

16 June 2014



Aged & Community Services
Western Australia Incorporated

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Dr Sarah Palmer
Principal Research Officer
Community Development and Justice Standing Committee
Parliament House
Perth, Western Australia 6000

Via email: lacdjsc@parliament.wa.gov.au

Dear Dr Palmer

RE: Inquiry into the policy implications of an ageing community

Aged & Community Services WA (ACSWA) is the peak body representing the church, charitable, and not-for-profit providers of residential and community care for older Western Australians in metropolitan, regional, rural and remote locations. Our Members collectively manage:

- 8,148 residential aged care beds
- 8,389 independent living units
- 5,284 community packages
- Over \$146 million in Home and Community Care funding

ACSWA welcomes the opportunity to make this submission to the Committee's inquiry into the policy implications of an ageing community. We note the five principles developed for the framework which include;

1. Promoting health and well being
2. Access to essential services
3. Economic security and protection of rights
4. Welcoming and well-planned communities
5. Opportunities to contribute

ACSWA broadly supports these principles although we are concerned to ensure that, in respect of the "Promoting health and wellbeing" principle, the proposed transfer to the Commonwealth of funding, policy and operational responsibility for Home and Community Care services is delivered in the best interests of older Western Australians and aged care sector providers.

As the peak body representing the not-for-profit providers in community aged care and residential aged care ACSWA is well placed to provide advice on the unique and diverse issues in Western Australia, especially those impacting on small and regional providers.



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Our Community Care Committee has agreed there are a number of key issues that should be addressed to reassure WA clients and providers that the proposed transition would deliver a net benefit, including:

- The requirement to better understand the issues for young people with a disability in respect of HACC transfer.
- The need to safeguard the flexibility of the current HACC Program.
- Safeguard the viability of small providers who offer a unique or niche service.
- Confirm the position of wellness and reablement in a Commonwealth environment.
- Recognise key challenges for dementia specific services and determine how these can be protected.
- Recognise that large mainstream pathways may not accommodate the unique requirements for small programs and small towns.
- Recognise the significant value of social capital provided by volunteers and determine how this will be retained in the proposed transition.
- Confirm how much of the current HACC program is planned to transition to the Commonwealth.
- Maintain the development and support role provided under the current HACC program.
- Reduce the administrative burden of the current duplicative system.
- Ensure funding certainty for HACC under Commonwealth arrangements.
- Ensure current procedures for Commonwealth contracts are harmonised with Western Australian procedures.

We would welcome the opportunity to provide further detail on these issues and look forward to continuing to work with your Committee on this critical issue for the aged care sector in Western Australia.

Yours sincerely

Chief Executive Officer