



## **BLACKALL RANGE CARE GROUP INC.**

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Patrons: Mr Thady Ryan; Mr Peter Wellington, MP

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Mr Steve Powis  
Director Contract Management  
Home and Community Care Program  
Department of Communities  
GPO Box 806  
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Dear Mr Powis

### **Re: Return of HACC Service Agreement documents for Blackall Range Care Group Inc**

Attached please find both signed copies of the Service Agreement between the Department of Communities and the Blackall Range Care Group Inc for the period 1 July 2010 until 30 June 2012(with proviso).

The Blackall Range Care Group Committee of Management wish to express their very grave concerns regarding the proposed changes to the HACC Program. These concerns were first expressed to the Department of Communities and to the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing via our local elected members, and to the HACC Policy Unit, when the changes were first mooted with COAG.

It is clear from what is stated in the letter accompanying the contract and in the contract itself, (and also by what is not stated in relation to State funding), that our organisation and every other HACC service in Australia is at risk of losing one third of our HACC funding to provide services to our clients.

We understand from what is said, that the HACC Program is to transition to the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing some time between 1 July 2011 and 1 July 2012, with only the Commonwealth component (66%) of the funding. No information has been provided regarding the other one third of the funding provided by State governments, except that the State will be responsible for younger people with a disability. There is no guarantee that this funding will be channeled through the existing HACC organisations which currently deliver services with these funds.

Under HACC Service Agreements including the new Agreement returned with this letter, there has been no requirement for organisations to differentiate between aged clients and younger clients with a disability, with the consequence that organisations have great diversity in the age spread of the demand for HACC services in their area and are able to meet that demand.

The area in which the Blackall Range Care Group delivers services, has a high proportion of aged care clients because the area has been a popular retirement destination for the last 20 years.

*Caring for the frail elderly and younger people with a disability of the Blackall Range  
A Home and Community Care (HACC) funded Project.*

If it is indeed inevitable that the HACC program has to be split in this way, with 2/3 of the funds being accountable to the Dept. of Health and Ageing to be spent on Aged Care and 1/3 to be accounted for to Disability Services Queensland and delivered as services to younger people with a disability, there are considerable risks for clients and services in the process to achieve that outcome.

Our questions are:

- Will this be managed at a program level, e.g. to put it simply - will BRCG receive another organisation's Aged Care funds, and give some of our disability funds to them in some kind of Program managed shuffle?
- When will organisations be consulted about potential issues in the transition process?
- The job of transition for such a large and entrenched program will be very considerable, and will involve the lives of the most vulnerable people in our community. What will happen if the funding realignment is not completed in 2 years? It will be a major disaster for clients, services and governments, if no funds are available to provide services for existing clients dependent on those services at 1 July 2012 or earlier.

The Blackall Range Care Group has been delivering Home and Community Care services for the last 23 years. The organisation is proud of its' history of HACC service delivery, and has had an excellent relationship with the program. Service delivery growth for the organisation has averaged 21.2% each year for the last 4 years mainly because of the high aged population in the area. This demographic and its consequent growth in demand will further exacerbate our position. We are extremely concerned about this transition, and are committed to safeguarding the welfare of our clients and the continuity of the services that they rely on. We hope that the Department understands our perspective, and is also committed to safeguarding the welfare of clients.

Yours sincerely

Mark Gardner  
President  
Blackall Range Care Group Inc  
/ 07 /2010