

22 April, 2018

ACSA to work with Government on `flu shots for aged care staff

The Federal Government's announcement today of the introduction of compulsory 'flu vaccinations for workers in aged care facilities will strengthen the 'flu prevention measures many aged care facilities offer voluntarily to staff, and residents, said peak body, Aged & Community Services Australia.

The measures announced today recognise how deadly and devastating the 'flu can be amongst those older Australians particularly vulnerable to its spread, but we understand that vaccination alone does not prevent the spread of infectious diseases and other prevention measures are important, ACSA CEO, Pat Sparrow, said.

"Common sense plays a part and, in the context of a close community environment such as a residential aged care facility, the most important thing is to stay away from a facility if you are unwell – something that applies to families, visitors, staff, and anyone else who may come into close contact with residents."

ACSA as the peak body and its not-for-profit members are committed to delivering quality care and will work with the government to administer the new vaccination program.

Consideration will need to be given to the circumstances of those individuals unable to be vaccinated for medical or cultural reasons, including the workforce implications for unvaccinated aged care workers.

"There is more detail to be worked through about the practicalities of administering this nationally but, overall, we welcome this announcement for the boosted protection it will provide older Australians and their families," said Ms. Sparrow.

ACSA does so while still urging the Government to consider the additional regulatory and cost burden it places on many providers at a time when many are struggling financially.

"Once again, the government has imposed a further layer of compliance without consideration to the financial realities of many providers with 41 per cent currently making a loss."

~ENDS~

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