

Media Release

Tuesday, 10 May 2005



AGED CARE – A WORK IN PROGRESS

The Government signalled tonight that more work is needed on the longer-term directions for Australia's aged and community care system to meet the challenges ahead.

This view was supported by Greg Mundy, CEO of Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA) which represents Australia's not-for-profit aged and community care providers.

"We look forward to working with Minister Bishop, the Government and all stakeholders in mapping out a system built around sustainability, quality, competition and choice. This is a pressing issue on which we need to act before it is too late."

"We need more action on the resourcing of both residential and community care which continue to experience significant wage and other cost increases without any matching increase in funds. Health professionals in the Veterans' portfolio have had these costs recognised in the budget but aged, and especially community, care continue to lag behind".

"Aged and community care also need a drastic reduction in the burden of excessively detailed Government regulation."

Minister Bishop tonight signalled the Government's intention to consider the longer term recommendations made in the Hogan review to which the Government responded in last year's budget.

"ACSA has made no secret that it doesn't necessarily support all of the specific directions suggested by Professor Hogan but we do agree that more fundamental change is needed in the future."

"We are pleased to see that the Government has followed through on its election promises in the areas of dementia and services for carers, including more flexible models of respite care in the community. ACSA praised these initiatives in the lead up to the last election."

While this year's budget did not address the adequacy of community care funding, we look forward to this issue being dealt with as the Government's community care reform program moves forward.

ACSA represents over 1,200 church, charitable and community-based organisations providing housing, supported accommodation and community care services to around half a million older Australians.

For Further Information

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