

The National Report

11 September, 2008 – Issue 188
Aged & Community Services Australia



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ACSA CONFERENCE

COMBINE PLEASURE WITH BUSINESS!
BOOK NOW FOR CONFERENCE DINING AND NETWORKING AND NOTE
LUNCHTIME NETWORKING SPECIALS

As all seasoned conference delegates know, you need to have a drink and a discussion about the speakers, the sessions and all the ideas that are floating around. The best and most useful place to do this is at the social gatherings on offer. Aged Care in the Fast Lane, in Adelaide, has so many such events that unless you come earlier or stay later, you won't be able to visit Maggie and Simon (the Cook and the Chef) to check out their food ideas. It's all happening at the conference!

Don't forget the two pre-conference workshops on Sunday 28 September.

- **Technology Symposium – The Future of Aged Care Starts Now**

Adelaide Convention Centre 12pm-5pm.

Lloyd Walker from Novitatech on Trends and Developments in Assistive Technology, and Jack York from It's Never 2 Late, and concurrent sessions on Supporting Assistive Technology in the field, and Information Technology

- **We Always Dress for Sunday Lunch- Interactive Workshop**

ACS SA & NT office, Fullarton. 2-5 pm

This Drama Film and Study Guide, created by leading WA care provider SilverChain tells the story of Meg and Tom – with care and understanding. It's also a variation on the story of the lives of many thousands who need care and how multimedia, can link emotion to provoke thought in how we care for people.

We Always Dress for Sunday Lunch covers grief and loss, post traumatic syndrome, issues of suicide, and challenges facing a rural community. The film speaks to people who provide care, in particular carers (private and professional) of elderly people who may or may not suffer from dementia or a mental illness.

It portrays how a Person Centered Approach benefits the person receiving the care if those providing care have a greater understanding of their life history. A knowledge of this history means that care can be better targeted to the real needs of the person, as revealed by the individual stories which shape them.

We Always Dress For Sunday Lunch aims to deliver a key strategy to assist the whole community to understand others by learning their life stories.

Ready! Set! Go! Welcome Reception

Time: 6.00pm – 8.00pm Venue: Auditorium, Adelaide Town Hall, King William Street, Adelaide

Start your engines and get off to a flying start with drinks and canapés held in the historic Adelaide Town Hall! This event will provide the perfect opportunity to jump start conversations with colleagues and friends with background music and elegant surrounds. Proudly Sponsored by HESTA Superannuation Fund.

On Monday 29 September - The hardest decision of all - which networking dinner to attend! All start at 7pm, all easy to get to, but which one depends on your major interest- and perhaps your preferred cuisine.

- **Rural and Remote Networking Dinner**

Venue: Riverbank Rooms, Adelaide Convention Centre

This dinner provides an excellent opportunity for Rural and Remote delegates to network with others over an informal dinner.

- **The Super Networking Dinner- Dinner with Robyn Stone**
Jolley's Boat House Restaurant, 1Jolleys Lane, Adelaide(Cuisine: Australian)
- **Scampi's on the Beach- Dinner with Philip Pearson,**
Foreshore, Glenelg (Cuisine: Seafood)
- **Red Ochre -Dinner with Jack York**
War Memorial Drive, North Adelaide (Cuisine: Australian)

Details, costs and bookings for all of these via registration brochure/ online at www.agedcare.org.au

Tuesday 30 September - Lunchtime Networking Events

- **CEO's Networking Lunch, hosted by Health Super 1.00pm-2.00pm**
Guest Speaker: Dean Jones

Don't miss Health Super's lunch where one of Australia's all time great cricketers, Dean Jones, will speak about the importance of leadership and key decision making. Later he will visit Health Super's trade display and sign autographs. BYO cricket bats.

Delegates will be sent an email inviting them to register for this lunch.

- **Housing Networking Lunch: The Future of Independent Living Units – addressing the decaying legacy** 1.00pm-2.00pm ,Riverbank Room 1. *There is no need to register, just grab your lunch and join us at 1pm on Tuesday 30 Sept in the Riverbank Room 1.*

Are you concerned about your organisation's ability to continue to offer ILU services? If so, you should attend the informal lunch time networking session at ACSA's National Conference.

