

# **Media Release**

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## **ACSA urges government not to put all its eggs in one basket**

Australia's peak aged and community services body has welcomed news that the Federal Government is considering a proposal to improve flexibility in aged care funding.

Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA) CEO Greg Mundy said "consumer directed care", where senior citizens are given vouchers to manage how and where they are cared for, was already on the industry's agenda.

"This model of funding is an important consideration in meeting consumer demands for options in aged care," Mr Mundy said.

"Various forms of consumer directed care, which have been trailed overseas within the last 10 to 15 years, highlight the need to properly identify and fund services to meet an increasing range of needs.

"However, local and international research and assessment of the programs also reveals inherent difficulties for older people in managing voucher systems."

"Further, there is evidence that the system can create additional burdens on established service providers as they strive to provide a range of quality care options."

"Consumer directed care is a positive but we would urge the Government not to pursue a "one system fits all" policy where it puts all its eggs in one basket," he said.

Mr Mundy said that it while was imperative that the community, government and industry debate appropriate methods of funding for aged care, action is needed now so older people's requirements are met.

In the short term, ACSA is looking to this year's Federal Budget to boost funding to ensure an array of concerns are addressed including the employment of sufficient aged care professionals at fair rates of pay.

"As the Government has recognised, some 13 per cent of Australia's population is aged 65 and over with that number expected to triple in 40 years.

"Aged care must be a priority for the Government today, not in 40 years."

ACSA represents more than 1,100 church, charitable and community based organisations providing accommodation and care services to over 700,000 older people, people with disabilities and their carers.

**For Further Information**

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