

Our Ref: 375/01/01

Ask For: Peter Mangan

28th July 2004

The Secretary
Senate Community Affairs References Committee
Suite S1 59
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

RE Issues in the Aged Care Industry

Dear Sir/Madam

At a recent council meeting, many issues were highlighted as significantly impacting on the delivery of our Home and Community Care programs

Meeting the needs of our older consumers presents many challenges for service providers with shortfalls in various funding sources impacting on the general service delivery of generic services. These funding shortfalls, fall in many areas, ranging from insufficient growth funds to meet the need of our consumers, to cost shifting between the tiers of government.

Due to the increasing costs of service delivery and the resultant service cuts, the Community Aged Care Program (CAPS) only delivers virtually the same amount of hours as subsidised HACC programs. From a service delivery perspective, it has become evident the funds allocated to Community Aged Care Packages are insufficient to meet the real needs of the consumer. Increasing the numbers of CAPS packages is necessary, however the appropriate level of resources needs to be allocated to each package in order to fully meet needs.

Extensive waiting lists exist within the Veterans Home Care program for basic service, therefore eligible Veterans are presenting to HACC services inappropriately, thus placing additional pressure on HACC services, resulting in waiting lists for all to endure, which would not be happening if the Veterans Home Care program assumed it's designated responsibilities

The increasing cost of funding transportation within the HACC program is becoming a concern to providers of community-based services. In rural remote areas, this overhead involved with service delivery is continuing to increase, thus placing additional financial pressure on HACC services.

The Safety Alarm Program, Personal Alert Victoria, has extensive waiting lists. In Baw Baw Shire there is a waiting list of up to 12 months for a safety alarm, which has an alarming impact on the capacity of our consumers to remain living independently in their own home.

Extensive under- resourcing of the Aged Care Assessment Service has had a significant impact on the Home and Community Care Service in Baw Baw Shire. Clients are waiting lengthy periods of time before receiving a Comprehensive Assessment via ACAS and with the current intake system, phone contact is inadequate and problematic, thus compounding the existing problem

These issues collectively impact on the ability to provide quality services to those people most in need within our community. Adequate resourcing of the above programs must be addressed in order for the Aged Care Sector to work more cohesively

Yours Faithfully

Peter Mangan
Director
Corporate and Community Services
Baw Baw Shire Council