

# **Media Release**

**Tuesday, 22 February 2005**



## **MORE PAPERWORK FOR AGED CARE PROVIDERS**

Today's announcement by Federal Minister for Ageing Julie Bishop of new accountability requirements for aged care providers will add to the already considerable burden of red tape in the industry.

"We are in favour of measures which support good financial management in the industry" commented Greg Mundy CEO of Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA) "but we do have some concerns about the detail of the new measures and the fact that the paper mountain continues to grow."

"Aged care is already a very highly regulated industry and, despite commitments to streamlining by past and present Federal Ministers, the red tape continues to proliferate."

"The new measures will affect aged care providers unevenly. Some providers will incur considerable increased costs to meet the new financial reporting guidelines which will divert resources away from providing care. The transition provisions announced by the Minister will soften, but not entirely eliminate, this problem."

"We are concerned that the new financial reporting requirements are designed to meet Government's needs rather than those of aged care providers and their Boards."

Commenting on the other components of the Minister Bishop's announcement, Mr Mundy added:

"The additional funds provided for residential care in last year's budget are certainly a step in the right direction but will be largely absorbed by wage increases already in train and in many cases already paid. It would be unfortunate if today's announcement were to further fuel wage expectations that simply cannot be met. An extra 1.75% each year can only go so far."

The aged care industry supports the value of training. This was evidenced last year by the first workforce census which showed that the overwhelming majority of care staff already have a post secondary qualification. Keeping these skills up to date is in everyone's interests.

ACSA is the leading national peak body for aged and community care providers and 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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