



21 March 2011

Productivity Commission
Email submission to
agedcare@pc.gov.au

Dear Madam / Sir,

We wish to make the following submission in response to the *Caring for Older Australians - Productivity Commission Draft Report January 2011*. (PC Report)

Overall we congratulate the Productivity Commission on production of a timely, accurate and comprehensive report. Generally, we agree with the intent of the majority of proposed recommendations. We would however, like to comment on the following themes:

Accommodation Fees and Charges:

The report infers a move towards a true market based system however there seems to be still quite a regulated role by the AACRC which needs to be further clarified. Their role re: supported residents is agreed. However their role re: monitoring of accommodation charges and bonds for non-supported seems paradoxical to allowing market forces to determine supply and demand. Any involvement of AACRC re: non supported must be transparent and be a guiding role only to allow a market system to develop.

Proportion of accommodation for supported Residents:

We are a stand alone private provider who generally operates approx 34-41% ratio of supported residents. (We also provide many 'extra services' for no extra charge). We wonder if this model of care will be able to be continued under any changes proposed and therefore making us unable to meet 'market forces' for supported care.

We suggest an incentive/sliding scale be introduced for concessional resident supplement for above the *regional ratio* to replace the current system.

.Simple and transparent processes for the trading of supported resident target ratios would also be needed.



Aged Care Workforce:

Education and training of staff is clearly crucial to our business. Draft Recommendation 11.4 should be expanded to include the “funding of a partnership of teaching aged care services with nominated Registered Training Organizations (RTO)”. We cater for many aged care worker trainees and offer placements varying between 80 -200 hours. We educate, train, supervise and provide a valuable positive placement. The RTO provides the theory, receives the funding, yet takes little responsibility re: student placement. A more equitable training system would include an incentive for providers, such as occurs with traineeships, to actively seek student placements and work in partnership with RTO’s to improve the practical learning environments currently offered.

Australian Seniors Gateway Agency:

The proposed agency is a one stop shop for consumers and promises to be the answer to all our current woes. Like any national scheme it is not the rhetoric which will determine the success but how the rhetoric transfers into practice. We refer to the very different approaches and advice given by ACATT /APATT teams over the years to demonstrate the point. The recruitment and training of all Gateway Agency staff to ensure a consistent approach is vital to its success especially in areas such as initial ACFI assessment and financial assessment.

Thank you for allowing us to comment.

Yours sincerely

Helen Jennings and Michael Greaves
Proprietors