

ACSA welcomes debate on reforms for aged care

Australia's peak body for aged care services has welcomed the Government's response to reforms proposed by the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission.

Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA) Acting CEO Pat Sparrow commended the Government for its commitment to genuine reform of the health sector of which aged care is an increasingly important element.

"Aged care as we know it must change to cater for the dramatic rise in the numbers of older Australians in the coming years," Ms Sparrow said.

"The current system isn't working to meet existing needs. Major reform is critical if we are to have the ability to provide quality care and support for older Australians when and where they need it."

Ms Sparrow said how the system was funded now, and into the future, had to involve all stakeholders in the sector including consumers, providers, carers and Government.

"Australia needs an innovative and creative approach to providing and funding aged care. These reforms provide that opportunity. We have to get it right and part of that process involves a vigorous debate on the specific recommendations and transition planning to allow consumers, providers and Government to manage any reforms.

"A healthier future for all Australians, including older people, is a laudable goal.

"While we have to recognize and work within global and national economic constraints, we must prioritize the care of older Australians strategically, effectively and compassionately.

"We look forward to an expansive and robust debate and welcome the opportunity, along with leading consumer groups, to make a significant contribution to creating a system providing high quality sustainable services and real choice for consumers."

Aged and Community Services Australia is the national peak body representing more than 1,100 church and charitable and community based organisations providing accommodation and care services to over 700,000 older people, people with a disability and their carers.