

# *The National Report*

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**Aged & Community Services Australia**



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## Official Opening and other Highlights of *Explore the Possibilities 2010 ACSA National Conference in Hobart*

Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia will officially open the conference on Monday 20th September.

Another star in appearance will be well known cricketer, author and architect, Max 'Tangles' Walker, who will be facilitating the CEO's forum on Day 1. He will also be available at the Thompson Adsett stand for those wishing to have a chat with him.

Check out other highlights, accommodation and post conference options in the Conference brochure available online at <http://www.cdesign.com.au/acsa2010/>.

### The Grand Plan- Growing Support

The Grand Plan- launched by the Campaign for Care of Older Australians (CCOA) on 30 June- is gaining momentum. There was extensive media coverage on launch day with John Safran, Father Bob Maguire and ACSA CEO Greg Mundy conducting many radio interviews; plus print media coverage in capital cities and regions as well as online. Channel 10's 7pm Project carried extensive coverage on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> July.

Our media coverage for the launch highlighted the results of a survey, which showed that people of all ages thought that aged care was an important issue, ahead of employment, education and the environment, and showing massive support (over 90%) for more government support for aged care services. More details are below.

A number of organisations with an interest in older people and their care have approached CCOA to see how they can join the campaign and they can, as Grand Fans and people are joining our Facebook site daily.

People are sending a card to a Grand Person in their life-with a corresponding email message to their local member. They are also sending emails to Minister Elliot, Opposition spokeswoman Senator Fierravanti-Wells and their cabinet colleagues Roxon and Dutton.

You can show them that you think aged care is important by logging on yourself at: [www.thegrandplan.com.au](http://www.thegrandplan.com.au).

### More Poll Details

CCOA Chair Greg Mundy has reported in a media release that Australians are more concerned about aged care than they are about employment, education and the environment, according to a new poll.

The online survey was undertaken by CCOA to launch The Grand Plan and was conducted by Pure Profile in June 2010. It involved more than 1,000 respondents from across Australia.

The poll revealed that aged care was not just a worry for older people, with men and women of all ages acknowledging that it rated ahead of employment, education and the environment

as an area of greatest concern; 91 per cent of respondents agreed aged care should be an entitlement; 96 per cent supported increased government funding; and 95 per cent agreed that those who can't afford to pay should receive additional assistance.

More than 60 per cent of respondents said it was difficult or almost impossible to access aged care services and 40 per cent of poll respondents said they feared losing their independence as they aged. *For more details visit [www.thegrandplan.com.au](http://www.thegrandplan.com.au)*

## Gillard Parents in Retirement Village, and Mother Worked in Aged Care

Our new Prime Minister has family connections to aged care. Her parents are residents of an Adelaide retirement village and her mother worked in a Salvation Army aged care facility. Her father was as a psychiatric nurse. The Prime Minister was also shadow Health Minister in opposition, facing off against the then Government's Health Minister, Mr Abbott.

## Invitation to Apply for grants under the Rural Health Continuing Education Stream Two is now open.

Applications for grants under Rural Health Continuing Education Stream Two are now open. The closing date is 20 August 2010.

The Rural Health Continuing Education (RHCE) program, funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Health and Ageing, supports qualified health professionals living and working in rural and remote Australia to undertake continuing professional development activities.

This latest round of funding is to provide grants for continuing professional development (CPD), multi-disciplinary training or Inter-Professional Learning (IPL) and orientation activities that meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers, allied health professionals, general practitioners and nurses and midwives living and practising in rural and remote areas of Australia.

RHCE Stream Two is administered by the National Rural Health Alliance, with funding of approximately \$2.5 million available in grants until June 30, 2013.

Further details, including guidelines, priorities and the application forms, are available on the RHCE website: [www.ruralhealth.org.au](http://www.ruralhealth.org.au).

## Aged Care Regulatory Amendments

In addition to the Aged Care regulatory amendments tabled by Minister Elliot and noted in National Report No 233, she tabled a few more in the last minute rush for Parliament to rise and MPs to flee Canberra.

These related to enteral feeding, ACAT guidelines definitions (relax- only minor), and flexible care subsidies. However two other related to the Government's worthy attempts to reduce regulatory burdens in the sector: the requirement to lodge an annual fire safety declaration

has been dropped where a state or local authority declaration has already been made, and reducing reporting requirements for the CAP.

