

The National Report

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Aged & Community Services Australia



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Image Campaign Update

ACSA's image campaign "Can't do it without you" is officially in the public domain following the television launch on September 21.

The kevin87 video was aired on Channel 9s Mornings with Kerri Anne and then released online with spectacular results including extensive exposure on national news web sites, advertising and marketing sites, blogs and YouTube.

Supporters were also quick to sign up to the kevin87 Facebook page and join in the conversations on twitter.

The first of our advertisements, which form the main focus of the campaign featuring elderly Australians and their carers, appeared in the Sunday Life magazine published in the Sunday Age and the Sun Herald in NSW on October 4.

Watch out for the ads to be rolled out in newspaper magazines during October:

- October 9 – Hobart Mercury
- October 10 – Good Weekend Magazine, Q Weekend, The West Weekend Magazine, Weekend Australian Magazine.
- October 11 – News Ltd Sunday Magazine in Sydney and Melbourne

ACSA CEO Greg Mundy said while the campaign was off to a great start there was still a way to go. “This is a long term campaign and we need financial support and further donations to keep it going. We need everyone with a stake in aged care to stay connected via Facebook, twitter, emails – whatever it takes to keep the conversation about aged care alive across the entire community.”

Visit www.agedcare.org.au for details on how to donate money and tell your friends about www.kevin87.com.au. If you haven't signed up to Facebook or twitter now's your chance.

Health and Aged Care Reform

Health Minister Roxon, sometimes accompanied by the Prime Minister, and her other portfolio Ministers including Justine Elliot, are continuing to stump the country seeking people's views on the recommendations of the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission (NHHRC). Their visits are often tied in with local openings of Government funded buildings and equipment, or grants to health, community and aged care organisations.

A specific Aged Care Forum, convened by Minister Elliot was held in Sydney this week with around 70 stakeholders attending. The audience was generally very supportive of the reform agenda for aged care and encouraged the Government to continue with it. Both Minister Roxon and Elliott have acknowledged that there are issues in aged care that in the short term as well as the longer-term reforms.

ACSA has also been involved in discussion with Ministers about the proposed reforms and the foreshadowed reference of the aged care reform agenda to the Productivity Commission. Greg Mundy commented: “Clearly there is a head of steam behind the Government's health and aged care reform agenda. They refer to it as a ‘once in a generation opportunity’ to address long-standing issues in our health and aged care systems. We need to ensure that the reform program does not stall and that the options are polished and refined appropriately to ensure sustainable, consumer oriented care. We also need attention to our immediate issues, to ensure we live long enough to see the longer term reforms!”

H1N1 Vaccination Roll Out in Aged and Community Care

The last National Report reported on the approval to roll out the Australian produced H1N1 vaccine and gave the general details of who was to get priority for the national vaccination program which was to start from 30 September.

Since then the Department has written to ACSA and to all Residential Aged Care Providers (addressed to DoNs and Care Managers) and to Community Care Providers, reiterating those at greatest risk and therefore those to have priority in vaccinations. This list does not cite age as a risk indicator (compared with normal influenza vaccination campaigns) but does identify health care workers including aged and community care workers as a priority for vaccination, and specifies a range of risk factors from specific health conditions.

The Panvax®H1N1 vaccine is to be distributed via the usual ordering and distribution channels used for the National Immunisation Program.

The vaccine is free for staff as well as for vulnerable residents of aged care facilities and community aged care clients, however there may be a cost for administration of the vaccine. The Department has suggested that facilities could coordinate with a general practitioner to organise vaccination for staff. General practitioners have been advised that they will be able to run temporary influenza vaccine clinics not on their premises. Their patients will be entitled to claim Medicare benefits for services appropriately provided.

State Associations have obtained and publicised advice from State Health Departments on alternative arrangements for administration of the vaccine to those in at risk category, including individual GPs or commercial immunisation providers, who may already work with or for state Immunisation Programs. This is because the H1N1 vaccine is not available on the private market for purchase as seasonal influenza vaccine usually is (e.g. from CSL).

