

The National Report

10 March 2010 – Issue 223
Aged & Community Services Australia



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National Campaign for Care of Older Australians

ACSA CEO Greg Mundy, Aged Care Association Australia (ACAA) CEO Rod Young and Catholic Health Australia CEO Martin Laverty led a panel discussion on the united national industry *Campaign for Care of Older Australians* (CCOA) at last week's Tri-State (ACCV, ACS SA&NT and ACS NSW&ACT) Conference in Mt Gambier.

They briefed Conference delegates on the roles and aims of the aged care and faith-based peak bodies in the CCOA in the lead up to the 2010 Federal Election and also discussed how aged care providers can be a part of the Campaign.

The Conference strongly supported the CCOA to drive the urgent need for aged care reform. It was agreed the Conference urgently calls for an industry reform agenda that aims to deliver:

1. **Access** for all seniors, including those who are disadvantaged.
2. **Choice** for seniors in how they receive aged care.
3. **Sustainability** of the industry to meet ever increasing consumer needs and expectations.

Older Australians Need Health Reform Too

ACSA has welcomed the Federal Government's announcement to deliver better health and hospitals to Australians.

ACSA CEO, Greg Mundy said it was important to recognise the enormity of the task the Government faces in reforming health services, but added that aged care must be an integral consideration.

While the nation's hospital systems treat large numbers of people every day, aged care providers support and care for more than 1 million people in their own homes and more than 200,000 in residential facilities.

A single level of government, the Federal Government, responsible for proper funding and regulation of aged care, would advance the delivery of services when and where they are needed. Flexible service delivery coupled with the ability of local networks and providers to meet the real needs of older Australians, are also issues in keeping with the Prime Minister's concerns that layers of bureaucracy and powerlessness at a local level do not serve anyone's best interests.

Independent determination of all costs associated with the provision of aged care, as proposed for the hospital system, would also be welcome. Current funding is inadequate and must be addressed as a priority.

We hope the Prime Minister's commitment to health reform will prompt the release of the terms of reference for the Productivity Commission inquiry into aged care, along with timelines.

NRHA Encourages States to Support Reform Blueprint

The National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA) has encouraged the States and Territories to sign up to the National Health and Hospitals Network blueprint which has the potential to benefit people in rural and remote areas in health and ageing.

"A focus on local health care networks also gives us the chance to stitch the fabric of our healthcare together in a way that works for our own particular towns and regions. Close articulation of hospitals, aged care and emergency services with the primary care sector is central to good health in smaller communities," NRHA Chair Dr Jenny May said.

In the next round of health announcements it is hoped that the Commonwealth will focus on rural and remote workforce issues and on building preventive care, primary care, hospitals services and aged care in each region to ensure they work together to meet local needs, the NRHA said.

ACSA 2010 Aged Care Excellence Awards

State Associations are currently calling for nominations for our Awards which are an opportunity to celebrate the achievements in the aged care community.

The Awards acknowledge excellence across the following categories: Employee, Volunteer, Trainee, Organisation, Media and Industry Supporter.

Click on the relevant State link below for further information and nomination forms - all State winners progress to the National Awards.

NSW and ACT

Nominations close Thursday 1 April 2010 www.agedservices.asn.au

SA and NT

Nominations close Friday 16 April 2010 www.agedcommunity.asn.au

Western Australia

Nominations close Wednesday 21 April 2010 www.acswa.org.au

Also holding seminars to assist with completion of nominations.

Victoria

Nominations close Friday 23 April 2010 www.accv.com.au

Queensland

Award nominations have now closed for Judging

Award Presentation to be held Thursday 18 March, ACQ State Conference, Conrad Jupiters, Gold Coast.

Aged Care Nursing Scholarships

Minister Elliot announced more aged care specific nursing scholarships to increase the workforce and up skill existing workers as part of her presentation at the Tri-State conference.

Up to 680 people would receive \$30,000 over three years to assist with their nursing studies, totally \$9.5 million worth of scholarships to help the sector's workforce issues.

The funding will support undergraduate and postgraduate nurses predominantly living in rural, regional and remote Australia. The scholarships will start immediately, benefiting up to 560 tertiary students who are beginning their studies in 2010. A further 120 scholarships will be made available to existing staff members.