ACSA members currently have about 42,000 units of housing. Many of these (approx 34,000) were developed with Commonwealth Government funding from the 50s to the 80s and many are now in need of redevelopment to bring them up to today's standards and to ensure they are accessible for people as they age.

ILUs currently provide 27% of the social housing for older people. At a time when housing affordability is at an all time low it is essential that ILUs are refurbished and continue to operate as affordable housing.

At the conference we are having an informal gathering over lunch of people interested in sharing their ideas concerning the future of ILUs. The discussion will be facilitated by Roland Naufal, a consultant with considerable Australian and international housing knowledge, currently working with ACSA on affordable housing, and Lesley Dredge from the ACSA team. Topics will be determined by participants

There is no need to register, just grab your lunch and join us at 1pm on Tuesday 30 Sept in the Riverbank Room 1

Gala Dinner -Tuesday night revs up at 7pm

Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous

Venue: Hall F, Adelaide Convention Centre

Dress: Ladies, dress to your glamorous best and gentleman, channel your inner James Bond and dress to kill!

Proudly Sponsored by Zurich.

Celebrate life in the fast lane with glamour and style at the Gala Dinner. Get ready to be entertained with cool swing and music to dance to, combined with first class South Australian food and wine.

For all conference enquiries check the program at www.agedcare.org.au

ACSA Awards for Excellence

Finalists have been selected for these prestigious awards, and winners will be announced at the National Conference Lists of finalists for all awards apart from the Individual Excellence Award, will be posted on the ACSA website, next week on the new improved website (see below).

New Improved ACSA Website Fires Up Today

Check out, in an orderly fashion (after all you're not booking for a Rolling Stones Concert or tickets for the Grand Final), ACSA's new website.

Same address, but better layout and quicker links

Commonwealth to Take Over All Aged Care

A report in the Melbourne Age newspaper last week by the veteran Canberra reporter Michelle Grattan, detailed the Commonwealth Government's position on the allocation of responsibilities between the Australian and State/Territory governments in relation to aged care.

The Commonwealth's position- largely unchanged since the 1980s-includes them taking total responsibility for specific aged care services, including the Aged Care Assessment Teams and the majority of services under the Commonwealth-State Home and Community Care (HACC) program. The states and territories would have the responsibility for funding the component of HACC that serves younger people, and would assume responsibility for all disability services and a community mental health funding role.

A discussion on this question is said to be on the table at the COAG meeting in the first week of October, with a proposed start up date of 1 July 2009.

ACSA believes that there are advantages and disadvantages in both the proposed change and the status quo. CEO Greg Mundy said it is more important how it is done and how well it is done than by whom. If a decision to change is made by COAG in October it will be very important for service providers' knowledge, skill and viewpoints to be centrally involved in implementation , including through major peak bodies like ACSA. A decision on this issue, after so many years of having it on the table, would be a significant milestone for Australian Federation."

There has been little reporting or other comments since the initial report, which included concerns expressed by a Victorian Minister due to that state's historically greater commitment in terms of services and funding, to HACC. The only other response has been from the Coalition spokesman for Disabilities, Senator Cory Bernardi. He claimed the Rudd Government was abandoning those who are amongst the most vulnerable in society by shifting responsibility to the State and Territory Labor Governments.

"It defies belief that the very states and territories that have stalled negotiations of the Commonwealth State Territory Disability Agreement (CSTDA) for more than a year, are now going to have complete control of all services," Senator Bernardi said.

"People with a disability and their carers deserve better," he said.

Queensland Government to get out of Residential Aged Care

In another – probably coincidental move, Margaret Wenham in the Courier Mail reports that the Queensland Government has made plans to stop providing residential aged care services..

The 22 state-run facilities, with 1500 mainly high care residents throughout rural and regional Queensland, could be used to provide other health services.

According to the article, the state cabinet will make a decision on the homes after 30 September.

