

THE VOICE OF ANGLICAN CARE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN AUSTRALIA

December, 2009

Highlights:

- Welfare changes – income management
- Campaign for Care for Older Australians
- Contribution of the Not-for-Profit Sector
- Farewells and welcomes within the Network

“These are significant reforms to welfare policy which will affect a large number of disadvantaged Australians” – The Senate

Last week Families, Housing, Community Services, and Indigenous Affairs Minister, Jenny Macklin, announced changes to welfare provision as a result of the government’s deliberations on the Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER). The proposals are far reaching and have the potential to bring about fundamental changes to how we view people receiving welfare payments. [See *Welfare changes*, under Government in this newsletter]

The dichotomy between tax payers and welfare recipients is a truly false one. At any time many Australians that work (and pay taxes) also receive some direct government payment – in the form of Family Tax Benefit for example. Of course the fact that we all enjoy tax payer provided benefits such as roads, police, schools, hospitals and the endless list of community infrastructure, while a longer bow to draw, should also not be dismissed. This is after all the very point of a society – of joining together to pool resources.

The dichotomy is also false over time – people that were born and grew up in this country received education, health programmes, and possible income supplementation to their parents. If we are lucky enough to reach old age we are again likely to receive some state help whether it is the aged pension or a place in an aged care programme -residential or community based.

Philosopher John Rawls famously proposed that public policy should be made from behind a “veil of ignorance”. That is that when we think about such changes we should not know our own lot in life – whether we are an able bodied employed person, or perhaps someone with a disability who will need to rely on the largesse and support of others.

The proposed changes seem to be drawing views that are black and that are white in the first instance. Views that are strong and strongly polarised. There is moral outrage from some sectors finding that such changes affect the very notion of entitlements for citizens. That control over what people spend their entitlements upon is impinges on their rights as a citizen. There are those that find any form of mutual obligation for basic entitlements to be abhorrent. There are equally those that see that provision of ‘something for nothing’ is unhelpful and undermines the contract an individual has with the state.

We know that Anglicare members do see people that are merely existing day to day, that are not able to live a full and decent life in our community due to their circumstances. Whilst for most this will be a temporary situation (due at least in part to the interventions of our organisations), we do know that we often see people that endure not only material poverty but a paucity of aspiration. It

can often be one of the saddest things to see a human being with the capacity to plan, to think ahead, to grow in what they have to offer, not having aspirations and hope.

Initially the term 'paucity of aspiration' could be seen to be a derogatory one, to put undue emphasis on the responsibility of the individual, but it can also be society's role to offer hope to individuals; Anglicare agencies do it every day – offering much more than a food parcel or an aged care bed. It is one of our key values. A socially inclusive society is surely one where all can have hope – it is one where all welcome social housing rather than just putting a roof over the heads of the homeless.

With this in mind can we examine the proposed welfare changes to see if they offer hope? Do they encourage aspiration – both at an individual and community level? Do they treat individuals with respect and dignity? If, when the veil of ignorance was removed and we found ourselves to be a person in receipt of these changes, would we be pleased?

Which elements of the policy are helpful and hopeful? What would we like to add or alter to make it more so? Is the language of the policy respectful and does it offer dignity or is it set merely to offer the taxpayers comfort that dollars are being well spent?

Language is immensely powerful and effects how we view our world and each other. Many people would not understand their Family Tax Benefits for example as welfare payments. The term 'welfare' is often used to narrowly encompass benefits such as Newstart, Youth Allowance, Disability benefits and Parenting Payments. The very benefits whose recipients will be affected by these changes.

Many in our community voluntarily opt into income quarantining – mortgage payments or rental payments are made by direct debit, credit cards are paid before the money gets to people's pockets. These however are voluntary and are seen as clever money management – when you're a taxpayer these things are called prudence. For others there is no choice and it's called quarantining. When you're a welfare recipient such controls can be administered as a punishment.

Anglicare Australia aspires to be a 'thought leader', to do this well we need to be thoughtful. This legislation looks challenging to many of us but we need to provide to government, opposition and the public sphere a thoughtful response educated by the experience of your clients and you as you interact with them. The timelines are tight and it would be easy to criticise this process for such fundamental changes without looking at the experience 'on the ground'. In making our submission we would like to hear from you: Anglicare Australia's advocacy is for the people that use the services of our members, the people with whom you have close connections.

The detailed proposals can be found [here](#)

A Senate Inquiry has been set up and submissions close on the 1st February 2010. Upon announcement of the changes Anglicare Australia issued the media statement which can be found [here](#). To give us your thoughts and feedback please get in touch by 19th January by phone or [email](#).



Kasy Chambers, Executive Director

1. Campaign for Care for Older Australians

2010 is an election year, and the best time to get commitments to really do things differently in the future is in the lead up to the election.

Anglicare has joined with the other faith based aged care providers and the sector's peak bodies (ACSCA and ACAA) to run a Campaign for Care for Older Australians.

