



COAG meetings leave aged care sector disappointed

Aged & Community Services SA & NT (ACS) welcomes the historic hospital announcements arising from this week's COAG meetings, but is concerned the Government has not begun to address the fundamental reforms required to deliver the aged care sector from crisis.

While many of the initiatives agreed to by COAG will contribute to improved health and services, "real reform in the health and hospital sector will not be effective without resolving the critical issues facing the aged care industry," said Peta Braendler, Acting CEO of ACS.

From yesterday's meeting, it is unclear how aged care will be delivered differently under the new plan; for example extra beds will not be viable if the costs of care are not addressed. It seems the only difference is that the system will now be entirely funded by the Federal Government.

"COAG must move its focus to aged care priorities such as proper funding (capital and recurrent), appropriate indexation for care subsidies and ways to attract and retain staff to the industry.

"If we are to have a sustainable aged care system that provides access and choice in quality care and services into the future, meeting the needs of our rapidly ageing population, funding has to meet real costs," Ms Braendler said.

The sector awaits the opportunity for input to the Productivity Commission inquiry, to help ensure sustainable reform so our frail elderly can have access to, and choice about, the care they receive.

Acting CEO Peta Braendler is available for media comment: phone (08) 8338 7111 or mobile 0408 231 047.

Aged and Community Services SA & NT Inc (ACS) is the peak body providing strategic leadership to 95% of the not-for-profit aged and community sector in South Australia and members in the Northern Territory.