



# AGED CARE INDUSTRY COUNCIL MEDIA RELEASE



Peak Council of Australia's Aged Care Providers

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## NURSING HOMES OF THE FUTURE WON'T BE BUILT

Aged care industry leaders have told the Federal Government that, without sweeping changes, the nursing homes we need to cater for an ageing population will not be built.

In the lead up to the weekend summit they called on the Government to match the Opposition's preparedness to look at new ways of financing aged care buildings.

The call is supported by Alan Graham, CEO Aged and Community Services SA &NT who has added that many aged care providers have advised him that they are holding off until government deals with the problem.

"We need fresh thinking on this issue. We have had a series of patch-up solutions to the problems of charging for aged care accommodation. These date back to the former Government's back down on refundable accommodation deposits in 1997," commented Mr Graham.

"None of these patch-ups, including the measures that came into effect this March, address the two fundamental issues of raising sufficient capital to cover the cost of buildings and seeking contributions from residents on an equitable basis." he added. "What is needed is a combined contribution from Government and the resident."

ACS SA &NT believes that whether this is paid in the form of a weekly rental or through the refundable deposit system known as Accommodation Bonds is less important than the principle of an adequate and equitable payment.

"What is important is that a 'safety net', is maintained that ensures that those who can't afford to pay are treated the same as those that can" Mr Graham commented.

This issue has been made sharper by the ending last month of a temporary interim accommodation payment from the Government of \$3.50 per day and industry fears that subsidies for care will not be properly indexed this year with no commitment having been made to continuing a 1.75% 'top up' payment after June this year.

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