

Alzheimer's Australia invites you



Productivity Commission Report consultation: **Caring for Older Australians**

We want to hear about your experiences and what you think are the changes required to better meet the needs of people with dementia.

You don't need to have read the report to attend.

By attending the consultation you will have the opportunity to:

- Provide your ideas for the future of aged care, particularly from the perspective of someone living with dementia;
 - Highlight any of your concerns; and
 - Help us to inform the government on your views

GLBTI Perspectives

25 October 2011

12.00pm to 2.00pm

Alzheimer's Australia SA, 27 Conyngham St, Glenside

Your RSVP is essential

RSVP by 5:00pm Thursday 20 October 2011 Phone (08) 8372 2100 or
email saresourcecentre@alzheimerssa.asn.au

Before attending, we encourage you to think about the following questions:

- What are people living with dementia looking for in aged care reform?
- What concerns you most in access to community and residential care services?
- Do you have particular concerns around access to information, assessment and services?
- What types of support and services do you need to assist you in your role as a carer?
- Are there health issues that need to be addressed in the reforms? (e.g. timely diagnosis, care in hospitals, dementia risk reduction and dementia research)

Additional documents are attached. The full report can be found at: www.pc.gov.au

If you have any feedback or queries you are encouraged to send an email to consultations@alzheimers.org.au

We invite you also to complete a short survey:

www.surveymonkey.com/s/PCconsultations and let us know your views.

Attachment A: Alzheimer's Australia's overview of the report

The Productivity Commission (PC) is the Australian Government's independent research and advisory body on a range of economic and social issues affecting the welfare of Australians. In August the government released the final report from the PC called '*Caring for Older Australians*'.

Alzheimer's Australia supports the approach to aged care reform which has been proposed by the Productivity Commission. The key elements of the recommendations are:

- Greatly expanded access to services based on an assessed 'entitlement to services'
- Greater emphasis on community care
- Better access to information for consumers
- Models of consumer directed care that empowers older people and their family carers to decide when, where and how the services they need will be delivered
- Changes to the user pay system to create a more sustainable aged care system
- Improved access to end of life care, advance care planning and palliative care.

Introducing 'entitlement to services' would be a significant change to the aged care system. It means that a person assessed as having a need would have access to care; currently this is not necessarily the case as services are effectively rationed in the current system.

There is no recommendation in the report that addresses dementia yet dementia is the core business of aged care. Over 60 % of people with dementia live in the community and 37% receive no formal care. The majority of residents in aged care have dementia; it is the most disabling of all conditions among older people and is one of the main causes of institutionalisation.

There are a number of issues in the Report that need to be addressed in the implementation of the reforms. These include:

- A funding model which recognises the extra costs of dementia care
- Investment in dementia research and prevention to reduce the future numbers of people with dementia
- The importance of culturally appropriate care for people with dementia
- Ensuring that individuals with younger onset dementia have access to care that meets their needs
- Ensuring the needs of individuals with severe behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia are met.

Alzheimer's Australia's main concern is that an aged care reform response that does not address dementia at its heart will not be successful.

To recognise dementia as a priority would require a comprehensive plan that recognises the dementia as a major chronic disease that has impacts on the whole of the health care system. Like any other chronic disease dementia needs to be addressed through promoting awareness, investing in research and prevention, reducing time to diagnosis and improving access to high quality dementia care and investing in prevention and research.

Attachment B: The Productivity Commission's overview of the report from a consumer perspective

Schedule B – What do the Proposed Reforms Mean? (*Caring for Older Australians*, 2011, pg LI)

The Commission's recommendations will significantly improve the quality and quantity of aged care services for older Australians. As a result of the reforms, older Australians would:

- have ready access to general advice on ageing issues, as well as specific information about their local aged care services. This advice and information would be available from a range of sources that all draw from a national information platform run by the Australian Seniors Gateway Agency (the Gateway)
- be assessed for their care and support needs by the Gateway. They could also go directly to community-support services (such as meals delivery and community transport) which would continue to be block funded (or receive a Gateway referral to them)
- receive an entitlement to services that matched their needs, and be advised of the price of those services and the details of approved providers in their local area
- be offered a care coordination service run by the Gateway and a case management service when needed
- have a single, updated, aged care electronic record that means that they do not have to keep repeating their history and personal circumstances
- benefit from a new intermediate community care package between CACP and EACH as part of the transitional arrangements
- choose their preferred provider (quantity limits on providers having been lifted), having regard to the quality of services being offered, including the professional and relationship skills of the personal carers, the cultural awareness and languages spoken and the ability to negotiate timing of service delivery
- seek a reassessment of their needs if there is a material change in their circumstances
- be subject to a fair and comprehensive financial means test — based on income and assets — to determine their level of co-contribution for approved care and support services (whether in their home or in residential care), with a safety net for those of limited means and with a lifetime stop-loss for care co-contributions
- have access to a government-backed Australian Aged Care Home Credit scheme with a no negative equity guarantee to meet their care and accommodation costs if their wealth is held mostly in the form of their house while protecting the share of the equity held by a spouse/partner
- be able to retain their house and be confident that their spouse, dependent child or other 'protected persons' would continue to be able to live in that house, rather than be forced to sell their home in order to go into residential care, as is the case for some at present
- if in residential care, pay a basic daily fee (currently set at 84 per cent of the single age pension), pay their care co-contribution, and pay a daily periodic accommodation charge or equivalent bond, with a safety net for those of limited means

- retain their Age Pension if they sell their home to move to alternative accommodation (such as a retirement village, serviced apartment, or a residential care facility) and pay a lower capital sum or daily charge by investing the excess proceeds from the sale in a Government-guaranteed Australian Age Pensioners Savings Account scheme
- benefit from measures to improve the quality of aged care services, including through a quality assurance framework, better evidence and information, and a more competitive environment facing approved providers
- receive enhanced access to general practitioners at residential aged care facilities through an increased Medicare rebate
- be given every opportunity to maintain or regain functional independence (including reablement)
- be free to choose whether to purchase additional aged care services (including accommodation) beyond the minimum approved entitlement and meet the associated costs themselves
- be confident that the Australian Aged Care Commission is monitoring the quality of care by providers and the price of residential accommodation during the transition period to protect against providers exploiting supply shortages and is an independent avenue for examining consumer complaints
- receive improved access to information about advance care directives, with a link to the proposed electronic records
- get better palliative and end-of-life care through an assessed entitlement from the Gateway.