## Draft Boundaries for Medicare Locals

The Australian General Practice network (AGPN) has published a doorstop - size volume suggesting options for the boundaries of Primary health Care Organisations, aka Medicare Locals.

This and other documents relating to PHCOs – super GP divisions - may be found on the Government’s health reform website: [www.yourhealth.gov.au](http://www.yourhealth.gov.au).

Comments on the proposed boundaries are being sought through the website, to be received by 30 September.

The National Rural Health Alliance (NHRA) has rejected the proposal, saying that rural people want ‘Medicare Locals’ - not State-wide primary care agencies . It will ‘work strenuously’ against the Report’s preferred options being adopted by government.

Dr Jenny May, Chairperson of the NRHA, says that by basing boundaries of the new primary care organisations on population size and organisational capability, the consultants’ report has come up with proposals which would be quite contrary to the interests of people in rural and remote areas.

“The idea that there should be one primary care organisation in the whole of Tasmania, one in the Northern Territory, and one for the whole of non-metropolitan SA is absurd – and would result in even less localisation of primary care management than now exists,” Dr May said.

## GST Changes in Retirement Villages

ACSA has sought clarification from the ATO about how the changes proposed in their draft ruling (for details see *National Report No. 233, 24 June*) might apply to charitable organisations involved in buying or selling a village from or to another charitable provider or a commercial operator. This advice will be passed onto ACSA members as soon as it is received.

## New Leadership for Nurses

The Australian Nursing Federation has a new leadership team with Lee Thomas assuming the role of federal secretary and Yvonne Chaperon taking on the federal assistant secretary position from 1 July.

Ms Thomas said she felt honoured to be leading Australia’s third largest and fastest growing union. Prior to taking on the role of assistant federal secretary of the ANF in 2008 Ms Thomas was secretary of the South Australian Branch of the union.

Ms Thomas says her experience working part time as a personal care worker in a South Australian nursing home when she was 17 solidified her ambition to become a nurse.

Ms Thomas and Ms Chaperon take on the leadership of the ANF at a time of great challenges for the aged care sector in particular. Lee Thomas is well known to ACSA, having been the ANF representative on the National Aged Care Alliance for several years.

## South Australian Inquiry Urges Boost to Aged Dental Care

A South Australian Parliamentary inquiry into dental services for the elderly has recommended the oral health of all aged care residents be checked when they first move in.

*ABC News Online* has reported that the inquiry found elderly people living alone and those in nursing homes had the worst tooth decay problems.

Inquiry presiding member, Labor MP Ian Hunter, said recommendations had been put to the SA Government, including a need for more support for dentists to treat patients in nursing homes.

"The Government gives them some assistance with some mobile dental equipment. We suggested to the Government that it increase its commitment to that program and increase the training of dentists so more dentists give of their time in these facilities."

## ACSA Kevin87 Campaign Features in Overseas Awards

ACSA's *Kevin87* campaign has won two Bronze Awards in the IPA Best of Health Awards in London. These are one of the top healthcare sector awards in the world.

The categories were Consumer, Mixed Media and Consumer, Film. Here's a link to the site: <http://www.ipa.co.uk/Content/2010-IPA-Best-of-Health-Awards-winners>

## Productivity Commission

The deadline for submissions is the 30 July, but so far only 33 have been received.

Visit <http://www.pc.gov.au/projects/inquiry/aged-care> for more information, and to read the submissions received.

## Carer Supplement Start from 1 July

From 1 July 2010, more than 500,000 carers across Australia will receive an annual \$600 Carer Supplement. It will be paid to people who receive:

- Carer Payment;
- both Wife Pension and Carer Allowance;
- both Department of Veterans' Affairs Partner Service Pension and Carer Allowance; and
- Department of Veterans' Affairs Carer Service pension.

The payment will also be provided to recipients of Carer Allowance for each person they care for.

This means that if a person is in receipt of Carer Allowance and Carer Payment (or Wife Pension, Department of Veterans' Affairs Service Pension or Carer Service pension) they will qualify for two Carer Supplement payments, with an additional payment for each extra person they care for.

The annual Carer Supplement gives carers certainty about the level of assistance they receive each year, and assists with budgeting for any unforeseen costs.

Most Carer Supplement payments will be paid between Thursday 1 July and Wednesday 14 July.