Members should ensure that community clients are aware of the need to make an appointment with their medical practitioner, especially those clients most at risk.

Award Modernisation Stage 4 - Home Care Workers

On 25 September the AIRC released exposure draft modern awards for Stage 4 industries including the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010.

Aged Care employers had made submissions to the AIRC in support of a separate award to cover Home Care and Disability Services as we did not believe the Aged Care Award 2010 had the appropriate classifications and flexibilities essential to the operation of these services. As a fallback we submitted that if the commission were not of a mind to create such an award they should make changes to the Aged Care Award 2010 and the Nurses Occupational Award to incorporate the appropriate classifications and flexibilities.

The AIRC created a separate award which covers not only Home Care and Disability Services but also activities traditionally covered by Social and Community Services Awards (SACS). The AIRC did not, however, remove Home Care from the scope of the Aged Care Award 2010. This leaves unclear the circumstances under which a home care employee would be covered by either award. We will be making submissions to the AIRC seeking clarification.

The Award itself, to the extent it covers Home Care Employees, appears to satisfy most of the concerns raised by employers in our submissions. We would, however, stress the fact that the award is an exposure draft only and is susceptible to change during the consultation phase.

New Charter of Rights and Responsibilities for Community Care

The new *Charter of Rights and Responsibilities for Community Care* which came into effect on 1 October applies to all recipients of Commonwealth Government funded community care packages and the people who provide them with those services. The new Charter replaces and clarifies the existing provisions of the *User Rights Principles 1997* made under the Aged Care Act.

It was developed in consultation with a working group, including Pat Sparrow who represented ACSA. She advocated strongly for not only the rights of workers but also the responsibilities of those receiving care.

The charter applies to the three types of community care packages funded by the Government to help older Australians continue to live independently and in their own homes and communities including CACPs, EACH and EACH D packages.

The *Charter of Rights and Responsibilities for Community Care*:

- Outlines rights of recipients and care workers;
- Gives older Australians a greater say in how services are provided to them;
- Allows people to receive the type of care that is most appropriate for them and to receive safe and quality care at all times;
- Allows recipients to have their complaints investigated fairly and confidentially; and
- Provides care workers with the right to have a safe working environment.

Two versions of the charter have been developed: the legislative Instrument version reflects the legislative drafting style and is in the third person. The implementation version for distribution is written in the first person.

The Department has sent the new Charter out to all providers and suggests that a copy should be provided as soon as is reasonably practicable to all current and future care recipients and their representatives. It is working with the Charter Working Group to develop further material for service providers and recipients in the coming months.

To view and download the Charter please visit:

<http://health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ageing-charter-rights.htm>

ACSA Community Care Conference - Call for Papers - Now Closing 16 October **Next Generation: Community Care**

Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre, 2-4 June 2010

The closing date for the Call For Papers has been extended until 5pm Friday 16 October 2009.

Please visit <http://www.acqi.org.au/acsa2010/index.html> and download a brochure with further details.

Leading the Way: Our Vision for Support and Care of Older Australians

The National Aged Care Alliance (NACA), of which ACSA is a member, has prepared this document to present a shared vision for the future support and care of all older Australians so that they can live with dignity and independence.

The challenges and changes needed in aged care have been well documented. Reforms over the last decade have increased the range of services and improved access and quality. However, it is now time for action to substantially change the system and take these reforms to the next level.

The reform agenda presented here transforms aged care in Australia by placing older people at its centre with a choice of timely, accessible and affordable services. In short the NACA vision is built around putting the older person first. http://www.naca.asn.au/Publications/NACA_Vision.pdf

2008-2009 Accommodation Bonds - Annual Prudential Compliance Statement

The 2008-2009 Annual Prudential Compliance Statement (APCS) was issued in August 2009 to all providers who have a financial year ending 30 June 2009. It must be completed, audited (by a registered company auditor) and lodged together with the audit report by 31 October 2009. The reporting date of 31 October 2009 cannot be extended.

