NACA AGED CARE REFORM MONTHLY UPDATE

May 2016

This update provides the latest information on Aged Care Reform activities for the month of May 2016, noting that much of May's activity was provided in the Aged Care Reform Secretariat Reports to the May Alliance meeting.

AGED CARE REFORM SECRETARIAT

To help in managing the various requests of changes to the groups, and in recognition the groups have begun to be serviced by different members of the team, the NACA ACR Secretariat has developed a generic inbox for all group related inquiries NACA.ACR.Secretariat@cota.org.au. Please use this email if your nominated representative on groups is changing or if you are not sure which member of our team should be actioning your request.

Thanks to all those who have provided updated details of members of groups at the May Alliance meeting.

As trialled in the May Alliance report, we have continued to use a 'themed' approach for this update, with some of the non-NACA groups placed under the relevant Advisory Group segments, rather than in the first section of 'External Committees and Groups'. Further feedback on this approach is welcome.

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 did not meet in May and its June meeting has been cancelled due to caretaker conventions. We repeat the advice that the Aged Care Sector Committee's Aged Care Roadmap was released and posted on the ACSC website during April. The Roadmap is available on the Committee's webpage at https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/ageing-and-aged-care/aged-care-reform/aged-care-sector-committee.

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

Chair: Judy Gregurke

The Aged Care Sector Committee Communications and Engagement Advisory Group has not met since our last report and its June meeting has been cancelled due to caretaker conventions.

ACSC Roadmap Advisory Group (Non-NACA Advisory Group)

See advice above about the release of the Aged Care Roadmap on 19 April 2016. This Advisory Group has completed its work and is not expected to meet again.

Aged Care Complaints Commissioner Consultative Committee (Non-NACA Advisory Group)

The Aged Care Complaints Commissioner spoke of her new Consultative Committee and the substantial achievements within her areas of since the 1 January changes of responsibility for complaints. Her presentation is available on the Alliance website.

Members representing the Alliance are Kay Richards (Leading Age Services Australia) and Anne Burgess (COTA Australia). Other members are Samantha Edmonds (National LGBTI Health Alliance), Mary Patetsos (FECCA), Matthew Moore (Institute for Urban Indigenous Health) and Larissa McIntyre (Australian College of Nursing).

Terms of reference have been agreed and appointments are current for one year. The Committee's purpose is to provide advice on communication, resources and concerns.

The first meeting involved review of a draft publication on how to raise a concern with a service provider and an animation on service provider resolution of concerns and complaints.

NACA COMMITTEES AND ADVISORY GROUPS

HOME CARE REFORMS ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Paul Sadler

Progress

The Advisory Group met on 30 May by teleconference and received a briefing from the Department on the subordinate legislation.

The Department has opened a consultation on the subordinate legislation for Increasing Choice in Home Care – Stage 1 until 9 June 2016. You may participate in the consultation by making a submission here: https://consultations.health.gov.au/ageing-and-aged-care/increasing-choice-delegated-legislation. The presentation from a webinar on 20 May is available here: http://livestream.ssc.gov.au/health/20may2016/

The NACA ACR Secretariat recognises there is a wide range of views amongst NACA members and that many NACA members will be making a submission to the consultation. Accordingly, it is proposed that the Alliance does not make a submission itself, but strongly encourages members to make their voice heard.

At its April meeting the Advisory Group noted deep concern with the remaining DHS reconciliation issues and their potential impact on February 2017 compliance with the proposed unspent funds timings. In particular, it was noted that a lack of timely and accurate reconciliation of payments by DHS may expose providers to unfair sanctions for non-compliance with the proposed timeframes for return of unspent funds. The Department has not yet responded to these concerns.

Limited discussion has been held on the approach to the Stage 2 Increasing Choice measures (combining home care and home support from July 2018). It was identified that by the end of 2016 a range of issues and options will be available for discussion. A finalised approach is not anticipated to be available until 2017. Concerns were noted from some members that achieving this measure by July 2018 may be optimistic and the Department drew attention to the fact that the Ministerial announcement indicated the change would occur *from* July 2018, not *by* July 2018.

