



**HEALTHCARE  
CHAPLAINCY COUNCIL  
OF VICTORIA Inc**  
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21<sup>st</sup> March 2011

Ms Sue Macri AM  
Associate Commissioner  
"Caring for Older Australians" Report  
Productivity Commission  
Email: agedcare@pc.gov.au

Dear Ms Macri

On behalf of the Healthcare Chaplaincy Council of Victoria Incorporated (HCCVI), this letter is a submission to the Productivity Commission's Report "Caring for Older Australians".

I have recently stepped into the new position of Manager - Aged care & Community Services at HCCVI. Time has not permitted a thorough response to the "Caring for Older Australians" draft report but I wanted to make the Commission aware of our organisation and our willingness to contribute or be consulted on matters relevant to the final report.

HCCVI is the peak body, funded by the Dept of Health, which provides leadership and education in the strategic development, promotion and provision of spiritual care, chaplaincy and pastoral care in the Victorian healthcare sector. This includes consultation with healthcare services, the development of policies, standards and best practice guidelines and providing grants for new initiatives in research, pilot projects, education and training projects. HCCVI is an organisation member of ACCV.

In 2008 the HCCVI commenced an aged care special interest group for those involved with the development and delivery of pastoral/spiritual care needs in the aged care sector. In the past year the HCCVI was successful in receiving a funding grant through the DoH Aged Care Division, Count Us In! projects. This project, due for completion in April 2011, will result in an education package for staff and volunteers in the residential aged care sector enabling identification and response to the spiritual care needs of residents and their families. The HCCVI has also provided input in the development of the DoH Wellbeing resources for the aged care sector highlighting the significance of attending to spiritual care as a component of providing holistic care.

This preliminary work in the sector has highlighted the lack of strategic planning for the development of pastoral and spiritual care services in aged care. The HCCVI has responded to this with the creation of this new position to focus attention in this sector. We are currently undertaking a needs analysis and audit of extant models for spiritual care service delivery that will be followed up with the development of best practice models and guidelines for both residential and community based care. This is an acknowledgement of a growing awareness of the link between good health and wellbeing and a holistic approach to care that includes spiritual care. The Victorian Department of Health Aged Care Division has also identified that quality of care must include appropriate identification



and response to spiritual needs recognising that "spirituality is an important predictor of quality of life" (National Ageing Research Institute, March 2008 - Aug 2008).

It will be important to ensure that the language used in the final draft of the "Caring for Older Australians" Report to reflect a person centred approach to care is inclusive of spiritual as well as psychological, social and medical aspects of care. This is in line with the Federal Governments' Aged Care Act (1997) that legislates for and takes seriously the need for spiritual care of older people. It is also in line with the Aged Care Standards set by the Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency, ACHS EQUiP Standards and Australian Palliative Care Standards.

HCCVI is happy to consult with and advise the Commission about the spiritual care needs of older Australians.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Taylor

Manager- Aged Care and Community Services



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