

# *The National Report*

**6 May 2010 – Issue 229**  
**Aged & Community Services Australia**



## *Contents:*

*Next Generation Community Care Conference – Early Bird Extension*  
*Henry Tax Review*  
*Productivity Commission Inquiry*  
*IFA Conference*  
*Guiding Principles for Consumer Directed Care – ACSA Position Paper*  
*Appointments of Interest*  
*HACC Reforms.... But Different in Victoria*  
*Green Aged Care*  
*Community Dementia Grants*  
*People with Dementia more likely to use Respite Care*  
*Palliative Care Community Grants*  
*Taxation Treatment of Solar Power*  
*Regulation and Growth of the Not-for-profit Housing Sector*  
*Age-specific Housing for Low to Moderate Income Older People*  
*Better Pharmacy Services*  
*Aged Care Essentials – Edition 2, 2010*  
*Police Check Renewals Due for Aged Care Workers*  
*Dates for Quarterly Reviews of Care Fees*  
*Review of Disability Support Pension*  
*Veterans' Entitlements Align to Same Sex Reforms*  
*Indigenous Remote Service Delivery (ISRDL) Traineeships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged and Primary Care Services*  
*Staff Development Opportunities around the Globe*  
*How it Works*  
*Join IAHSA's Staf Exchange Listserv*  
*Megatrends and Megashocks: A new View of our Future World*  
*Aged Care Relies on Team Approach*  
*Software Company Commissions Fundamental Aged Care Research*

# Conference Early Bird - One and Only Extension - Now Closes Friday 7 May

## Next Generation Community Care Rewarding, Rethinking, Reshaping

### Show You Care About Community Care

The Prime Minister's talking about it; the Premiers are talking about it; there are even stories in newspapers, on the radio and television.

### Community Care is big news.

This year's Community Care Conference on the Gold Coast is a forum you can't afford to miss as Australia embarks on the most significant health reforms in a generation.

Each of you involved in Community Care know just how important your work is, how much elderly people appreciate the relationships and the care.

Now it's more important than ever to join together – to rethink and reshape the future of Community Care to ensure it continues to be rewarding for you and for elderly Australians who count on your care and support.

Be there to hear Mike Woods, Deputy Chairman of the Productivity Commission elaborate on the terms of reference for the Commission's inquiry into aged care – due to be announced soon as part of the Government's health reforms.

Show how much you care about Community Care – register today to be part of the Next Generation of Community Care.

Program details including an impressive speakers' agenda are available at <http://www.acqi.org.au/events/acsa-2010/acsa-2010-registration-brochure>

## Henry Tax Review

ACSA produced a National *Report Special Edition No. 228* on 3 May on the long awaited Henry Tax Review. It provided an overview, what had been accepted, postponed and rejected, and also considered the sections dealing with aged care funding, superannuation, the not for profit sector, and housing and housing affordability.

If you missed it, it can be viewed on the ACSA website: [www.agedcare.org.au](http://www.agedcare.org.au).

## Productivity Commission Inquiry

Further information about the processes to be followed in this inquiry including key dates and the opportunity to register to receive further information may be found on the Commission's website [www.pc.gov.au](http://www.pc.gov.au) under "View Current Projects."

## IFA Conference

ACSA CEO Greg Mundy attended the opening of the International Federation on Ageing conference in Melbourne which is being hosted by COTA (Vic). A 'who's who' of Australian aged care researchers and many aged care providers, officials and peak body staff attended the opening along with Federal Minister Justine Elliot and the Victorian Minister Lisa Neville.

Delegates heard an opening address from WHO Director of Ageing, (Australian born) Dr John Beard covering ageing in different parts of the world and why we should not see ageing as a crisis, notwithstanding the fact that global ageing still has a long way to go.

## Guiding Principles for Consumer Directed Care - ACSA Position Paper

ACSA has just released a Position Paper on Guiding Principles for Consumer Directed Care (CDC). The introduction explains that CDC is both a philosophy and an orientation to a service delivery option where consumers control and choose the services they get, including what, when, how, where and who provides those services. Individuals will vary in the level of choice and control they want, and the circumstances and capacity of people will also affect the level of control they exercise.

