



AGED CARE INDUSTRY COUNCIL MEDIA RELEASE



Peak Council of Australia's Aged Care Providers

Embargoed until: 9.00am Friday 16 January 2009

Clock ticking on aged-care funding

The Aged Care Industry Council (ACIC) has stepped up calls for the Federal Government to overhaul funding for aged care in the lead up to the May budget.

ACIC represents more than 95 per cent of Australia's aged-care providers in the church, charitable and privately owned sectors, through Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA) and the Aged Care Association Australia (ACAA).

ACIC's appeal for a new vision for aged care in Australia, including improved funding, comes as the Queensland and South Australian Governments support industry concerns about the future of aged-care services.

ACSA Acting CEO Patricia Sparrow said the Federal Government must act now to ensure the increasing numbers of older Australians have the care and facilities they need, and deserve. "The clock is ticking on this issue," Ms Sparrow said. "Aged care is a vital community service which can ill afford protracted debates on funding issues. The system is under threat now and difficulties with service provision will only continue to worsen without change."

Ms Sparrow urged the Government to adopt a new model for aged care. "The current system of funding for aged care facilities fails to address a broad range of issues from wages for carers to maintaining and developing appropriate facilities," Ms Sparrow said.

"Aged care is not dissimilar to the health and education sectors where funding is critical, and a variety of options must be provided to cater for many different scenarios. Those options are needed now to avoid a bleak future for the aged-care sector."

ACAA CEO Rod Young said the increasing complexity of aged-care needs for a growing number of Australians required an innovative solution.

"We need a sustainable system to ensure we can provide timely, proper care for all older Australians. The current system is not working and if left unchanged will leave this group with nowhere to turn," he said. "Older Australians should not be denied our care and respect."

Mr Young and Ms Sparrow said older Australians should not be penalised because they have simply grown old and need additional care.

"As a collective, we need to devise an effective model to meet the increasing needs of older Australians. The Government and industry should not be at cross purposes when it comes to caring for Australians. "It is time to take care of aged care," they said.

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