

CARING FOR OLDER AUSTRALIANS

Submission from Community Transport Future Directions Working Group for Metropolitan Sydney

The Community Transport NSW Future Directions Working Group for Metropolitan Sydney made a submission to the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into 'Caring for Older Australians' in August 2011. We would like to thank the Productivity Commission for the opportunity of further input and reiterate the points we made in that submission about the importance of Community Transport in the community care system for older Australians.

Looking at the Community Transport sector in NSW

What are the strengths of the Community Transport sector in NSW?

- The Community Transport system in NSW is **proactive, flexible and innovative**.
- We offer **not just transport but a personalised service**.
- We **offer a continuum of care that is client focussed**.
- We have **well trained staff and volunteers** who work with clients, to ensure appropriate support is provided and transport services are safe for clients, staff and volunteers.
- We are **well integrated in the community care service system**.
- We have **good assets and infrastructure**. Over the years individual Community Transport services have tailored their vehicle fleets to suit the local community and most Community Transport services now have a range of vehicles for different services. Our vehicles can be brokered out as a valuable community resource.

Looking to the future

How would we like Community Transport to operate in the future?

In our earlier submission we indicated that we would like to see Community Transport in the future:

- Offer broader transport services for all people who are transport disadvantaged (and not be just a HACC / community care service).
- Within the aged care area, offer a continuum of services, from transport services for older people in the HACC target group who have low support needs but are no longer able to access public transport through to partnerships with Community Aged Care and Residential Aged Care providers to provide transport for people with high level care needs. Use an enabling model of care based on wellness approaches to support clients to not become reliant on Community Transport and move them back on to public transport when appropriate.
- Respond to the needs of people under 65 who have disabilities and are transport disadvantaged, by including in the Community Transport model services that meet the transport needs of the wide range of people who have disabilities, including people who have mental health issues or who have physical or intellectual disabilities.
- In metropolitan and regional areas, develop a regional focus for service delivery and local outlets or satellite services with transport delivery at the local level responsive to community needs.
- Within the Community Transport sector, look at holistic planning for Community Transport, strong branding and marketing.

Responding to the Draft Report: Caring for Older Australians

We would like to support the submission made by Community Transport Organisation (CTO) NSW in response to the Draft Report on the Caring for Older Australians Inquiry, January 2011.

In particular we support the four key recommendations of the CTO to the Inquiry:

1. That Community Transport retains block funding and that yearly increments are guaranteed to meet the increased costs associated with delivering services. There also needs to be an implementation of standardised funding benchmarks to ensure equity for all communities.
2. The allocation of all funding for transport is through the Community Transport services.
3. That consideration should be given to removing the barriers to Community Transport so that it can provide services to the wider transport disadvantaged people in the community and provide an efficient, competitive specialised transport service for the aged and people with a disability
4. If Community Transport can only be accessed through a one stop entry point common to the whole aged care system, then special consideration needs to be given to the ensuring that low need mobility restricted clients are still identified and that it is also appropriate for people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

We also support the principles in CTO's vision for a future Community Transport System which:

- Provides a seamless continuum of service types
- Is accessible to all people in the community who are transport disadvantaged
- Is large enough to be efficient and competitive to provide specialised transport services to other aged care, disability and health services
- Links with and compliments the State transport system
- Has professional and accredited staff
- Is an accredited transport provider
- Allows equity of access for all communities across Australia
- Above all provides an appropriate and caring level of service for clients

Members of the Community Transport NSW Future Directions Working Group

Great Community Transport
Inner West Community Transport
Manly Warringah Pittwater Community Transport
Randwick Waverley Community Transport
Regional Co-ordination Office for Community Transport in Northern Sydney (Accessible Bridge Services Inc)
South Sydney Community Transport
Sutherland Shire Community Transport