There is not yet an agreed definition of CDC, with interpretations including consumers receiving direct cash payments, individualised service budgets and consumer participation and direction of their service planning. Likewise the scope of CDC is not settled with possibilities ranging from within program services (eg packaged care or respite) to consideration of the wide range of services and supports available to older people to manage their lives (eg Transition Care, continence support, aged and community care, respite etc).

This Position Paper should be considered in conjunction with the ACSA CDC Discussion Paper released in September 2008. Available at [www.agedcare.org.au](http://www.agedcare.org.au).

## Appointments of Interest

- **ANF National Secretary Ged Kearney Elected ACTU President**

Ged Kearney ANF National Secretary has been formally elected unopposed as ACTU President and will take up the role in July this year. *National Report* had earlier reported on her appointment. ACSA congratulates Ged, and believes she will continue to advocate the importance of aged care.

- **Aged Care Commissioner**

Minister Elliot has announced that Adjunct Professor John Kelly AM has been appointed temporarily as the Aged Care Commissioner from 1 May 2010, following the completion of the term of Australia's first Aged Care Commissioner, Ms Rhonda Parker and her decision not to renominate.

“Ms Parker has made a significant contribution to the quality of care and safety of aged care residents through her rigorous scrutiny of the aged care sector. I greatly appreciate her efforts and her contribution,” Minister Elliot said.

The Government has commenced an open selection process for a new Commissioner. Professor Kelly has a broad background in the health sector from both legal and management perspectives with particular expertise in the governance and regulation of aged care. He is an Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery and Health at the University of Technology, Sydney.

The Aged Care Commissioner is a statutory appointment made under the Aged Care Act 1997.

## **HACC Reforms... But Different in Victoria**

COAG has agreed the Commonwealth will have full funding and policy responsibility for aged care. These reforms include a transfer to the Commonwealth of current resourcing for aged care services from the Home and Community Care (HACC) program (except in Victoria). Western Australia has not yet signed the COAG Agreement so their position on HACC is not clear or perhaps final?

The Victorian Government will retain responsibility for jointly funding and managing HACC Services in Victoria, for older people, younger people with disabilities and their carers.

## **Green Aged Care**

Greens Senator Rachel Siewert has released a community discussion paper on aged care reform and is seeking feedback.

The paper suggests some immediate fixes to the current system to maintain its viability (including an immediate injection of funds), but focuses mainly on options for longer term systemic reform – such as establishing an independent national aged care authority, improving the interface between the health and aged care systems, and a greater focus on preventive and community care options to better maintain independence, health and well-being.

The Greens discussion paper raises some interesting questions about how to plan for the future, and they are keen to hear from those with first-hand experience and good ideas. Download the paper and submit comments at: [www.greenmps.org.au/agedcare](http://www.greenmps.org.au/agedcare)

## **Community Dementia Grants**

Minister Elliot announced on 21 April \$3.5 million in grants to fund 82 community projects to provide support and raise awareness for people with dementia and their families. Details of the grant recipients are available at [www.health.gov.au/dementia](http://www.health.gov.au/dementia)

## **People with Dementia More Likely to Use Respite Care**

People with dementia are more likely to use residential respite care than those who don't have dementia, according to a report released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

The study is based on 32,000 people in the Pathways in Aged Care (PIAC) cohort who had an approval for RRC use from an Aged Care Assessment Team in 2003–04. A greater proportion of people with dementia (32%) took up approved RRC than those without dementia (25%).

## Palliative Care Community Grants

Minister Elliot has announced \$14 million to support initiatives that improve palliative care support and services for patients, their families and carers.

- **The Local Palliative Care Grants Program**  
\$11 million for 21 grants of up to \$600,000 for community groups, health and aged care providers and charitable organisations to provide better practice in palliative care for people with a mental illness, Alzheimer's Disease and other dementias; and
- **The Rural Palliative Care Project**  
\$3 million to the Australian General Practice Network (AGPN) for 35 Divisions of General Practice, or consortia of Divisions, to continue to provide coordinated palliative care to patients and families in rural and regional areas.

## Taxation Treatment of Solar Power

There has recently been political and public concern at the taxation treatment of people, including pensioners, who may try and sell their solar power into the electricity grid. Greens Senator Bob Brown said that in NSW, pensioner Don Campbell, who invested \$11,000 in solar panels, has been told by the federal government his pension will be docked if he sells electricity into the grid.