The Group flagged a number of areas requiring further discussion which have been listed for future meetings, including the need to revisit the technological solution for My Aged Care's randomisation of the search finder before the February 2017 changes are implemented.

The Group has also seen a brief overview of the Department's approach to the IT changes required to enable Stage 1 of Increasing Choice to occur, and the Advisory Group has been promised it will be briefed on the final requirements before the build commences.

COMMONWEALTH HOME SUPPORT PROGRAMME (CHSP) ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Paul Sadler

The Commonwealth Home Support Programme meetings planned for 18 May and 1 July have been deferred until after the election. No further activity has occurred since the May Alliance reports and the following section has been repeated for further consideration.

Additional policy considerations arising from the implementation of the CHSP

The Department presented a paper that identified a small number of unintended consequences with the implementation of CHSP, with work already underway to address them while also considering changes within the broader context of aged care reforms.

Two key areas that have been identified were discussed by the group. This included the challenges faced by clients of the Assistance with Care and Housing (ACH) program, particularly around My Aged Care call centre operators being aware the age eligibility for ACH was 50 years and over, or 45 years and over for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. An updated version of the CHSP manual will also include clarification about these target groups being 'prematurely aged' and will consider future discussions around extending eligibility to other CHSP services for clients of the ACH sub-program.

In addition, the Department noted the impacts on former HACC clients with complex care needs of not having a long term case management service. The majority of these existing clients have been or will be 'grandfathered' under the CHSP to ensure continuity of support, or until they move to a more appropriate program such as the Home Care Packages Programme.

The Department is also exploring how the community transport sector can be supported through the CHSP, including developing and implementing a revised definition for the CHSP Transport service type.

A number of individual discussions will occur with relevant stakeholders over the coming months about these emerging issues.

THE AGED CARE GATEWAY ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Ian Yates

Progress

The Gateway Advisory Group met on 20 May. This brief overview of items and issues arising from the May meeting was provided verbally at the May Alliance meeting.

My Aged Care System Changes

Two new releases (4.0 on 21 March and 4.1 on 30 April) have improved:

- functionality of the provider and assessor portals
- access to information for assessors and providers
- assessment and contact centre processes
- service finders
- My Aged Care operations, and
- Enabled subsequent transition care approvals to be made by assessors in the assessor portal

RAS Update

13 Regional assessment Service contractor organisations have now completed their first round of performance reports which are informing the quality review being undertaken by the Department. The review includes a workshop, meetings between RAS contractors and the Department, and the engagement of an external organisation to develop a RAS evaluation framework.

Training

Course units for all My Aged Care workforces' (contact centre, RAS and ACATs) training are due for review for accreditation by August. The Advisory Group discussed the importance of ensuring training is up to date with My Aged Care changes and that service user (provider and consumer) feedback should be included in training. Concerns remain about the non-mandatory nature of competency units relating to contact centre skills and cultural competency in working with ATSI and CALD consumers and callers.

Transition Working Group and Delivery Subgroup

It was agreed that the Transition Working Group has completed its work and that the Delivery Subgroup should now be re-instated with a forward workplan.

Reablement and Wellness

Advisory Group members raised concerns about reported variability in the implementation of wellness and reablement approaches by Regional Assessment Services, including some cases in which face to face assessment is not being offered. These issues are expected to be picked up in the planned June review.

Health Interface

There was some discussion about the Department's ongoing use and refining of webforms rather than integrated solutions, particularly for GP software. Hospitals generally appear to be willing to use webforms outside their patient management systems.

Referral pathways for health professionals is part of the work occurring in the Contact Centre Enhancement Project.

Increasing Choice in Home Care

Major point for My Aged Care raised here was the recognition that for Stage 2 (from July 2018) there will be a single assessment workforce.