CAP Review Now Seeking Submissions

The Minister for Ageing, Mrs Justine Elliot has released the formal timetable for the CAP review, which announced in the May Budget.

The Review of the CAP will examine:

- the extent to which the medium term financial assistance provided by the CAP has been effective in encouraging efficiency through improved management practices; and
- the need for, and level of, any further medium term financial assistance to encourage providers to become more efficient through improved management practices.

"In addition, the Australian Government will be interested to hear ideas from the aged care sector and the community on what nursing home and hostel operators should be asked to do in order to receive CAP funding," Mrs Elliot said.

The Government is now seeking comment from organisations and individuals with an interest in the provision of residential care for frail older people.

Advertisements would appear in national newspapers and submissions will be accepted up until Friday, 24 October 2008.

ACSA views the continuation of the CAP top up indexation as a vital safeguard for service continuity pending the development of more robust, sustainable solutions. Without the extra CAP indexation, service failures are more likely to occur.

ACSA has also long argued that Australian Government funded community care services stand in just as much need of adequate indexation as does residential care. Failure to meet increasing costs leads inexorably to a decline in service.

The ACSA Federation will naturally make a submission at the national level in conjunction with the Aged Care Association which mainly represents privately owned and operated residential care services.

Many individual aged care services are also expected to make submissions identifying the impact of reduced funding at the service level and the effect on consumers.

Further information can be found at: www.health.gov.au/cap.

Submissions can be emailed to cap.review@health.gov.au.

New ACSA Corporate Supporter

Australian Strategic Services, Romsey based, but working Australia wide and familiar to many ACSA members, with CEO Michael Goldsworthy, have signed up as a new National Corporate Supporter

New ACSA Baby

Long time ACSA staffer Fleur Thomson and her partner Chris, are the proud parents of a baby girl, Sylvie Winifred. Mother and baby are both well.

ACSA Signs up with Center for Aging Services Technologies

ACSA along with ACAA (Aged Care Association of Australia) has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Center for Aging Services Technologies ([CAST](#)) to establish a CAST Affiliated Action Network in Australia.

CAST is an international collaboration of over 400 technology companies, ageing-service providers, businesses, universities and government organisations.

It aims to promote the development, evaluation and adoption of emerging technologies that have the potential to support people as they age.

The agreement was made under the auspices of the Aged Care Industry Council.

The purpose of the Australian network will be to facilitate the exchange of ideas about ageing services technologies.

Economic Report Card on Aged Care Sector

Minister Elliot in Federal Parliament presented an 'economic report card' on the aged care sector in Australia showing a positive outlook.

She said building approvals in aged care for the last quarter reached record levels with more than \$302 million in projects - an increase of 20.8% over the same period - a year ago. For the June 2008 quarter, there were \$302 million in projects compared to \$250 million in construction for the June 2007 quarter.

“This is great news and shows a real confidence in the future of aged care,” she said.

ACSA notes that some of this increase is likely to be due to the 2008 deadline for building improvements and the huge increase in building costs in many parts of Australia. Many aged care providers are currently operating on a knife edge or at a loss.

National Evaluation of the Transition Care Program

The Government has released the *National Evaluation of the Transition Care Program* Report. Its main findings were that:

- The Transition Care Program provided additional treatment and care options following hospitalization that were highly valued by patients and their families.
- Functional improvements occurred. When compared with similar groups of frail older people discharged from hospital during the same time period, those who received Transition Care had fewer readmissions to hospital and were less likely to move into permanent residential aged care.
- These outcomes are achieved at a comparatively high cost. For every day a recipient of Transition Care survives without institutional care i.e. without hospital or residential aged care over a six month period it costs \$344 per day. Costs were evaluated during an early phase of the program when they are likely to be high.
- The program was implemented within a health context where older people across Australia have widely variable access to rehabilitation and geriatric hospital beds. It did not appear that areas which were short of aged care services or subacute beds had been prioritized in the allocation of the first 2,000 Transition Care places.