Some ACSA members believe that it would be difficult for their ILU residents who had installed panels to cover their own electrical bills, let alone make money from selling it back to the grid.

However in Private Taxation Ruling Number 92788, the ATO says village residents won't pay tax on solar income as follows:

1. Are credits or payments you receive for power generated by solar panels on your residence, assessable for income tax? *Answer:* No.
2. Are you entitled to either an outright deduction or a decline in value deduction for the cost of the solar panels? *Answer:* No.
3. Are you entitled to any deductions in relation to funds borrowed in order to purchase the solar panels? *Answer:* No.

It is worthwhile going to the website to check the status background and specific circumstances of private legal rulings before assuming it would cover other situations.

<http://www.ato.gov.au/rba/print.asp?doc=/rba/content/92788.htm>

## Regulation and Growth of the Not-For-Profit Housing Sector

On 22 April Housing Minister Tanya Plibersek launched a discussion paper *Regulation and Growth of the Not-for-Profit Housing Sector*.

The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) are hosting a series of public consultations sessions in all capital cities and three regional centres

during May 2010. The sessions will summarise the issues in the discussion paper and enable participants to put forward their views in a structured discussion process. Registration for each consultation can be requested by phoning 1800 919 511.

ACSA will be putting in a submission on the discussion paper, which is available at [http://fahcsia.gov.au/about/news/2010/Pages/housing\\_regulation\\_discussion\\_paper.aspx](http://fahcsia.gov.au/about/news/2010/Pages/housing_regulation_discussion_paper.aspx).

## Age-Specific Housing for Low to Moderate Income Older People

Researchers from the University of New South Wales, the University of Western Sydney, and Murdoch University are seeking assistance with a research project into age-specific housing in Australia, funded by the Australian Urban Housing Research Institute.

The experience and views of providers of age-specific housing would be of significant benefit to the research project and final report. Providers have direct contact with older clients and are in an excellent position to assess the functioning of the age-specific housing more generally.

The project team invites age-specific housing providers across Australia to complete an online survey about their housing. The survey is estimated to take about 10 – 15 minutes of your time and will be online until 10 June 2010. The survey can be found at: <https://www.surveys.unsw.edu.au/survey/154763/5f8d/>

If you would like any further information about this survey or the research project or require assistance in accessing or completing the survey questionnaire, please contact Laura Davy, University of New South Wales: [l.davy@unsw.edu.au](mailto:l.davy@unsw.edu.au), (02) 9385 5571.

## Better Pharmacy Services

The Government and Pharmacy Guild of Australia have finalised the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement, which will provide better pharmacy services for consumers and a stronger role for pharmacy at the front line of health care.

Several of the key features and reforms under the Agreement involve older people, and services involving residential aged care, including:

- Medication-management programs, under which pharmacists provide education and support to patients on how to best use their medications and avoid medication errors. This will include medication reviews for consumers, including at home and in residential aged care, and specific support for patients with chronic conditions, such as Type 2 diabetes and asthma;
- Support for pharmacists to provide dose administration aids to patients who experience difficulty remembering to use their medicines – preventing unnecessary adverse medication events;
- A new patient service charter that outlines the roles and responsibilities of the pharmacist and the pharmacy, and clearly identifies the level of patient care that can be expected from any pharmacy;
- Support for pharmacists to identify, resolve and document medicine-related issues experienced by patients.; and
- Simpler and safer dispensing processes in residential aged care, by eliminating the requirement for separate medication charts and prescriptions.

The Pharmacy Agreement will also continue the rules that determine where pharmacies can be located, and Community Service Obligation arrangements. These arrangements ensure all PBS medicines are made available within 24 hours, no matter where people live.

## Aged Care Essentials - Edition 2, 2010

The 2nd edition of Aged Care Essentials is designed for approved providers and the staff of Australian Government-subsidised residential aged care services. It carries news and announcements about residential aged care services, as well as information about current rates for subsidies, supplements and charges.