ACATs have requested the development of guidance material to inform their decision making in the selection of a specific home care package level and a stakeholder group has prepared a Draft ACAT Guidance Framework which will be tested through a trial project in June/July 2016. The new ACAT Guidance Framework will be launched in February 2017.

Business to Government (B2G)

This issue had been referred to this Gateway Advisory Group meeting from the Aged Care Reform Secretariat and Sponsors prior to actioning a further letter to the Minister (as had been discussed at the February Alliance meeting).

Group members were informed of an Aged Care Industry IT Company (ACIitC) meeting that had occurred on 16 May and a significant article on the work of this group was included in the on-line Australian Ageing Agenda on Friday 20 May. The Department's work with the ACIitC is totally outside of any Alliance involvement or communication methodology. The Advisory Group has requested a clear timeline for the discussion paper that the Department has indicated it will be preparing and that this will be provided as soon as possible and out of session.

Contact Centre Enhancement Project

In discussing the Enhancement Project, which is addressing the substantial growth in contact centre operations to deal with demand, it was agreed that the Delivery Subgroup would be well placed to provide support to this work.

The Aged Care Guild Reference Group

The Department has established a reference group with the Aged Care Guild to provide a vehicle to consult on current operational processes, future IT functionality and business processes for My Aged Care. Advisory Group members were surprised by this initiative and queried with the Department if this was to be a precedent for such a reference group being established with each peak body. It is certainly outside the consultation mechanism used by the Department with the National Aged Care Alliance. The Chair (Ian

Yates) advised the Advisory Group that he proposed to follow up the Group's concerns with the Department.

QUALITY ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Kay Richards

Progress

The QAG meeting scheduled for 2 May was deferred to 18 May by videoconference. Some planned agenda items were withdrawn due to caretaker conventions. The group welcomed Assistant Secretary of the Quality and Regulatory Compliance Branch, Amy Laffan, to her first meeting.

Nick Ryan and Christina Bolger from the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency provided an overview of the Draft Cost Recovery of Quality Agency Accreditation Services, which is now open for consultation. Feedback is due by 6 June 2016. The Quality Agency has employed Ernst and Young to test some of the modelling used in its work.

The Department presented a paper designed to explore the QAG views on jointly progressing options for giving older people more quality information on service providers. Members supported the initial concept and Department will provide some of their research and a more detailed paper to inform further discussion at the next meeting.

The QAG also discussed the progress of non-NACA groups working in the area of quality and determined that there will be a standing agenda item on the work of the Standards Technical Advisory Group. In our 'themed' approach, feedback from the Standards TAG meeting is shown below.

Advisory Group members continue to raise concerns in relation to the development and timing of the proposed accreditation marketplace. Further action has been undertaken by the Internal Working Group on the Quality Accreditation Marketplace that was formed at the February Alliance meeting. See the Internal Working Groups Report for more information.

Further meetings via videoconference are scheduled for 18 July, 19 October and 13 December.

Department of Health – Standards Technical Advisory Group (Non-NACA Advisory Group)

The Quality Standards Technical Advisory Group (TAG) is reviewing the existing aged care standards with the aim of:

- Forming one set of standards that support an end to end aged care system
- Increasing the focus on outcomes for consumers
- Reducing unnecessary regulatory burden by minimising duplication between the standards and with other legislated obligations
- Improving the clarity of the standards and addressing any deficiencies within the existing standards

The draft standards are being prepared in a way that places the focus on the consumer and the outcomes that the consumer experiences – rather than expressing them in terms of outputs or systems required by the provider. The development of the standards involves close examination of quality standards in similar sectors, particularly health and disability.

Representatives of NACA (as a whole rather than constituencies) are Anne Maddock (Anglicare Australia), Samantha Edmonds (National LGBTI Health Alliance), Dr Ronelle Hutchinson (Speech Pathology Australia) and Kay Richards (Leading Age Services Australia).

QUALITY INDICATORS REFERENCE GROUP

Chair: Adrian Morgan

Progress

The Quality Indicators Reference Group did not meet in May.