## Disabilities Convention Report

Attorney-General, Robert McClelland and Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services, Bill Shorten, have announced a national public consultation process on Australia's first report under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Under the Convention, Australia is required to submit a comprehensive report every four years on measures taken to promote the rights and freedoms of those with a disability.

The draft report, which will be Australia's first since becoming a party to the Convention in August 2008, includes information about the development of the National Disability Strategy and explains our policies, programs and laws relating to the rights of persons with disabilities.

The Government is now seeking comment on the draft report from non-government organisations, persons with disabilities and their advocates, and other interested individuals.

The Government is also developing a National Disability Strategy, to be released this year, which will outline our approach to further protecting the rights of people with a disability and encouraging their inclusion in society.

Copies of the draft report and supporting documents can be obtained at [www.ag.gov.au](http://www.ag.gov.au)  
Submissions close on 6 August

## Parliament Passes Legislation to Cut Red-Tape For Business

Legislation to reduce the red-tape burden on business and improve Australia's corporate reporting framework will come into effect for the financial year ending 30 June 2010.

The Bill makes life easier for businesses of all sizes - from the 11,000 companies limited by guarantee, most of which are not-for-profits, to large corporate groups, which can face unnecessarily duplication in their reporting requirements, the Minister for Financial Services, Superannuation and Corporate Law, Mr Chris Bowen said.

The package of reforms, contained in the Corporations Amendment (Corporate Reporting Reform) Bill include:

- significantly reducing the regulatory burden on companies limited by guarantee, which typically have a not-for-profit purpose, by introducing a three-tiered differential reporting framework;
- streamlining parent-entity reporting;
- providing greater flexibility for companies to pay dividends, by replacing the profits test with a solvency-type test; and allowing companies to more easily change their year-end date to minimise the burden on companies and their auditors during peak reporting periods.

The reforms will also implement refinements to the regulatory framework, including:

- improving disclosure of non-financial information in the directors' report;
- refining the statement of compliance with International Financial Reporting Standards contained in the directors' declaration; and
- clarifying the circumstances in which a company can cancel its share capital.

## Stroke Patients to Receive Wii Therapy via National Broadband Network

Stroke patients will be some of the first people to benefit from the National Broadband Network via a project to deliver remote rehabilitation therapy using Nintendo Wii.

Lead researcher Dr Penelope McNulty from Neuroscience Research Australia (NeuRA) said the project will assess the feasibility of offering high-quality, remotely-monitored rehabilitation where access to therapy is currently restricted or non-existent.

NeuRA and NBN Co will work together to test the delivery of the rehabilitation training to people with stroke-affected hands and arms using the National Broadband Network, as studies at Neuroscience Research Australia have shown that this form of therapy can significantly improve movement after only two weeks.

Each participant will take part in ten one-hour sessions at home over a two-week period. They will be supervised by a therapist in Sydney, who will use the network to receive high quality video images and sensor data to analyse the patient's movements and provide feedback. Mike Quigley, who started as NBN Co Chief Executive in July last year and is on the NeuRA board, has donated his first year's salary - \$ 2 million - to fund this project, as well as other projects at NeuRA, including the construction of the Neuroscience Research Precinct.

[www.NeuRA.edu.au](http://www.NeuRA.edu.au)

## Indigenous Health Information

Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet's plain language section has been developed to provide Indigenous Health Workers with up-to-date easily accessible information on a chronic, infectious and other health conditions. They can be accessed at:

<http://www.healthinonet.ecu.edu.au/health-systems/health-workers/plain-language>

## Enterprise Care Not for Profit Remuneration Survey and Report.

This annual survey aims to take a snapshot of current remuneration levels in the Not for Profit sector and provide benchmarks for use by organisations. The 2010 survey for the Not for Profit sector is now underway and has already been emailed to approximately 4000 organisations.

Collecting information such as Chief Executive Officer base salary, bonus, car allowance, insurance and professional development payments, as well as the percentage of salary increase for the prior year, this survey gathers the most up to date and statistically relevant information for CEO remuneration benchmarking in Australia. Also surveyed are the base salary, bonus, other benefits and percentage of salary increase for 16 other common organisational positions

To contribute to this valuable survey and ensure your organisation's data goes to towards increasing the sector's knowledge, register your interest with Enterprise Care at <http://www.enterprise-care.com.au>. There is a charge to obtain the final report.