An html version of this document is being prepared. If you are having problems downloading the PDF and would like a hard copy sent to you in the post; or if you would like to go on the mailing list to receive the newsletter via email (PDF format) email [agedcare\\_essentials@health.gov.au](mailto:agedcare_essentials@health.gov.au) <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ageing-acsentials-2010-e02.htm>

## Police Check Renewals Due for Aged Care Workers

It is now time to be ensuring that renewal procedures are underway for the three yearly Police Checks, which have been extended in scope since their inception and now cover all staff and contractors who have access to care recipients, regardless of whether they are supervised or unsupervised, and volunteers who have unsupervised access to care recipients. These arrangements also apply to the Australian Government's National Respite for Carers Program.

To assist approved providers with their responsibilities, the Department has developed Police Certificate Guidelines for Aged Care Providers (Guidelines). The Guidelines provide further information including a Police Certificate Register at Appendix 3 for recording police check information. See a link to the Guidelines at:

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ageing-quality-factsheet-policechecks.htm>

Renewal of police checks is a matter between the employee and employer. An approved provider can apply on behalf of an individual for a police check in person or online through their state or territory police department or a CrimTrac accredited agency.

A list of the accredited agencies can be found on the CrimTrac website at [www.crimtrac.gov.au](http://www.crimtrac.gov.au). Where unforeseen circumstances have resulted in a police check expiring, approved providers are responsible for assessing any risks associated with any interim measure, bearing in mind the potential time which may elapse between the expiry of the police check and when the new check is received.

## Dates for Quarterly Reviews of Care Fees

DoHA has advised the quarterly reviews of income tested fees will be conducted on 29 May 2010 - effective from 1 July 2010. Dates for September and January 2011 reviews will be advertised prior to September 2010.

## Review of Disability Support Pension

FaHCSIA Minister, Jenny Macklin and the Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services, Bill Shorten announced on 28 April a review of the Disability Support Pension (DSP) to make it simpler, fairer and sustainable for those who need it.

A key part of the reforms is a comprehensive revision, by medical and disability experts and advocates, of the 22, Impairment Tables that are used to measure how a person's impairment affects their ability to work. The current Impairment Tables were last comprehensively reviewed in 1993 and are no longer consistent with contemporary medical and rehabilitation practices. The revised Impairment Tables will be implemented on 1 January 2012.

As part of the package of DSP reforms, changes will also make it simpler and fairer for people who have a profound disability or a terminal illness to receive the benefit as quickly as possible. At the same time, people who are clearly not eligible will be streamed out of the process earlier and referred to appropriate assistance more quickly.

As a result of this package of reforms an estimated 1,500 people, previously ineligible for DSP, are expected to be granted the pension, and 6,500 claimants, who would otherwise have received DSP, will no longer be eligible.

## Veterans' Entitlements Align to Same Sex Reforms

The Veterans Entitlements Amendment Principles 2010 (Partially Asset-test Exempt Income Stream - Exemption) have been implemented by the Repatriation Commission under subsection 52 (1AB) of the Veterans Entitlements Act 1986 (the Act).

The purpose of the Amendment Principles is to amend the Veterans' Entitlements Principles 2005 to incorporate amendments to the Act made by the Same-Sex Relationships Act 2008 (Equal Treatment in Commonwealth Laws – General Law Reform) to eliminate any possible discrimination against same-sex couples. The word "spouse" is now replaced by "partner".

## Indigenous Remote Service Delivery (ISRSD) Traineeships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged and Primary Care Services

The ISRSD traineeships will provide funding to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aged care and primary health care services in remote locations to employ Indigenous people as trainees in business administration. DoHA will also arrange for the delivery of fully funded culturally appropriate and targeted training to suit the business and administration needs of aged and primary health care services.

Closing Date: 5:00 pm on 4 June 2010. For more information and to download documents, click on the link. <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/grant3040910>

## Staff Development Opportunities Around the Globe

As an IAHSA member, ACSA is part of the world's largest network of ageing service providers. In order to build on current relationships and foster the further development of connections among IAHSA members, we have created the International Staff Exchange.