Applications for the scholarships are being administered by the Royal College of Nursing Australia (RCNA). The scholarships were advertised on Saturday, 6 March and applications must be submitted by Friday, 16 April.

For more information, call the RCNA on 1800 116 696 or send an email enquiry to scholarships@rcna.org.au

Catholic Health Australia (CHA) Community Aged Care Policy Blueprint

Aged care should be made an entitlement available to every person who needs it, according to a community aged care policy blueprint released by CHA.

Helping more ageing Australians to live in their own homes longer would reap huge psychological rewards for individuals, save taxpayers money, and free up hospital beds, CHA CEO Martin Laverty said in releasing the policy blueprint.

“Australia has a rapidly ageing population and not nearly enough residential aged care to accommodate them,” Mr Laverty said. “Most people would choose to stay in their own home for as long as possible, if given the choice. At the moment, many don’t have that choice. Access to aged care should be an entitlement, not a privilege.”

CHA’s community aged care policy blueprint *A Better Way Forward* outlines how older Australians can achieve a better quality of life while allowing Government to save money by broadening access to at-home aged care.

The community care policy blueprint recommends:

- Scrapping the Howard Government’s Aged Care Act 1997 allocation formula for funding aged care places, and replacing it with a ‘Medicare’ style entitlement;
- Setting care payments in both residential and community care services at equal amounts, to create choice as to whether care is delivered in a person’s home or in a residential aged care facility;
- Benchmarking a quality level of care, and basing care payments on this benchmark, and;
- Abolishing the current Aged Care Assessment Team structure, and replacing it with a nationally administered network of aged care access centres.

A Better Way Forward is available at <http://www.cha.org.au/site.php?id=15>

NRHA Critical of Govt Response to Patients’ Assisted Travel Reform

The Commonwealth Government’s ‘hands-off’ response to the Senate’s Inquiry into patient assisted travel schemes will bitterly disappoint people in rural and remote areas, Dr Jenny May, Chairperson of the Alliance, said.

“Having the Commonwealth ‘committed to working with state and territory governments to improve the system’ but not leading or investing is a serious setback”.

“We understand that the Commonwealth does not welcome financial exposure to these schemes, but we are convinced that it needs to lead. The best way of doing this effectively would be to provide incentive payments to the states and the Northern Territory,” Dr May said.

“Having waited so long for this response to the Senate Report, it gives us little confidence to know that the Commonwealth is still considering the issues through its various reform and collaborative processes. But we live in hope,” she said.

The formal response to the report lists the many programs funded since the election of the Rudd Government and the reviews undertaken, but makes no substantive response to the specific recommendations from the Senate nor indeed to the clear proposal from the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission that PATS should be better funded. ACSA made a submission in May 2007 to this Senate Inquiry, which completed its report in September 2007.

Electronic Medication Management in Aged Care

The “Case for Electronic Medication Management in Aged Care” report is now available from the ACSA website at

<http://www.agedcare.org.au/Electronic%20Medication%20Management.html>

Bold Ideas Better Lives Challenge

The Australian Centre for Social Innovation is offering the chance to turn a big idea into big impact.

It will support up to 10 projects that show the best and brightest ideas in social innovation across Australia. The idea could deal with anything from healthcare to education, climate change to the internet as long as it addresses a social need faced by communities in Australia.

Mentoring plus money (up to \$1million) is on offer to get ideas off the ground.

More information and applications are online at <http://www.tacsi.org.au/challenge>, or you can contact Erin Green challenge@tacsi.org.au to find out more.

Groundbreaking Residential Aged Care Menu Survey

As part of aged care worker and dietitian at Nambucca Valley Care, Karen Abbey’s PhD at the University of Queensland, a menu survey has been sent to residential aged care facilities across Australia.

This is the first of its kind in Australia giving food service across Australia an opportunity to contribute information to this project. The survey’s main aim is to examine better practices in food and nutrition services, and menu planning and menu design to deliver optimal nutrition to residential aged care.

ACSA supports Karen’s attempts to cover as many facilities as possible to obtain a good overview of what is happening in aged care food services across Australia.

Please take the time to fill it in and send it back. Your time and support is appreciated.

