

Media Release
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AGED CARE FUTURE NOT YET SECURE

Measures announced in the Federal Budget are a welcome short term boost for aged care services, according to Greg Mundy, CEO of Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA). But they leave much more to be done to ensure Australia's aged care system is ready for the army of older people marching towards it.

"The budget does some useful things but it does not secure the future of aged care services, as the Government claims." Mr Mundy observed.

Problems in the *Securing the Future* package announced by the Prime Minister and the Minister for Ageing in February this year have been dealt with in the budget so that its inadvertent consequences – which would have meant that some aged care services received less money - have been lessened, but not entirely removed.

However the package does not include long term solutions to fund the growing demand for aged care services. The recommendations of the Government-commissioned Hogan review which was set up to address these issues continue to be ignored.

ACSA has called for aged care funding to be linked to the real costs of providing care and for user payments for accommodation to be linked to the cost of providing it – with proper protection for those on low incomes. The measures announced in the budget, while helpful in the short term, fall well short of this.

"The Government's package was never a complete solution to the problems facing aged care and fixing the mistakes in it doesn't alter this fact." Mr Mundy commented.

Other aged care measures in the budget such as increased funding for culturally diverse services; secure employment for indigenous aged care workers and the trialling of new models of respite are all worthwhile initiatives which will be welcomed by the aged care industry. More funding for continence aids, home visits by GPs and visits to nursing homes by GPs are all good for the well-being of the older people for whom we care, Mr Mundy added.

"We welcome the additional resourcing provided in the budget, but more needs to be done to ensure that we can care for the growing numbers of older people in Australia to the level that they deserve."

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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