

## NACA AGED CARE REFORM MONTHLY UPDATE

March 2016

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*This update provides the latest information on Aged Care Reform activities for the month of March 2016.*

### **NEW STAFF MEMBER FOR THE AGED CARE REFORM SECRETARIAT**

As advised in our February monthly update, we have a new staff member reporting through Corey. Jane Fewings is our part time Policy and Projects Officer and she brings a wealth of experience in government and sector policy work, most recently as Manager NDIS Policy for the Victorian Government. Jane will be at the May meeting of the Alliance. Jane's initial focus will be on the Ageing/Disability Interface Internal Working Group, the Red Tape Reduction Working Group, the Quality Advisory Group and the Quality Indicators Reference Group.

### **NON-NACA COMMITTEES AND ADVISORY GROUPS**

The NACA Aged Care Reform Secretariat represents the Alliance on the Aged Care Sector Committee and its sub-committees and advisory groups. We make every effort to consult with the Alliance where time frames and confidentiality requirements permit. We continue to report on these aged care reform initiatives that are not NACA auspiced yet are related to the Alliance's work and in which Alliance members are represented.

#### **Aged Care Sector Committee (Non-NACA committee)**

**Chair: Mr David Tune AO PSM**

##### ***Progress***

The Aged Care Sector Committee met on Friday 4 March and received a briefing on the passage of the Increasing Choice legislation which had passed the Senate the day before.

Key topics discussed in the meeting included a report about ACFI monitoring and proposals for change, with further advice to be given to Minister Ley. There was also a discussion about proposals for the development of a workforce strategy to be put to Minister Ley, who participated in further discussion and agreed to the proposed industry and sector leadership of the development of a strategy for the aged care workforce.

Minister Ley participated in discussions about the Aged Care Roadmap and the NACA Blueprint II. The Aged Care Sector Committee approved the final changes to the Roadmap and sent it to the Minister in late March 2016.

#### **ACSC Communications and Engagement Advisory Group (Non-NACA Advisory Group)**

**Chair: Judy Gregurke**

The Terms of Reference were endorsed at the 4 March meeting of the ACSC. There was no meeting in March.

## **ACSC Roadmap Advisory Group (Non-NACA Advisory Group)**

There has been no further meeting of the Roadmap Advisory Group. The final version of the Aged Care Roadmap was expected to be posted on the ACSC website by the end of March, or as soon as possible thereafter.

## **NACA COMMITTEES AND ADVISORY GROUPS**

### **HOME CARE REFORMS ADVISORY GROUP**

**Chair: Paul Sadler**

#### ***Progress***

This Advisory Group did not meet in March. Its next scheduled meeting is in April.

### **THE AGED CARE GATEWAY ADVISORY GROUP**

**Chair: Ian Yates**

#### ***Progress***

The Gateway Advisory Group did not meet in March.

### **QUALITY ADVISORY GROUP**

**Chair: Kay Richards**

#### ***Progress***

The Quality Advisory Group met by videoconference on 24 March 2016. Many of the issues raised in discussions at the February Alliance meeting were discussed, with particular emphasis from group members requesting urgent communication from the Department to residential care providers who will be affected by the implementation of the Aged Care Quality Agency's cost recovery strategy – expected to take effect from 1 July 2016. The Department advised that the cost recovery issue was being considered by government within the budget processes and they were unable to provide further information.

Group members asked for specific feedback to be communicated to the sector in relation to the roll out of the Quality Agency's cost recovery, with details on who will be affected and how, the relationship between ARIA scores and aged care planning regions, and whether, and how, the viability supplement will inform this.

The Advisory Group also spent time discussing the Single Quality Framework, with the Department reinforcing the importance of the group's contribution in the development and refinement of the Framework. Members expressed concern about the confusing use of the word 'quality' to mean different things in different circumstances, especially where quality was seen as the baseline for safety but not inclusive of quality improvement or consumer expectations of quality and performance differentiation.

Concerns were also raised in the meeting about the National Quality Indicators Programme, with participating providers due to submit their first quarter data at the end of March. The benchmarking of individual facility performance against an average or mean was not seen as a measure of quality. Members felt it is critical that both providers and consumers (including prospective consumers) must be able to have confidence in reported performance, so that achieving a particular level of performance against standards is a prerequisite for receiving government funding.