If you need a copy of the survey please email karen.abbey@nvcl.org.au and she will be happy to send you one.

The closing date for the survey has been extended to the end of April so please send it back as soon as possible as all surveys are important.

Family Mediation and Family Abuse Survey

University of South Australia researchers are seeking participation in a national survey to develop older-person-centred models of family mediation to prevent the financial abuse of older people by their family members, which is the most commonly reported form of abuse (along with psychological abuse).

The project has been funded by an Australian Research Council Linkage grant in partnership with the Department for Families and Communities, Office of the Public Advocate, Guardianship Board, Alzheimer's South Australia and Relationships South Australia.

In the first stage of the project they are circulating two on-line national surveys:

- one for Managers or CEOs of organisations servicing older people and/or their families and providing family dispute resolution services; and
- one for service providers from different disciplines who are family mediators or who work with older people and/or their families.

The survey links are:

For Managers or CEOs of relevant organisations <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/W5RZFBS>
For practitioners providing services to older people and/or their family members and/or family dispute resolution (mediation) services <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/THXQ2VG>

Please contact Associate Professor Dale Bagshaw, the Project Manager dale.bagshaw@unisa.edu.au or Dr Jenni Adams jenni.adams@unisa.edu.au, if you have any questions.

Residential Aged Care Communiqué (RAC)

The first issue of RAC for 2010, published by the Department of Forensic Medicine at Monash University, is now available on line and by subscription.

This issue focuses on how RAC responds to emergency situations due to internal hazards. It follows on from the last issue of 2009, which explored the need for an organised response to an external hazard i.e. Extreme Hot Weather.

Two cases are presented illustrating dramatic differences in teamwork during an emergency response, followed by expert commentaries that address themes arising from the cases. The first is about respecting a resident's dignity to take risks, and the second discusses being prepared for a crisis through rehearsal and training.

If you would like a free subscription to RAC, please email: racc@vifm.org.

2011 Census Discussion Paper

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is to replace the Australian Statistical Geographical Classification (ASGC) with the new Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) commencing in 2011.

The move to the new classification will lead to improvements in the quality of small area time series data from the Census and will enable better comparison between Census and other data sources that adopt the new geographic classification.

The purpose of *Discussion Paper: Census of Population and Housing -ABS Views on 2011 Census Output Geography, 2011(ref.0.55.002)* is to form census users of the geographical areas for which data from the 2011 Census will be available, and seek user views on the range of products that will be available for the various levels of the ASGS.

Users are invited to comment on the ASGS implementation plans for the 2011 Census. Submissions can be forwarded electronically to census.software@abs.gov.au. The closing date for submissions is Thursday 1 April 2010. www.abs.gov.au.

Aged Care Recipients of Employer of Choice for Women Awards

The Federal Government's Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA) has recognised several aged care providers as an *Employer of Choice* for Women, in its 2010 list.

The EOWA citation is an endorsement of organisations' female-friendly work practices. Selected organisations – 95 Australia-wide – were chosen against stringent criteria for their workplace policies and practices that support and encourage women across their industry and deliver improved outcomes for women, particularly in the areas of attracting, growing, promoting and retaining female staff.

Aged and community care employers receiving awards included Warrigal Care, Catholic Care Hunter-Manning, Baptist Community Services - NSW & ACT, Benetas, Mercy Health, Uniting Aged Care Victoria and Tasmania; and Fullarton Lutheran Homes Inc. in SA .

For the list of organisations recognised in the 2010 Employers of Choice for Women visit: http://www.eowa.gov.au/EOWA_Employer_of_Choice_for_Women/2010/Media_Page.asp

Everyone Belongs on Harmony Day 21 March 2010

Australians will celebrate the many cultures that make Australia great by getting involved in Harmony Day activities on 21 March. Hundreds of thousands of Australians will be out celebrating over the coming weeks, while sports organisations, community groups, government agencies, churches, schools and workplaces will host special events. www.harmony.gov.au.

Osteoporotic Hip Fracture in Australia

The incidence of hip fractures among older Australians declined consistently between 1997-98 and 2006-07, but more so for women than men, according to a report released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

The problem of osteoporotic hip fracture in Australia report shows that over the ten year period, the incidence rate for osteoporotic hip fracture decreased by 14% for men and by 20% for women.