## Age Matters Statistics

*Age Matters* is a newsletter about age related statistics. It includes topical articles and reviews of relevant ABS publications. *Age Matters* highlights developments in statistics on the ageing population, and other information of likely interest to ageing researchers and policy makers.

Interested readers are also invited to visit the Ageing theme page on the ABS website for links to ageing-relevant ABS datasets and other web sites.

[www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4914.0.55.001?OpenDocument](http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4914.0.55.001?OpenDocument)

## Healthy Ageing Quiz- Practical Tips for Ageing Well

Noelene Brown, Ambassador for Ageing, has launched *Healthy Ageing Quiz: Practical tips for ageing well*, the latest report from the National Seniors Productive Ageing Centre Developed by the National Ageing Research Institute, it draws on the latest scientific evidence to identify factors associated with healthy ageing.

The research findings are presented in a unique way – the healthy ageing quiz. The quiz is accessible at [www.productiveageing.com.au](http://www.productiveageing.com.au). Hard copies of the quiz are available separately upon request.

## Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) Training Package to Assist Aged Care Workers

The Government has released a training package that will assist aged care providers dealing with GLBT people. The package was developed through a partnership with ACON, Australia's largest community-based GLBT health and HIV organisation, and Aged and Community Services Association NSW & ACT.

## Opening a Dialogue: Improving Communication and Practice in Advance Care and End of Life Care Planning

This project, funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, aims to improve communication in Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACFs) between aged care staff and family caregivers about dementia and issues related to future care planning and palliative care.

The study is being conducted in two RACFs in both Tasmania and Victoria. Partner organisations include state-based palliative care services, aged care services, dementia services and other primary care providers including GPs.

The project will develop and trial a model that will provide a foundation for effective advanced care planning and end of life planning for people with dementia in RACFs.

This model includes:

- (a) the development of Dementia-Palliative Care Resource Nurse (DPRN) roles in each participating RACF;
- (b) the development and piloting of a discussion tool and supporting strategies to facilitate staff-family caregiver dialogues about dementia being a terminal condition, issues of deterioration, mortality and a palliative approach to care; and
- (c) capacity building activities for aged care staff to facilitate communication about dementia and palliative approaches to care.

For further information please contact Sharon Andrews, Project Co-Ordinator:

[Sharon.andrews@utas.edu.au](mailto:Sharon.andrews@utas.edu.au)

## Healthcare Identifiers Service Legislation

The Aged Care Industry IT Council (ACIITC) has welcomed the passing of Healthcare Identifiers Service Legislation by federal Parliament.

ACIITC which is keen to support the deployment of IT systems across residential and community aged care has seen the creation of Health Identifiers as a foundation step in the future enablement of individual health care records and workforce efficiency gains to support e-prescribing and quality management of medication administration.

More information about healthcare identifiers and the Healthcare Identifiers Service is available at [www.ehealthinfo.gov.au](http://www.ehealthinfo.gov.au) or [www.medicare.gov.au](http://www.medicare.gov.au)

## New Repatriation Health Cards

Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) clients have started to receive their new gold, white and orange Repatriation Health Cards in the mail.

New cards will now have a magnetic strip which will contain data including the veteran's full name, file number, card type and expiry date. Micro-printing and the addition of a DVA registered hologram will ensure enhanced security and reduce the likelihood of reproduction.

The mail-out is expected to be completed by the end of August 2010.

For more information on DVA Repatriation Health Cards visit the [DVA treatment cards website](#). One of the main benefits for health providers is a substantial reduction in time spent on manual processing. Providers wanting to take advantage of this upgrade can contact DVA at [dvacard@dva.gov.au](mailto:dvacard@dva.gov.au)

## HECS-HELP Benefit Extended to Education and Nursing Graduates

In the 2009 Budget, the Australian Government announced the extension of the HECS-HELP benefit to students who complete an eligible education or nursing course of study after 30 June 2009 and start work in an education or nursing occupation.

Eligible education and nursing graduates who take up employment in these professions can apply for the HECS-HELP benefit which will reduce their Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) compulsory repayment.

There is a voluminous amount of information on the website, including a downloadable *Repaying your HELP debt 2010-2011*. Good luck!  
<http://www.ato.gov.au>

## Print Disability Services Program

Vision Australia, Association for the Blind Western Australia, Royal Society for the Blind of South Australia, Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children, and People Learn Productions will deliver the federal Government's Print Disability Services Program in 2010/2011.

