

**ATTENTION  
PREMIER RANN**

16 April

The Hon Mike Rann  
Premier  
South Australia

Dear Premier

All Australians have a vested interest in a cost effective, efficient health system that promotes wellbeing and provides timely treatment in well-equipped, properly staffed hospitals, and support care to aid recovery.

But no one's interests are served when State and Territory leaders are held hostage by the Federal Government and forced into agreement on reforms which have not been properly evaluated.

As Premier of South Australia, Aged & Community Services SA & NT (ACS), the peak not for profit organisation for aged care residential and community services, urges you to consider the plight of thousands of older residents in this state whose needs for care and support have been sidelined in the debate on health reform.

Real reform in the health and hospital sector will not be effective without resolving the critical issues facing the aged care sector.

ACS welcomes the Federal Government's recent commitment to address the problems. The initiatives announced on Monday this week are a first step on the road to reform. As the Prime Minister announced, the Productivity Commission inquiry will "set out the path for further structural reform". The sector eagerly awaits the opportunity to articulate its views so that sustainable reform can be implemented and our older citizens can have access to, and choice about, the care they receive.

ACS supports a truly integrated system for aged care provided by one level of government – the Federal Government – and welcomes reforms around improved medical care and primary health services.

**However, the key issues of funding (capital and recurrent) and appropriate indexation for care subsidies have been ignored by the Federal Government.**

If we are to have a sustainable aged care system that provides access and choice in quality care and services now and into the future, funding has to match the real costs. Nothing in the Federal Government's plan addresses the shortfall in income to meet the increasing costs of building and providing care and services.

We urge you to take full stock of the Government's proposals for older people and not be drawn into political machinations at the expense of the older residents of South Australia.

On behalf of thousands of valued and valuable older South Australian residents please do not accept anything less than a commitment to real funding for aged care as you prepare for the next meeting of COAG.

Alan Graham  
Chief Executive Officer

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