'The fact that the incidence of hip fractures decreased more slowly among males may indicate that men could benefit from increased attention to prevention of underlying risk factors,' said report co-author Tracy Dixon.

While the overall incidence rate of osteoporotic hip fractures is declining, the actual number of cases is still on the rise due to a growing and ageing population. There were about 16,500 osteoporotic hip fractures among Australians aged 40 years or over in 2006-07, most of whom were 65 years or older, with more than half were 85 years or older. Almost three-quarters were women.

Dementia in Extreme Elderly Population Study

University of California researchers have found that the incidence rate for all causes of dementia in people age 90 and older is 18.2% annually and significantly increases with age in both men and women.

The "The 90+ Study," a population-based, longitudinal study of ageing and dementia, showed that dementia incidence rates almost double every five years in those 90 and older. Researchers found the overall incidence rate based on 770 person-years of follow-up was 18.2% per year. Rates increased with age from 12.7% per year in the 90-94 age group, to 21.2% per year in the 95-99 age group, to 40.7% per year in the 100+ age group. Incidence rates were very similar for men and women.

Previous results from The "90+ Study" found higher estimates of dementia prevalence in women (45%) compared to men (28%), a result also seen in other similar studies. Article: "Dementia Incidence Continues to Increase with Age in the Oldest-Old: The 90+ Study." María M. Corrada, Ron Brookmeyer, Annlia Paganini-Hill, Daniel Berlau, Claudia H. Kawas. *Annals of Neurology*; Published Online: February 23, 2009 (DOI: 10.1002/ana.21915); Print Issue Date: February 2010.

Older Australians a "Burden on Society"

Ageist attitudes are rife throughout the Australian population with older people often viewed as fragile, unproductive and a burden on society, according to *Respect in an Ageing Society* Report undertaken by Deakin University, commissioned by aged care provider Benetas. It examines the attitudes of society towards older people and what respect for older Australians means to them and the wider community.

Benetas CEO, Sandra Hills, says the *Respect in an Ageing Society* report highlights the need for governments, business and the community to direct greater attention to creating a society that respects and values older people. www.benetas.com.au

Wireless eHealth and the Elderly Consumer

Wireless eHealth and the Elderly Consumer, a UK report published by Cambridge UK based researchers, Wireless Healthcare, suggests a focus on family carers, rather than the elderly. The report sees the next generation of carers as 'Alphadaughters', predominantly female family members who use online technology and consumer medical devices to provide high quality and cost effective care for their elderly parents. The report also explains that while part of the solution

is technology based there are many other ways governments could support Alphadaughters and make healthcare more family carer friendly.

Wireless Healthcare suggests that providing resources to this unofficial, and sometimes unrecognised, segment of the healthcare sector could prove as cost effective as spending on mainstream healthcare. The report identifies Alphadaughters as the next big consumer market whose purchase of healthcare equipment and services on behalf of their parents could overcome the problem of how to channel the wealth of the elderly back to young, economically active, families. The report "Wireless eHealth and the Elderly Consumer" is available from Wireless Healthcare <http://www.wirelesshealthcare.co.uk>.

ACSA Twenty 10 National Conference - Explore the Possibilities - Call for Abstracts

We are now calling for presentations for ACSA's annual National Conference to be held in Hobart between 19 and 22 September 2010. "Explore the possibilities" is this year's theme. We want to explore the possibilities around how we can adapt lessons from our collective experience, and embrace innovative practices from within and outside our industry. The conference program comprises a range of sub-themes to stimulate the imagination:

- Sustainability
- Food
- Marketing
- Workforce
- Information technology
- Travel
- Community

For more information and a copy of the Call for Abstracts Brochure please go to www.cdeshign.com.au/acsa2010

ACSA Community Care Conference - Don't Forget!

ACSA Community Care Conference 2-4 June 2010, Gold Coast
"Next Generation"

<http://www.acqi.asn.au/acsa2010/index.html>

Aged & Community Services Australia
Level 1, 36 Albert Road, South Melbourne Vic 3205
Ph: 03 9686 3460
Email: info@agedcare.org.au www.agedccare.org.au