



## Media Release

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### Time to “bed down” aged care: ACSA

The unsustainable cost of providing high care accommodation for older Australians has been underlined by a shortfall in the latest round of bed licences announced by the Federal Government, Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA) CEO Greg Mundy said today.

Mr Mundy welcomed the Minister for Ageing’s announcement of 5,748 places for residential care but he said it was 1,915 short of the numbers advertised.

“The economics of establishing and maintaining residential care means that these services can not be sustained at current funding levels,” Mr Mundy said.

“Uniting Aged Care Australia has recently announced the closure of two facilities in Victoria, forcing more than 100 people to lose their homes, primarily because of inadequate funding. Further, almost 800 bed licences were handed back to the Government between November and March this year.

“The reduced uptake of bed licences and forced closures will begin to impact on the services available to those frail older Australians who need residential care now, and those who will need it in the future.

“The Government has designated that 88 out of 113 aged care services per 1,000 people over 70 should be residential care. That target will not be met if this trend continues.

“ACSA welcomes the boost to community care services which is sorely needed. But this should not be at the expense of residential care for those for whom it is the only viable option.

“Community care is essential and integral to Australians being able to choose how and where they are cared for as they grow older.

“However, a last minute switch by the Government in allocating resources from one area of aged care to another, by disguising unresolved financial issues in residential care, is not the way to plan the allocation of these vital services.

“There is no argument that the Federal Government is spending record amounts of money on aged care and has recognised that older Australians will increasingly form a greater proportion of the population.

“But with so much money and so many people’s well being at stake, it is important that the full range of services is available to meet the needs of older Australians. We want the best for those who have fought enough battles in their lives and now need our support.”

**Media contact: Chris Hornsey 0419 513 432**