



Media Release

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Older Australians need health reform too: ACSA

Australia's peak national body for not-for-profit aged and community care providers has welcomed the Federal Government's bold move to deliver better health and hospitals to Australians.

Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA) CEO Greg Mundy said it was important to recognise the enormity of the task the Government faces in reforming health services, but added that aged care must be an integral consideration.

"While the nation's hospital systems treat large numbers of people every day, aged care providers support and care for more than 1 million people in their own homes and more than 200,000 in residential facilities," Mr Mundy said.

"We all know these numbers will escalate dramatically in the coming years and this means we have to address immediate concerns in addition to meeting the needs of a new generation of older Australians.

"A single level of government, the Federal Government, responsible for proper funding and regulation of aged care, would similarly advance the delivery of services when and where they are needed.

"Flexibility in how those services are delivered, the ability of local networks and providers to use funding to meet the real needs of older Australians, are also issues in keeping with the Prime Minister's concerns that layers of bureaucracy and powerlessness at a local level do not serve anyone's best interests.

"Independent determination of all costs associated with the provision of aged care, as proposed for the hospital system, would also be welcome. Current funding is inadequate and must be addressed as a priority.

"We hope the Prime Minister's commitment to health reform will prompt the release of the terms of reference for the Productivity Commission inquiry into aged care, along with time lines.

"In keeping with Mr Rudd's analogy, the aged care system also has cracks and flaws which have also been painted over for too long. Older Australians need an aged care system for the 21st Century, which is already ten years old, let's get on with it."

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