Approved providers who fail to comply with the prudential standards, including lodging of the APCS by the due date, or fail to refund bond balances within the statutory timeframes, risk having compliance action taken against them.

Furthermore, providers are reminded that they MUST record the appropriate interest rate that applied at the time to any outstanding bonds in their accommodation bond register. This change to the prudential compliance requirements came into operation in 2007-2008.

Dementia Support Funding

Minister Elliot on 24 September 2009 announced a \$4 million package for additional dementia research, information and support for people living with dementia and their carers. The funding package will provide:

- \$2.5 million for dementia research grants;
- \$1.5 million for community support grants focusing on awareness raising and support for specific needs groups; and
- \$150,000 for the promotion of the Dementia Resource Guide.

Treasury Review of GST Concessions for Not-For-Profit Entities

Treasury is currently reviewing concessions under the GST Act which may have implications for the Not-for-Profit sector. As part of this review, Treasury is calling for comments on proposed changes through their consultative process. The areas concerned are around sub-entities of NFP organisations and concessions applying to them.

For further information please go to the following link and see subsection 2.7 non-Profit Sub-Entities: <http://www.treasury.gov.au/contentitem.asp?NavId=037&ContentID=1613>

Roxon Signals Funding Changes

Canberra will target its \$14.8 billion Medicare system for major savings and crack down on "cowboy" marketing practices for flashy new medical technologies, according to a report in *The Australian*.

It reports that Health Minister Nicola Roxon has issued a strongly worded challenge to doctors, drug and medical device makers to stop resisting reform and to help trim costs by backing more cost-effective technologies.

"It is frustrating that wherever I go I find almost universal agreement that we need reform and to use taxpayer funds more wisely, but it is always with a 'not in my backyard' caveat," Ms Roxon told the annual conference of the Medical Technology Association of Australia in Sydney. "When we spend \$14.8bn a year on the MBS, there are clearly some major savings to be made," she added. Doctors, pathologists and drug companies all suffered cuts to their taxpayer-funded fees in this year's budget, with the government signalling more pain could follow next year to help finance its ambitious health reform agenda. Last month, Kevin Rudd outlined plans to regularly review the effectiveness of subsidised medical treatments and cut funding from those found to be ineffective.

Ms Roxon said the current review of the way Canberra assesses health technologies, to report at the end of this year, would drive the Prime Minister's push for accountability. She said one area of savings would be to wean doctors and patients off the "flashiest technologies" in favour of better-value ones.

Alzheimer's Australia Information

Alzheimer's Australia CEO Glenn Rees wishes to advise National Report readers that the presentation by Constantine Lyketsos at the National Press Club on 23 September during Dementia Awareness Week, as well as his presentation at the ACSA Conference, and the 2010 Budget submission, are all available on the website at www.alzheimers.org.au.

Achieving Quality Use of Medicines in the Community for Palliative and End-Of-Life Care

Deprescribing, opioid-phobia and disposal of unused medicines have been identified as significant issues in palliative care in this report prepared by the National Prescribing Service (NPS) and Palliative Care Australia (PCA).

The report is the first to document a shared understanding of the barriers to the best use of medicines during the end stages of life. Informed by submissions from more than 70 healthcare organisations and individuals, the report describes medicine use issues in palliative care and documents ways in which it can be improved.

www.palliativecare.org.au/Portals/46/Policy/QUM%20in%20palliative%20care%20-%20report%20-%20September%202009.pdf

UK Hospital Death Rates Study

A study of Britain's National Health Service reported in *The Guardian* has revealed there is one day in the year when death rates go up by an average of 6 per cent. In a finding that has implications for hospitals around the world, that day is also when the wards welcome a new intake of junior doctors.