This program supports organisations to produce print material in alternative formats for people with disability who are unable to read, hold or manipulate standard printed material.

Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities, Bill Shorten, said the new program will provide more information, in more formats, to more people.

"New technology lets people access digital material regardless of where they live, meaning organisations should not service clients only in a particular part of Australia. There is now a significant focus on collaboration, sharing of resources and reducing Duplication," he said.

## SAGE Study Tours 2011 - 2012 Program

SAGE Study Tours for 2011 and 2012 are now being planned. In 2011 tours are being planned around the year's two big international Eldercare conferences - the *National Care Forum* in the

UK in May, and the *IAHSA Global Ageing Conference & Exposition* in Washington DC, USA in October.

For 2012 tours to South Africa and to Miami, Florida are proposed, subject to the response SAGE receives in the coming weeks. So if you'd like to see the way eldercare is delivered in the tribal societies and the developed urban areas of South Africa, or innovative retirement services and delivery in the retiree capital of America, let us know by registering your interest in attending on our website by clicking on the tour links below.

Tours are capped at 15 delegates maximum, and with a huge amount of interest already expressed in the USA trip, you'll need to act fast to secure your place with the Australian SAGE delegation.

Further details and registration at [www.sagetours.com.au](http://www.sagetours.com.au)

## IAHSA Staff Exchange Network

*National Report No. 229, 6 May* described the IAHSA Staff Exchange Network, which facilitates visits between IAHSA members who provide care and services for the elderly. IAHSA provides links between facilities to orchestrate staff educational visits. Benefits to participants include:

- Increased understanding of international initiatives and cultural challenges in providing care for the elderly;
- Enhanced staff development and learning;
- Increased esteem of workforce through participation; and
- Increased retention of quality leadership staff.

The Staff Exchange Network, which included an Australian experience, was recently highlighted in the American chapter's magazine. [Read the story at http://www.iahsa.net/internalpage.aspx?id=7634](http://www.iahsa.net/internalpage.aspx?id=7634)

## Report on Eggs and Nutrition

A report which examines the latest scientific research around the nutritional qualities of eggs and addresses the misconceptions around eggs and serum cholesterol has been released. Get cracking to read it at: [http://enc.org.au/workspace/files/Egg\\_report\\_Final.pdf](http://enc.org.au/workspace/files/Egg_report_Final.pdf)

## Homelessness National Quality Framework

Feedback from the first round of consultations for the Homelessness National Quality Framework is now available on the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) website.

[http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/about/news/2010/Pages/homelessness\\_national\\_quality\\_framework.aspx](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/about/news/2010/Pages/homelessness_national_quality_framework.aspx)

## Tests help predict falls by Parkinson's sufferers

A group of tests may help predict which people with Parkinson's disease are more likely to fall, according to a study by Queensland University of Technology (QUT). The tests that were the best predictors of whether a person was likely to fall included a test of overall Parkinson's symptoms, a questionnaire on how often people tended to "freeze" while walking, and a test of balance.

The study results were published in the American Academy of Neurology's online medical journal [Neurology](#)<sup>®</sup>.

The study was supported by Parkinson's Queensland, QUT and the National Health and Medical Research Council.

## Community Services Australia Report

Australia's community service providers spent \$25.2 billion on direct services in 2008-09, according to figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). Just over half of this expenditure was by 'not for profit' organisations.

Commonwealth, state and territory government organisations contributed \$3.8 billion directly and also provided a further \$9.5 billion in funding and payments to private organisations and self-employed contractors. In addition community service providers spent a further \$4.0 billion on related or overhead community assistance.

At the end of June 2009 there were nearly 11,000 businesses and organisations involved in the provision of community services. These included 5,809 'not for profit' organisations, 4,638 'for profit' organisations, and 520 government organisations.

Over half a million people were employed by organisations providing community services, 78% of whom were female. Most employees were aged between 26 and 46 years and over 42% were employed on a permanent part time basis.

There were 325,440 volunteers assisting community services organisations during 2008-09, providing 78 hours of voluntary services on average.

*Community Services, Australia 2008-09* (cat. no 8696.0) is available for free download from the ABS website at <http://www.abs.gov.au>.

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