

Attention on aged care staffing is welcome but it's more than a numbers game – ACSA

Peak body Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA) has asked the Queensland Government to engage in consultation with the aged care providers regarding today's announcement regarding staffing levels.

ACSA Acting CEO, Mr Darren Mathewson said, "We welcome government attention on the issue of staffing, as aged care desperately needs attention in this area.

"Previously, the Queensland Government acknowledged that staffing ratios needed to differ from centre to centre based on the individual and complex needs of residents.

"As Queensland Health Minister, The Hon Dr Steven Miles said in *The Australian* in September 2018, aged care was 'more than just a numbers game'. So ACSA is concerned about the nature and language of today's announcement that seems to fail to acknowledge this.

"ACSA acknowledges the call for transparency and more meaningful consumer information, so residents and their families have access to relevant information, however the federal government is already active in this space. There is a risk of duplication and confusion.

"We are concerned that a pattern of knee jerk policy responses is becoming the norm – with bigger picture structural and funding issues being ignored.

"We know that people in aged care will be at times needing higher levels of support and we want all people to get that care when they need it. If we are to treat older Australians with respect as our population ages – we need ongoing collaboration and dialogue to solve some big picture challenges of the next few decades not policy on the run.

"Our providers of aged care want the same things as older Australians and their families, to have safe, quality care and services," said Mr Mathewson.

ACSA is requesting a meeting with the Queensland Government to seek further information about today's announcement.

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