions to provide life-saving assistance. However, their ability to operate is severely hindered by restrictions on movement, access, and supply chains.

This letter and the response it has generated speaks to the depth of the anguish, shock and outrage felt by healthcare workers, shared by workers and young people more broadly, as they witness the atrocities being perpetrated by the US-backed Israeli government in Gaza.

By signing the letter, and listing their occupations, the health workers have bravely risked being reported by Zionist groups to the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and medical, nursing and allied health boards.

In a brazen inversion of medical ethics and international humanitarian law, healthcare workers, including doctors, have been “doxxed” and reported to AHPRA for potential disciplinary action, in malicious and targeted campaigns to threaten their ability to practice and earn a livelihood.

Organised groups have agitated via social media posts and other communication forums to urge their followers and members of the public to complain to AHPRA and the Health Ombudsman about the supposed “antisemitic” behaviour of health workers calling for an end to the Gaza genocide.

Like many aspects of the genocide, this witch-hunt has not been reported widely in the corporate media, but practitioners are well aware of the repercussions of speaking up against the war crimes in Palestine. More than 50 medical practitioners are known to have been reported to AHPRA, and the issue has been further pursued by Zionist lobbyists in a Labor government-backed Senate committee inquiry.

The open letter calls on the Australian government to “immediately increase funding and logistical support to trusted humanitarian and medical organisations such as PANZMA, and ensure that Australian aid reaches civilians in Gaza safely and effectively.”

It also asks for “sustained diplomatic pressure to lift the blockade and allow the unimpeded delivery of essential medical supplies, food, clean water, fuel, and shelter materials.”

The letter urges increased “advocacy at the international level (including through the United Nations) for an immediate and permanent humanitarian ceasefire, and the protection of medical workers and facilities in accordance with international humanitarian law.”

It further calls for the government to “facilitate emergency relief corridors to allow for the coordinated, large-scale distribution of humanitarian aid into Gaza, including supporting the evacuation of critically ill patients where needed.”

The open letter concludes: “As health professionals, we are ethically bound to speak out when human life is threatened on such a scale. Bombing hospitals, targeting medical facilities and murdering medical professionals is a war crime. We urge you to act with the urgency and compassion this crisis demands.”

The widespread nature of the signatories, both geographically and across specialties and the allied health professions, as well as across seniority levels, speaks to the sense of urgency healthcare workers feel in their need to act.

However, the truth is that the Labor government has been complicit in the genocide from the beginning, as have all the American and European governments. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has repeated fraudulent statements such as Israel having “a right to defend itself” and that opposing Israel’s slaughter is antisemitic.

A Birchgrove Legal dossier submitted to the International Criminal Court has outlined many ways in which Labor has been involved in the genocide, including by giving military support via F-35 parts and supplying intelligence from the US Pine Gap satellite surveillance base in central Australia.

The dossier cited dozens of examples of Labor ministers justifying clear Israeli war crimes, including the deliberate murder of civilians.

When US President Donald Trump proclaimed in February that the US would aid the ethnic cleansing of the Gaza Strip and seek to take control of it, Albanese repeatedly refused to condemn the plan. “I’m not going to have a running commentary on statements by the President of the United States,” Albanese stated.

Similar letters and petitions have been sent to the Labor government since the latest onslaught against the Palestinians began in October 2023, yet the genocide is only intensifying.

One letter, initiated by the Perth Doctors for Palestine, was published as an advertisement in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Age* on May 29. It was titled: “We Cannot Stay Silent: Australian doctors call for government action to end the loss of life in Gaza.”

Another letter, signed by 930 doctors, was organised by the Australian and Aotearoan New Zealand Doctors for Palestine. Sent to Albanese’s office on May 30, it included a call for “immediate and targeted sanctions on Israel.”

Such appeals have fallen on deaf ears for month after month because the Labor government is unequivocally committed to the US military alliance, including Washington’s preparations for a war against China to seek to reassert US global hegemony.

Despite having just won an election on the back of widespread hostility to the Trump administration’s fascistic “Make America Great Again” agenda, which voters associated with the Liberal-National Coalition, Albanese is seeking to collaborate closely with the Trump White House and to maintain the AUKUS pact directed against China.

For all of us who want to end the barbarism, a correct understanding of the basic underlying issues is essential. Appeals to the Labor government, or to the United Nations for that matter, will not halt the greatest war crimes since World War II.

The truth is that the horrors occurring in Gaza are part of a wider agenda. As the US and Israeli bombings of Iran demonstrate, the

Gaza genocide is a component of a US-led imperialist drive to reorganise the entire strategic and resource-rich Middle East. This is directed against both Russia and China, which each have major interests in the region.

Moreover, this is being accompanied by demands for ever-greater military spending, which inevitably means deeper cuts to social spending, including public health.

Health workers also face the reality that the health trade union bureaucrats have lined up behind the Labor government by opposing any action whatsoever against the genocide. In fact, the New South Wales Nurses and Midwives Association called a rally to join the media and Labor government witch-hunt against two Bankstown Hospital nurses who were deliberately baited and goaded by an Israeli online “influencer” into making politically reactionary statements about “killing” Israeli patients.

At the same time, the health unions and associations have kept separate all the struggles across Australia against low pay, understaffing and workloads by different sections of health workers, such as nurses, support staff, psychiatrists and other doctors. These struggles need to be unified and fused with the building of an independent working-class movement against genocide and war.

Rather than holding out hopes of pressuring the Labor government into reversing its course after 21 months of defending the atrocities, there has to be a turn to the factories, hospitals, schools and other workplaces throughout the country for the organisation of independent action to break out of this straitjacket and to link up with workers globally.

There is only one social force that can halt the genocide and the wider plunge into war, and that is the international working class. In the first place, workers have the capacity to halt all war-related production and supplies. That means taking a stand against the capitalist profit system itself and turning to a socialist perspective for the total reorganisation of society on the basis of human need, not corporate greed.

To develop this fight, health workers need to form independent rank-and-file committees to discuss and organise, and reach out to fellow workers in the health sector and beyond. Please contact the Health Workers Rank-and-File Committee to discuss this further.

Contact the Health Workers’ Rank-and-File Committee (HWRFC):

Email: sephw.aus@gmail.com

Twitter: @HealthRandF_Aus

Facebook: facebook.com/groups/hwrfcaus



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact