
UnitingCare Australia welcomes ALP call for transparency in aged care funding cuts

UnitingCare Australia today welcomed the call by the Australian Labor Party for the Government to publicly release its modelling on the impact of the funding cuts to aged care.

In its May Budget, the Government cut funding to the complex area of health care element of the Aged Care Funding Instrument by \$1.2 billion over four years. This cut was in addition to cuts of more than \$400 million announced by the Government in December 2015.

Independent modelling by Ansell Strategic showed that the cuts would reduce the funding to the sector as a whole by more than \$2.5 billion and by an average of 11 per cent or by \$6,655 per resident per year.

UnitingCare Australia Acting National Director Martin J. Cowling welcomed the call by the ALP for the Government to release its data, and urged the Government and the ALP to work cooperatively with the aged care sector to develop more appropriate funding models.

“We greatly appreciate that the ALP has heard the message that the cuts are far deeper and more significant than estimated by the Government and will seriously jeopardise the quality of care. We look forward to the support of the ALP in halting the cuts and seriously examining the true cost of care into the future,” Mr Cowling said.

“You simply cannot take away that level of funding and not have major negative consequences for both the quality of care of individuals and the health sector as a whole.”

Mr Cowling said that UnitingCare Australia was willing to work with the Government to develop more sustainable funding models that would not reduce the level of care available to people with complex care needs in residential care.

“We are disappointed that the Government has not released its modelling, as access to that data would help us to work with Government to develop more robust funding models that will better support the growth in demand for aged care,” said Mr Cowling.

Mr Cowling said the aged care sector not only delivers vital services to people at the most vulnerable point in their lives but it also supports the broader health sector by providing tailored services outside of the highly pressured acute care system and contributes more than \$13.5 billion to the economy each year and employs more than 350,000 people.

UnitingCare Australia is one of Australia’s largest Not for Profit aged care providers, delivering residential and in-home care services Australia wide.