Postgraduate Community Aged Care Nursing Scholarship Scheme

The Royal College of Nursing, Australia (RCNA) has said applications for the Postgraduate Community Aged Care Nursing Scholarship Scheme have opened. The scholarships are funded by the Australian Government and administered by RCNA.

Applications are open to registered nurses (division 1) across Australia who are working in the community aged care sector, have a current practising certificate and wish to undertake further study in 2009.

The scholarship scheme provides financial assistance for educational study programs or courses, including relevant accredited tertiary level or TAFE level courses, workshops and conference participation.

Successful applicants must undertake programs that are directly relevant to nursing employment in the community aged care sector. Applicants may apply for assistance toward more than one professional development activity.

Applications close at 5pm on Friday 24 October 2008.

To download the application and guideline form please visit the website www.rcna.org.au.

Pension and Income Support Payment Increases

Pensions and other income support payments and allowances will rise from 20 September.

The maximum single pension will rise by \$15.30 per fortnight and \$12.70 in the maximum partnered rate for each member of a pensioner couple.

The third instalment (now \$128.50) of the increased Utilities Allowance and the Seniors Concession Allowance (now \$514 per annum) will also be paid from 20 September.

Assistance for Volunteers' Petrol Bills

Not-for-profit organisations can receive up to \$2,500 to help pay for their volunteers' petrol bills, as part of the Australian Government's \$21 million Volunteer Grants Program 2008.

Under the Program, grants of between \$1,000 and \$5,000 can also be used to purchase equipment, including computers, tools, air conditioners and sporting equipment.

This new measure will assist volunteers who use their vehicles to support people in the community for activities like delivering meals, taking disadvantaged children to weekend sport and visiting the elderly.

Voluntary and other charitable organisations can apply for funding to contribute to the reimbursement of fuel costs incurred by their volunteers.

Applications close on Friday 17 October. Organisations will receive funding by the end of the year.

More information on the program, including application forms and guidelines at:

www.fahcsia.gov.au or by calling the toll-free hotline on 1800 183 374.

National Institute of Clinical Studies Fellowships

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) is inviting early-to-mid career health professionals with a commitment to improve health care in Australia to apply for a 2009 NICS Fellowship.

NICS Fellows are provided with unique opportunities through mentoring, training, national and international networking and practical support. NICS Fellowships are offered for two years, half-time to health professionals who are future leaders in evidence-based health care and wish to address an evidence-practice gap in their area of clinical practice.

Applications close: October 27, 2008. For information about the NICS Fellowships and the individual Fellowships: www.nhmrc.gov.au/nics

Community Aged Care Workforce Training Initiatives T

The Federal Government has provided updates on a number of proposed training initiatives to boost the community aged care workforce.

Among the announcements from the Minister Elliot, is that 500 training places for community care workers from culturally diverse or indigenous backgrounds will soon be available.

Courses covered by the Commonwealth program will include the Certificate III in Home and Community Care and the Certificate IV in Service Coordination, as well as language and literacy training.

The program will particularly target community aged care workers in remote and regional areas.

Mrs Elliot said 1500 more training places would be made available under the program at later dates.

The Minister also announced the provision of 180 scholarships next year to help community aged nurses improve their skills.

The \$10,000 scholarships are part of the \$4.5 million Postgraduate Community Aged Care Nursing Scholarships Scheme, which is administered by the Royal College of Nursing Australia.

The scholarship scheme is open to registered and Division 1 nurses who work in community aged care.

It can be used to support tertiary studies, TAFE programs and vocational education and training courses, including short courses and conferences.

New ABS Population Projections

Australia's population is set to change substantially over the next 50 years, with around one in four Australians being 65 years or older by 2056, according to the latest population projections released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). These projections are based on a series of assumptions that take into account recent trends in fertility, mortality and migration.

By 2056 Australia's population is projected to increase to between 31 and 43 million people, with around 23% to 25% being 65 years or older. In 2007 Australia's population was 21 million people, with 13% being 65 years or older. The ageing of Australia's population is the result of sustained low fertility, combined with increasing life expectancy.

