



HammondCare

An independent Christian charity

24 April 2013

The Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Living Longer Living Better Reform Bills

HammondCare supports the proposed legislation which has been drafted to implement the Living Longer Living Better reform package.

In particular HammondCare supports the introduction of an Aged Care Pricing Commissioner (ACPC) to approve accommodation payments which exceed the maximum amount determined by the Minister. This measure will provide clarity and protection for consumers and is to be applauded.

However, HammondCare is concerned that the 1 January 2014 commencement date for the ACPC (as outlined in the Aged Care (Living Longer Living Better) Bill 2013) will have the unintended consequence of deferring important construction throughout the aged care sector. The uncertainty caused by this delay is preventing aged care providers from accessing the vital bank finance needed to construct new facilities for which 'Level 3' approval is being sought.

So as not to defer the construction of vital new residential aged care buildings, we strongly recommend that the commencement date for the ACPC be brought forward to 1 August 2013. To avoid creating an excessive administrative burden, HammondCare proposes that in this initial period, from 1 August 2013 to 31 December 2013, the ACPC would only receive approval applications for new buildings.

It is therefore critical that the relevant legislation be passed during this parliament.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the proposed legislation with the Committee and would be happy to provide further information if required.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Stephen Judd
CEO

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