As indicated in our report to the May Alliance meeting, the NACA Aged Care Reform Secretariat has participated in the KPMG post pilot consultations following the Consumer Experience and Quality of Life pilots. These sessions and teleconferences are being facilitated by senior KPMG personnel – the May ones for residential services and another series in June for home care services. Mechanisms for receiving feedback from residents and consumers are also being developed. QIRG members raised particular concerns about the need to handle proxy (carer/family member) responses separately from actual consumer responses to ensure comparative validity can be established. Concerns were also raised by members of the need to ensure that people with special needs, particularly language and cognition, are effectively consulted during this process, and also not counted as a single category without reflecting the nature of their special needs.

During discussion on the CEQOL pilot in Home Care there were two key issues identified. One involved the exploration of whether or not My Aged Care data would be able to provide an access indicator that would allow services to compare their results with other like services. The initial data from this cycle is deemed insufficient to support this proposal and further work during the second data cycle will be undertaken.

The second issue identified is that there has not yet been any work undertaken on the development of a display and report function in My Aged Care for CEQOL indicators. Members remain concerned about this.

Over the past six to 12 months, Adrian Morgan as Chair of the QIRG has been maintaining an issues log on behalf of QIRG members. A free ranging discussion allowed members to review the items that have been raised previously and are as yet unresolved. Many of their concerns were reiterated through the discussion. There is very limited or no recognition in the development of the NQIP of the importance of consumers as users of the outcome data and the relevance that this would have for providers working towards a market based system. None of the systemic elements appear to be designed to meet the needs of Australia's diverse ageing population, with diversity described as an 'add-on'. Members continue to express concern about a perceived disconnect between approaches to CEQOL and any capacity for providers to have control over the changes that might improve consumer views especially where these relate to imposed systems.

A further face to face meeting has been planned for the end of June, as all future meetings past 1 July 2016 are expected to be by teleconference.

Department of Health – Quality Indicators Technical Advisory Panel (Non-NACA)

NACA has nominated key people as whole of Alliance representatives and this group is due to meet on 23 May 2016.

NACA's nominees are Professor Colleen Doyle (Australian Association of Gerontology), Annette Byron (Dietitians Association Australia), and Lesley Jeffers (Anglicare Australia).

Department of Health – Quality Indicators User Group (Non-NACA)

NACA has nominated key people as whole of Alliance representatives and this group is yet to be convened. Nominees are Louise Beaumont (Australian Association of Gerontology), Fonda Voukelatos (Uniting Care Australia) and Glenn Bunney (Leading Age Services Australia). A consumer group representative is yet to be advised.

NACA INTERNAL WORKING GROUPS

ACCESS AND EQUITY OF OUTCOMES WORKING GROUP

Chair: TBC

At its May meeting, the Alliance endorsed the terms of reference for a new permanent creation of an Access and Equity Outcomes Working Group to assist the Alliance and its various groups with a centralised

point of information about access and equity issues. The group will meet in the coming weeks to elect its chair and will commence work on a principles based Access and Equity of Outcomes statement for the Alliance's review at its August meeting.

QUALITY ACCREDITATION MARKEPLACE WORKING GROUP

Chair: Kay Richards

This Group was created at the February Alliance meeting for the special purpose of reviewing the Accreditation Marketplace material previously developed and discussed by the Quality Advisory Group. Over several teleconferences the Group drafted a further letter to the Department and the Minister restating the Alliance's view on the best order for some of the reform steps. As yet no response to this correspondence has been received.

The May Alliance meeting agreed the Quality Accreditation Marketplace Working Group should continue to articulate a view of how an accreditation marketplace should be developed for NACA's consideration at its August meeting. Over the coming weeks the Working Group will develop further documentation on the possible next steps for discussion at the Alliance meeting in August.

RED TAPE REDUCTION WORKING GROUP

Chair: Adrian Morgan

The Internal Working Group has not met in April, but has been supplying information on the impact of the Aged Care Sector Committee's Red Tape Reduction Action Plan, to provide feedback on the net gains and positive impacts of red tape reduction to date. Further information is being sought before being provided back to the Aged Care Sector Committee.