IAHSA has established a Staff Exchange Network -an exciting leadership development opportunity for aged care staff around the world. Staff members work in a facility in another country and gain valuable insight from the global community. Benefits to participants include:

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

## How it Works

The programme is designed for leadership development of staff. Participating facilities will determine the best mode for sharing expenses. Typically, the host facility takes responsibility for all expenses for visitors on site, including lodging, meals, and ground transportation, usually using facility guest rooms and dining operations. Translation services, if needed, may also be provided by the host. The visiting organization is usually responsible for travel to and from the site.

## Join IAHSA's Staff Exchange Listserv

This listserv connects members who are interested in hosting or participating in a staff exchange. <http://www.iahsa.net/internalpage.aspx?id=7426>

## Megatrends and Megashocks: A New View of our Future World

A new report from CSIRO on 23 April identifies five global megatrends and eight megashocks that are changing the world.

“Megatrends are collections of interlinked trends that will change the way people live and the science and technology products that they demand,” report co-author CSIRO’s Dr James Moody says.

“Megashocks are hard-to-predict risks defined by sudden and significant events, like the Asian tsunami and the GFC.

“As well as informing science activities within CSIRO, we hope that this report will help inform Australian industry, government and community decisions. Our aim is to take a fresh approach to understanding the future by using new data, methods, technology and ideas.”

“We welcome comment and input from experts and stakeholders to this work in progress.” The megatrends presented in the report are based on analyses of over 100 trends contributed by leading scientists and business development staff across

CSIRO. <http://www.csiro.au/news/Megatrends-and-megashocks-a-new-view-of-our-future-world.html>

## Aged Care Relies on Team Approach

Recent media articles regarding the qualifications and quality of workers in the aged care system fail to fully acknowledge the importance of vocational education and training (VET) in meeting the needs of aged care service delivery.

“Caring for our aged requires a variety of skills and qualifications, and therefore, a variety of learning and development activities and experience” said Judy MacGraw, CEO of the Community services and Health Industry Skills Council.

“Providing quality health and community services requires a balanced mix of nursing staff, allied health staff and support staff.

“People who have attained their qualifications in Certificate III and IV in Aged Care play a specific role within the broader aged care matrix.

“The recent changes to the content of the Certificate IV in Aged Care will enable support worker roles to advance their skills in terms of service delivery and quality through the development of key “skills sets” for:

- Dementia planning and coordination
- High support and complex care
- Team leadership

“Aged care stakeholders are right to be concerned that there are decreasing numbers of nurses working in aged care. However, in themselves, qualified aged care support workers play a valuable role as part of the broader team.

“As the workplace needs change, our workforce skills will need to change as well. This requires a greater emphasis by employers, unions, training providers, funders and policy organisations to increase the skills and qualifications of our workforce,” she said.

One example of where this need is already being addressed is through the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) funding for Certificate III and IV in Aged Care and Enrolled/Division 2 nursing qualifications as well as targeted training in specialist areas such as dementia support.

“The CS&H ISC supports targeted skill development through the new CHC08 Community Services Training Package “skill sets”. In the past the training system has funded full qualifications only. Into the future the system also needs to also support funding for targeted skill sets as part of improving the capacity of the aged care team,” said Judy MacGraw.

[https://www.cshisc.com.au/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=508&Itemid=230](https://www.cshisc.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=508&Itemid=230)

## Software Company Commissions Fundamental Aged Care Research

AutumnCare, a privately owned Australian-based software company operating in the aged care area has announced an extensive research project with the University of Sydney’s Health Informatics Research and Evaluation Unit to undertake a fundamental study into aged care processes.

“Despite the widespread community concern about the viability and sustainability of aged care services, there is little evidence about what can be done to improve its efficiency and effectiveness and enhance the quality of care provided to residents,”. Head of the Unit, Professor Johanna Westbrook, said.

“Residential aged-care facilities remain a largely neglected area of research investigation and this project will make an important contribution to providing new evidence about work processes and how information technology might support improvements in care.”

Stuart Hope, MD AutumnCare, said that empirical data is required to enable process improvement decisions to be made to help the Aged Care industry.

**Aged & Community Services Australia**  
**Level 1, 36 Albert Road, South Melbourne Vic 3205**  
**Ph: 03 9686 3460**  
**Email: [info@agedcare.org.au](mailto:info@agedcare.org.au) [www.agedccare.org.au](http://www.agedccare.org.au)**