There was further discussion on the contestable marketplace for residential accreditation, again following the discussion and subsequent letter following the February Alliance meeting, and the Department noted

that while the sector had been consulted about the marketplace, the Single Quality Framework was being co-designed and was an opportunity for all to work together.

The QAG will meet further in 2016 via videoconference on 18 May, 18 July, 19 October and 13 December and will be supported by Judy Gregurke and Jane Fewings.

## **QUALITY INDICATORS REFERENCE GROUP**

**Chair: Adrian Morgan**

### ***Progress***

The Quality Indicators Reference Group has not met in March and is due to meet again at the end of April in a face to face meeting in Canberra. QIRG will be supported by Judy Gregurke and Jane Fewings.

## **COMMONWEALTH HOME SUPPORT PROGRAMME (CHSP) ADVISORY GROUP**

**Chair: Paul Sadler**

The CHSP Advisory Group did not meet in March. The next meeting is set as a face to face meeting in early April.

## **NACA INTERNAL WORKING GROUPS**

### **RED TAPE REDUCTION WORKING GROUP**

**Chair: Adrian Morgan**

The Aged Care Sector Committee has requested assistance from this Internal Working Group, seeking feedback on the net gains and positive impacts of red tape reduction to date. The Internal Working Group has been asked to identify some of the early and emerging benefits. Examples of the benefits and impact from these changes are requested to be circulated to the ACR Secretariat by the end of April.

At the most recent ACSC meeting no further update to the red tape reduction progress report was provided.

### **AGEING AND DISABILITY INTERFACE WORKING GROUP**

**Chair: Julie Heraghty / Deputy Chair: Sue Elderton**

The NACA ACR Secretariat paper was reviewed and revised by the Ageing and Disability Interface Working Group's review by email and a teleconference on 17 March. It is expected to be ready for initial circulation to Alliance members in April with further revised version to be circulated and discussed at the Alliance meeting in May.

### **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP**

**Chair: Melissa Coad**

Melissa Coad (United Voice) was endorsed as the Chair of the Workforce Development Group at the February NACA meeting. This Working Group is expected to meet via teleconference before the next Alliance meeting to review NACA's 2012 position paper on workforce and continue discussions around what a workforce strategy might include. .

## **HOME CARE REFORMS INTERNAL WORKING GROUP**

### **Chair: Heather Witham**

As per our February Update, Heather Witham was elected as Chair of the Home Care Reforms Internal Working Group. The group met on the evening of Day 1 of NACA to discuss the passage of the legislation and identified no specific action required by the group unless unforeseen delays on the passage of the legislation through parliament emerged. The group received an update on the work of the Home Care Reforms Advisory Group from Paul Sadler and agreed to meet again when a clearer engagement strategy on Stage 2 reforms was known.

## **QUALITY ACCREDITATION MARKETPLACE INTERNAL WORKING GROUP**

### **Chair: Kay Richards**

This new internal working group was created at the February Alliance meeting and met for the first time by teleconference on 30 March 2016. The Group's purpose was to review the Alliance's communications regarding the contestable marketplace for residential accreditation. In undertaking this review the group also explored the relationship between the contestable marketplace and other aspects of proposed quality reforms such as the development of a single set of standards, cost recovery and a single quality framework.

The group proposed that the Alliance send a further letter to the Minister and the Department, reiterating the content of the letter sent immediately following the February Alliance meeting and emphasising ongoing concern. There was discussion about the need for further research on what an accreditation marketplace might look like, with reference to existing models currently in use in Australia and New Zealand. The draft letter was to be submitted to Sponsors for endorsement and dissemination prior to the next Alliance meeting.

## **BLUE PRINT IMPLEMENTATION WORKING GROUP**

### **Co-Chairs: Nick Mersiades & Ian Yates**

At the February meeting a number of positions were discussed and refined in relation to the Blueprint Asks and Actions document developed since the November meeting. This document will now be known as the 2016 Federal Election Platform and has been circulated throughout March for review by the broader NACA membership. It is anticipated to be finalised in April and launched in advance of the election being called.

**Judy Gregurke, Corey Irlam and Jane Fewings**

**National Aged Care Alliance Aged Care Reform Secretariat**