AGEING AND DISABILITY INTERFACE WORKING GROUP

Chair: Julie Heraghty / Deputy Chair: Sue Elderton

The second consultation draft of the Ageing and Disability interface paper was circulated to Alliance members for discussion at its May meeting with subsequent written feedback closing on 1 June 2016. The paper looks at the impact on younger people in the aged care system as well as how older Australians will receive the support they need in relation to their disability. In the meeting the paper was broadly supported by NACA members, with minimal amendments.

The Aged Care Reform Secretariat also provided a brief update to its attendance at the Inaugural Ageing and Disability Interface Summit held in Canberra on 19 May 2016. The Secretariat identified the draft interface paper would be updated with more context setting information between the two systems. A further consultation draft will be circulated to the Alliance in the coming weeks.

Originally when this group was set up it identified three areas it would focus on. Since this time, the Department of Social Services has announced a process for considering an integrated Carers Support plan. Accordingly, the focus on the issues for carers across the two sectors has been recommended by Carers Australia as not being included, instead deferring to the public consultation on the carers integrated plan currently inviting submissions until 16 June. Members are encouraged to make individual submissions to this consultation here: https://engage.dss.gov.au/designing-the-new-integrated-carer-support-service/

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

Chair: Melissa Coad

The Group met on 2 May to discuss potential future work. Following an update by Judy Gregurke from the last Aged Care Sector Committee meeting, where there was a conversation about workforce, it was agreed that the provider offer at the sector committee and the Ministers indication she would be happy for the Department to be involved gives NACA an opportunity to prepare a NACA view on workforce.

The NACA Workforce Development Group agreed to prepare a new paper on workforce that would combine updated elements of the 2012 paper, reflect the Roadmap and the NACA Blueprint and would include anything else NACA would want to see in relation to a future aged care workforce.

The group resolved that the NACA paper would be expressly about the paid workforce but that it would include a statement that the importance of the unpaid/informal and volunteer workforce is recognised and explain why we are focusing on the paid workforce in this document. The group acknowledged in the document that what we currently define as the paid workforce may evolve over time.

The May Alliance meeting agreed to the proposal that the group will prepare a draft workforce paper to be circulated to and amended by the workforce group throughout May and June. The draft paper will then be circulated to the whole of NACA during July with a near final draft by in late July to be discussed at the August NACA meeting. Melissa Coad is leading the development of the paper.

HOME CARE REFORMS INTERNAL WORKING GROUP

Chair: Heather Witham

This group did not meet in April but has agreed to meet again when a clearer engagement strategy on Stage 2 reforms is known.

BLUE PRINT IMPLEMENTATION WORKING GROUP

Co-Chairs: Nick Mersiades & Ian Yates

While the Blueprint Implementation Working Group did not meet in April, the broader Alliance membership approved the final 2016 Federal Election Positions out of session for dissemination as part of the Age Well campaign. The positon statement was signed off by 47 members of the Alliance with 46 logos authorised to be included for endorsement. Members were encouraged to use this document as part of their own organisation's advocacy on aged care matters during the election.

An update to the Australians Deserve to Age Well Campaign was presented. COTA on behalf of the Alliance has engaged a communications organisation to assist with the Age Well Campaign, who commenced work in late May for the campaign.

The campaign website www.agewellcampaign.com.au went live on 25 May 2016. On launch day the campaign media achieved one large state printed story, 2 national and 1 state radio interviews, 1 national TV interview and numerous online stories. As at 26 May, the social media launch achieved 2,878 petition signatories with 7,530 signatories.

The Alliance received a report on the fundraising efforts for the campaign and the costs allocated for the campaign, along with an overview of future activities throughout the remainder of the campaign.

Judy Gregurke, Corey Irlam and Jane Fewings
National Aged Care Alliance Aged Care Reform Secretariat