

Submission  
No 37

**INQUIRY INTO SERVICES PROVIDED OR FUNDED BY  
THE DEPARTMENT OF AGEING, DISABILITY AND  
HOME CARE**

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**Date received:** 6/08/2010

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**Submission to the New South Wales Legislative Council Inquiry into services provided or funded by the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care**

made on behalf of  
**the Australian Association of Gerontology (NSW Division).**

The Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) is concerned with all issues affecting our ageing population including factors affecting people ageing with disability and those people who care for them. Our aim is to expand knowledge of ageing, with the purpose of improving the experience of ageing. We are Australia's largest multidisciplinary professional association of people who work in, or have an interest in, ageing. Our diverse membership includes health professionals, academics, government representatives, providers and staff of aged care services, policy analysts, support workers, researchers from the social and medical sciences, administrators, voluntary agencies, students, and older people themselves. The NSW Division of the AAG appreciates the opportunity to contribute to this important inquiry into *Services provided or funded by Department of Ageing Disability and Home Care* and has noted issues of relevance to the Inquiry below.

- We would like to make a strong recommendation regarding the value and importance of research for providing an evidence base for service provision, for evaluating the equity, effectiveness and efficiency of services, and for planning for future service needs. We argue that such research needs to involve a number of disciplines and research approaches including research using administrative and linked data. For example, recent projects using Home and Community Care data have provided information on barriers to access and effective models of care for older men (MacDonald et al. 2009 <http://www.dadhc.nsw.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/08E45F97-0A09-4915-9FE4-AB6E1CC4243E/5242/FINALREPORTHACC SERVICES AND OLDER MEN.pdf>) and opportunities for health promotion and disease prevention for people receiving HACC services (Jorm et al. Home and community care services in Australia: a major opportunity for preventative health care? *BMC Geriatrics* 2010, 10:26MJA 2010). Copies of these documents are available on request from [Julie.byles@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:Julie.byles@newcastle.edu.au)
- There is also a great need for more research into effective provision of community care in Australia, and these needs have been well defined in the National Community Care Research Agenda developed by Aged & Community Services Australia (ACSA), the Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) and the ARC/NHMRC Research Network in Ageing Well (RNAW) and released at the ACSA National Community Care conference in June 2010.
- We note the mismatch between the increasing need for ageing and disability services and the available funding for these services. Inflation, increase in pay rates and other cost increases have further eroded the ability of these services to meet the increasing demand for them, with consequences for service quality and timeliness.
- With increasing numbers of older people, a lack of quality and timely services will also increase pressure on the state funded health system.
- The NSW Division of the AAG emphasise the need for a whole of government and whole of society approach. This approach should encompass appropriate housing, transport, assistive technologies, health and other infrastructure, as well as aged care and disability services.
- We also believe that services should be about prevention and enablement as well as assistance and care.
- We further support and endorse the principles specified in the National Aged Care Alliance Vision for Support and Care of Older Australians ([http://www.naca.asn.au/Publications/NACA\\_Vision.pdf](http://www.naca.asn.au/Publications/NACA_Vision.pdf)).
- We would also refer the Inquiry to the intersection between the TOR for the NSW Legislative Council and those of the Productivity Commission public inquiry into caring for older Australians <http://www.pc.gov.au/projects/inquiry/aged-care>

The AAG appreciates that there will be significant changes with respect to delivery of Home and Community Care Services to older people from 2012, with responsibility for these services transferring from the states to the Commonwealth government. However we also believe that a whole of government approach and a health focus on the provision of services for older people requires that consideration of older people's needs must remain within the domain of State governments as well, notwithstanding the HACC changes to come. The NSW Division of the AAG would welcome the opportunity to provide advice and input into ensuring optimum care and quality of life for older people in NSW, particularly during this period of transition and service evolution.

Contact details and further information  
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