



Media Release

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Aged care reforms a stepping stone

The national peak body representing not-for-profit aged and community care providers welcomes the Federal Government's moves to reform aged care.

Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA) CEO Greg Mundy said the range of initiatives released today were a good starting point.

"However, aged care should not, and cannot be, a political bargaining chip," Mr Mundy said.

"The issues confronting Australia's ageing population are far too important to be caught up in political trade-offs and haggling between the Commonwealth and the States. We need a comprehensive solution to the challenges of our ageing population and an holistic approach to solutions.

"The proposals put forward today do not address the fundamental underlying problems hampering the provision of quality services in community and residential care.

"As the Prime Minister has said, the plans are a first step and not a panacea for aged care. However, in the immediate short term we expect the Government to use the Federal Budget as a means to address the crippling financial concerns of the aged care sector.

"Funding must meet the real costs of providing care and services. Currently the subsidies fall well short of the mark. The Conditional Adjustment Payment should be reinstated as a way of making sure annual funding more closely matches the cost of providing the care older people need."

Mr Mundy said longer term planning for comprehensive reform of aged care including its financing is expected to be undertaken by a Productivity Commission inquiry.

"When the Government announces the terms of reference, which we anticipate soon, we expect a commitment to endorse and implement real changes likely to flow from the Commission's recommendations."

Mr Mundy said without immediate improvement for financial support for aged and community services, there maybe precious few still around to be part of future reforms."

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