

# **Media Release**

**Wednesday, 13 December 2006**



## **NEED FOR NEW POLICY IN AGED CARE**

Minister Santoro's confirmation of the need for new policy in relation to user charging for nursing homes (high care residential homes) was welcomed by the leading industry body, Aged and Community Services Australia, today.

"The current user charging arrangements for nursing homes are inadequate and inequitable, so it is encouraging to see that the Government is committed to addressing this," commented Greg Mundy ACSA's CEO.

"Minister Santoro's address to the National Press Club today recognised that the nursing homes we'll need tomorrow won't be built unless there are changes to the financial arrangements and correctly stresses the need for residents having greater choices in this regard." Mr Mundy added.

"Minister Santoro's declaration that accommodation bonds will not be introduced into high care homes shows that in some areas the Government's thinking has not moved on from 1997."

"All of the major stakeholders, including providers, church groups and consumers, have recognised that times have changed and have acknowledged that the payment of a partly refundable deposit (or Bond) may well suit many older people's circumstances."

"Taking one of the options off the table at the outset is a limitation but not an insuperable barrier to solving this long-standing problem."

"We will continue to work with Minister Santoro and the Australian Government to explore other options to solve the question of the financing of the nursing homes of tomorrow."

"We need solutions that work in rural and regional Australia as well as the metropolitan areas, for the socially disadvantaged as well as the better off."

"We need a user charging regime that is fair and affordable and which allows new nursing homes to be built. We need the Australian Government to pay its share on behalf of those with lesser means." "I am confident that this can be achieved"

ACSA represents over 1,200 church, charitable and community-based organisations providing housing, supported accommodation and community care services to over 650,000 older Australians, people with a disability and their carers.

**For Further Information**

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