

# **Media Release**

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## **LEADERS NEED TO SORT OUT AGED CARE**

“Australia’s population is ageing and we need to ensure that our system of care is best prepared for the challenges it is facing.”

This is the advice from the aged care industry to Australia’s leaders in the lead up to tomorrow’s COAG meeting. Greg Mundy, CEO of Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA) went on to offer the following advice to the Prime Minister and State Premiers.

“An effective and well-resourced aged care system is important to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the system of care for older people but aged care must not be seen simply as an adjunct to health care, it is much more than that.” Mr Mundy stated.

“A strong system of community and residential care, appropriate housing and supportive communities are all important for the daily lives of frail older people - for keeping them well and optimising their independence.”

“The various parts of our system of care of older people are individually very good by world standards, even though many have been starved of resources over the past 10 years. What is not so good is the way that they fit together around the complex care needs of an older person. Different levels of Government are responsible for different aspects of care and this is the source of many problems.”

“The links between primary health care, hospitals and the aged care system, including both residential and community care, do not work as well as they need to.”

“The planning and resourcing of community care is disjointed.” Mr Mundy added. “It’s left to older people and their families and service providers to sort out the mess created by a myriad of Commonwealth and State funding programs, each with its own rules and guidelines.”

“The current division of labour between the Commonwealth and State Governments has allowed both to avoid responsibility. This has been at the expense of older people and their families. While some limited reforms have been attempted in the past, we now have an ideal opportunity to fix this longstanding problem once and for all.”

“Australia’s older people need coordinated planning of care services – both medical and social – coordinated delivery of care and adequate investment in care services”

“I wish the leaders well in their deliberations and urge them to think of their parents and their needs as they consider reforms to Australia’s health and aged care system. The aged care industry stands ready to help to improve the system, Governments need to talk to us.”

ACSA represents over 1,200 church, charitable and community-based organisations providing housing, supported accommodation and community care services to around 750,000 older Australians, people with a disability and their carers.

**For Further Information**

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