“Researchers from the Dr Foster Unit and the Department of Acute Medicine at Imperial College London say there has been a suspicion for years that more people die on the day the new doctors arrive, but for the first time they have established that it happens - although they say the rise in deaths is very small. They do not blame the doctors' inexperience or confusion, and say it is also possible only the severest cases are admitted in that week because of the changeover.”

"A similar effect has been recorded in the US (known as the 'July phenomenon')," the researchers wrote. www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0007103

Falls Report

The report *Injury deaths, Australia 2004-05*, released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), found a total of 9,775 deaths with the rate of injury-related deaths per 100,000 people being 63.9 for men and 30.3 for women.

Overall, the most common cause of injury-related deaths was unintentional falls, which accounted for 29% of all injury deaths that occurred in 2004–05. People aged 70 years and over accounted for almost 90% of all deaths in this group.

The report found just over 25% of all injury deaths involved some type of fracture, with just on two-thirds of fracture deaths involving a hip fracture.

Injuries to the head were also common, accounting for over 17% of all injury deaths. Of these, 40% were recorded as sustaining some form of intracranial injury.

www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10777

Towards National Indicators of Safety and Quality in Health Care

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care funded the AIHW to develop safety and quality indicators for various health settings, including primary care and community health care services, hospitals, specialised health services (such as palliative care, defence health services etc), and residential aged care.

The resulting report notes that Australia has yet to follow the lead of countries such as the United States of America and United Kingdom which have adopted detailed regular public reporting at the provider level.

The authors reported finding strong evidence that “...making performance information public stimulates quality improvement in the areas where performance is reported to be low. Since quality improvement efforts among the public-report hospitals appear to be significantly greater than in hospitals given only private reports, there is added value to making performance information public.”

The indicators suggested by the report for residential aged care include:

- Oral health in residential aged care
- Falls resulting in patient harm in hospitals and residential aged care facilities
- People receiving a medication review

On the third point, the report notes that: “Without a systematic event-monitoring mechanism many adverse drug incidents go unreported which has implications for the quality of care and patient safety. Discussion needs to occur with the Commission on Safety and Quality and the role of Adverse Medicine Events line and Adverse Drug Reactions Advisory Committee should be considered.

ACSA is currently reviewing this report and will comment on it. The purely medical focus of the indicators may need to be broadened to properly capture the essence of aged care.

www.aihw.gov.au/publications/hse/hse-75-10792/hse-75-10792.pdf

Commonwealth Health Spending Increases

Health and welfare expenditure series no. 37, a new report from the AIHW, shows that after years of decline, the Commonwealth Government’s share of total health funding increased from 42.0% in 2006-07 to 43.2% in 2007-08.

This is the first year that the Commonwealth’s share of health funding has increased since the year 2000-01. www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10954

Residential Care Manual

The new edition of the Residential Care Manual 2009, Edition 1 is now available on the Department of Health and Ageing’s website.

Each residential aged care service should have received an email regarding the new edition and will receive 2 copies of the new manual. The manual has been updated and revised with ACSA feedback on both the proposed content and format.

If you do not receive the updated manual or require any further information, contact the Aged Care Information Line on 1800 500 853.

Preparing for Outbreaks of Gastroenteritis

The Department has sent out a reminder to facilities regarding preparation for possible Gastroenteritis outbreaks. This includes a reminder to access the Gastro Info Kit, which is available at: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ageing-publicat-gastro-kit.htm>

Infection Control Guidelines

In the latest Medical Journal of Australia, the Healthcare Infection Control Special Interest Group (HICSIG) of the Australasian Society for Infectious Diseases (ASID) has proposed standard infection control guidelines for adoption across Australia for patients with influenza-like illnesses. Further information about these guidelines can be found at:

www.mja.com.au/public/issues/191_08_191009/fer10972_fm.html

Care Search Palliative Care Knowledge Network

The Palliative Care Knowledge Network is now producing this newsletter. The newsletter looks at who is using Care Search, what resources can be found on the website and how these resources can help in practice.