The number of people aged 85 years or over is likely to increase rapidly over the next 50 years, from 344,000 people in 2007 to between 1.7 million and 3.1 million people in 2056. By then, people aged 85 years or over will make up 5% to 7% of Australia's population, compared to only 1.6% in 2007.

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mediareleasesbyCatalogue/7DB4DD841EA3A2A5CA2574B9001E26F6?OpenDocument>.

More Support for Carers of People with Dementia

The Australian Government recently announced a further \$3 million to support the individual needs of carers of people with dementia.

Funding will be provided to Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres (CRCCs), to be used to provide skill enhancement activities to help carers in their valuable role. CRCCs will be able to apply for funding to provide specialist services in their local area.

For more information visit

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr08-je-je158.htm/>.

Agendas Spring 2008 Issue

The latest edition of ACSA's quarterly Agendas is now published and is being distributed by State Associations and directly to subscribers.

It reports on the recent Community Care Conference and the Affordable Housing Forum, and previews the forthcoming National Conference in Adelaide. In addition it has articles by Minister Elliot and Shadow Minister Margaret May.

There is also a report by Barbara Squires from the Benevolent Society of NSW about the recent visit it sponsored, along with the Department of Health and Ageing, of Dr. Hans Becker, CEO of the Humanitas Foundation in the Netherlands.

The Humanitas concept of 'Apartments for Life' has been very successful in Rotterdam, and it is the basis of the new model of housing, care and support for older people that The Benevolent Society is trialling at our site in Ocean Street, Bondi.

Dr. Becker has kindly given permission for resources prepared for the study tour to be made available on The Benevolent Society's website. www.bensoc.org.au.

ACSA Members Aged Care Awards and Recognition

- **Warrigal Care, NSW**

Grindley Construction has been recognised at the Master Builders Association of NSW's 2008 Excellence in Housing Awards for its work on a Warrigal Care facility in Goulburn.

The \$16 million facility provides homely accommodation and care services to 120 of the region's oldest people.

It features extensive use of carpets and wood grain floors along with designer furniture and artworks enhance the large single and couple rooms. The home also includes a reception lobby, hairdresser, café and therapy room.

- **Feros Care Queensland**

At the recent Information Technology in Aged Care (ITAC) conference, the award for the best IT solution across more than 150 beds went to Feros Care in Queensland for its Gateway community

care initiative. The gateway framework is a single point-of-entry to the organisation that clients can access via a 1300-number and remote staff can log onto using a wide area network (wan).

It combines current communication technology with community care software to improve efficiencies across the organisation.

- **Mary Ogilvy, Tasmania**

The best IT solution across less than 150 beds went to Mary Ogilvy Homes Society in Tasmania for its introduction of AutumnCare's harmony program.

Dementia Collaborative Research Centres

The Dementia Collaborative Research Centre identifies current research being undertaken across Australia. A project entitled "Trial of a community model of care for people throughout the progression of dementia" is being conducted in collaboration with industry partners, the Prince Charles Hospital, Blue Care and RSL Care.

Some of the aims of the project include producing evidence based guidelines for the recognition, assessment and management of people with dementia as well as providing clinical pathways for GPs and health professionals from diagnosis to severe stage dementia.

The drafts of the Pathways and Evidence-based guidelines can be viewed at:

http://www.dementia.unsw.edu.au/drcweb.nsf/page/drc3_projects

AIRC to Discuss Award Modernisation

ACSA has appeared at the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, to represent the industry at a conference to discuss award modernisation of health and welfare services across Australia.

Commissioner Cribb convened the conference with peak industry groups, unions and employer industrial relations representatives from health, aged care and community services in Melbourne.

He heard different views of the parties on scoping the industry sectors for the creation of one national award for each industry sector. Various views were put by the parties as to what would constitute the aged and community care industry in Australia and how to fit various sectors into one national award. This is a complex task as there are more than 400 Federal and State Awards covering workers.

The challenge is to define aged care and what it does, or doesn't, include. The Aged Care Industry Council is leading this award modernisation scoping project.

The Australian Industrial Relations Commission will meet again this month to discuss the matter further.

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