Care search welcomes feedback about the Care Search website and how they can make the network better. www.caresearch.com.au/caresearch/

Accommodation Choices for Older Australians and their Families

This new publication from Department of Families, Housing, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs (FAHCSIA), provides older Australians and their families with practical advice and options relating to a large range of issues concerning accommodation choices.

It contains practical information about the many accommodation options available at and beyond retirement, and information on finances and how living arrangements may impact on pension payments. It also provides practical advice on selling the family home whilst on the pension, as well as the implications of renovating, moving in with family or having to live apart from a spouse.

Copies are available by calling FAHCSIA on 1800 050 009 or at www.fahcsia.gov.au/about/news/2009/Pages/accom_choices_200909.aspx

E-Forum on Human Rights and Cultural Diversity

This e-forum was launched by the Australian Human Rights Commission on 22 September. It is the result of a partnership between the Australian Human Rights Commission and the Institute for Cultural Diversity.

This site provides a new way of finding out about what is happening in culturally diverse Australia - in human rights, the arts, justice, research and among agencies working in government, business and the community. The site's other themes include: arts, justice, agencies and research.

<http://www.humanrights.gov.au/> or www.culturaldiversity.net.au

Keeping Connected in the Community

This report was prepared for Anglicare Australia about a group of projects concerned with social inclusion and older people. It represents collaboration between four Anglicare members: Anglicare South Australia, Anglicare Tasmania, Brotherhood of St Laurence and Spiritus.

Anglicare Tasmania undertook to prepare a report reviewing major themes relating to social inclusion and older people, documenting the key elements of the three projects and noting their challenges and achievements.

The closely linked concepts of social inclusion, social exclusion and social isolation are explored in this report.

www.anglicare.asn.au/documents/Sept09_KeepingConnectedintheCommunityReport.pdf

Fact Sheets on Homelessness

Fact Sheets highlighting the Australian, State and Territory Governments' efforts on homelessness are now available.

www.fahcsia.gov.au/about/news/2009/Pages/NationalPartnershipAgreementonHomelessness.aspx

Medicare Australia

Due to planned system maintenance Medicare Australia's Online Claiming system will be unavailable between 8.00pm on Saturday 10 October to 10.00am on Sunday 11 October. During the outage the external status page will also be unavailable.

Medicare Australia apologises for the inconvenience this may cause.

Should you experience any issues after this time, please contact the Aged Care Online Claiming Helpdesk on 1800 195 206 and select option 2.

Conferences

Unlocking the Potential

International Conference on Creative Expression, Communication and Dementia: 22-23 October 2009, Adelaide Convention Centre

This entertaining and informative conference offers everything from Clown Doctors and Japanese theatre to a thought-provoking art exhibition and a kaleidoscope of experts in the creative fields. It's a rare opportunity to discuss the value of active participation in the creative arts for older people and discover new approaches and insights to improve the lives of all seniors.

Keynote Speaker: International researcher, Dr Dalia Gottlieb-Tanaka (Canada).

To find out more, please visit: <http://www.alloccasionsgroup.com/CECD09>

International Federation on Ageing International Conference Melbourne 3-6 May 2010

IFA 2010 has extended the deadline date for abstract submission until 30 November 2009. The five themes that form the program framework - Climate Change; Social Inclusion; Human Rights; Resourcing Change; and Healthy Ageing.

The following speakers have been confirmed for IFA 2010:

Dr John Beard, Dr Joel Sadavoy, Dr Elizabeth Broderick, Mr Allan Hatton-Yeo, Dr Alexandre Kalache, Mr Peter Matwijiw, Dr Katy Auty and Mary Crooks.

Registration for IFA 2010 is now open! Register now to secure your attendance and take advantage of the early bird registration fee. <http://www.ifa2010.org/default.asp>

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