We have already sent a letter to the Prime Minister, with copies to politicians from all sides, advising them that we are calling for reforms that will:

- Give older people and their families greater choice of type of services, who provides them and where and when they are received.
- Strengthen measures to ensure that people with special needs, those who face socioeconomic disadvantage and those who face geographic disadvantage, all have access to high quality aged care services.
- Place aged care services on a sustainable footing to ensure their continuing capacity to meet the service and support needs of older people and their carers.

Now the campaign group needs to get more specific: working out what it wants the political parties to commit to deliver, and developing messages which make that clear, and which all of us can use to put aged at the front of voters' minds at election time, whenever that happens to be.

Anglicare Australia is a member of the campaign management committee, along with ACSA, ACAA, UnitingCare Australia and Catholic Health Australia. Other partners in the campaign group overall are Baptist Care Australia, Churches of Christ Living Care, Lutheran Aged Care Australia, Sir Moses Montefiore Jewish Home, Presbyterian Aged Care NSW & ACT; and the Salvation Army Aged Care Plus. Between us all we provide something like 90% of aged care services across Australia.

Our key assets as campaign partners are our extensive networks. Anglicare member organisations, and their nine thousand aged care staff and volunteers, for example, work with twelve thousand older Australians and their families right across the country. The campaign will be strengthened if we can all enlist those networks to build grassroots support.

Anglicare Australia's Deputy Director [Roland Manderson](#) is the contact person for this campaign. He's active Campaign Management Committee, drawing on support from our own aged care network.

2. Anglicare Australia's response to the Productivity Commission draft research report *Contribution of the Not-for-Profit Sector*

The Productivity Commission's draft research report of its inquiry in the [Contribution of the Not-for-Profit Sector](#) was released in October. The inquiry was a detailed look at how community services are provided by non government organisations, how they sometimes deliver things that

government can't, the complicated and uncoordinated way that it is all handled by government, and the possibilities of making the various system work better.

The draft report recognises the complexities and frustrations that we in the sector face dealing with government funding, makes a good fist of articulating the reach and the impact of the work that we do, and calls for governments to pay the full cost of the services they fund. These are steps in the right direction.

Anglicare Australia made a substantial submission to that inquiry in June and a further response to the draft report last week. You can find our original submission and the latest response on our website under '[Government Inquiries](#)'

Anglicare Australia's response picked up on:

- the need to identify and value the broader social goals behind the work we do,
- the importance of secure long term collaborations if we are going to develop programs that address the most complicated challenges in our society,
- the value to government and society of the community sector's voice.

The response also proposed a number of specific ways to streamline tendering, contracting and reporting requirements across all levels of government.

The proof of the pudding, as always, will be in the eating. The Commission's final report is due to come down at the end of the year. We need to ensure that governments at all levels use it as a guide to put systems in place, together, that support and respond to this work. That way we can hope to deliver better outcomes for our society, and for the most vulnerable people within it.

Read more [here](#)

3. OECD meeting

We met with representatives of the OECD who are writing a report on Social Inclusion in OECD countries.

We raised particularly excluded groups; people with disabilities; carers; people with mental health issues; older people; people on very low incomes.

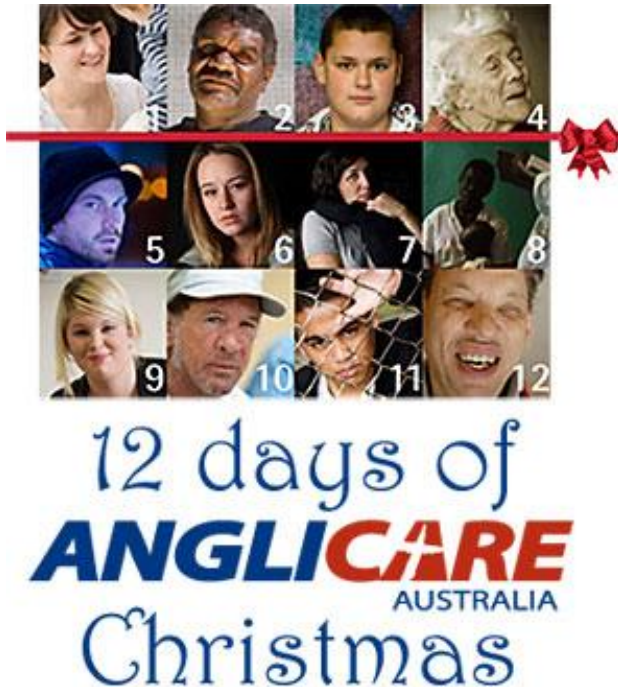
We also challenged statements that jobs were the only way to be socially included (whilst recognising employment as a very important pathway for most) and made representation for them to consider policies that would make a more inclusive society as well as policies to enable individuals to be more included.

4. New staff member Stefanie Stankov

Stefanie Stankov has joined Anglicare Australia's National Office as an Administrative Assistant Trainee as part of a one-year program. A graduate of Mackillop Catholic College, Tuggeranong, Canberra, she will be working in various areas of the office, but particularly understudying our Office Manager, Melissa Dyson. Stefanie will also be studying part-time at CIT for her Certificate III in Business Administration.

Stefanie's e-mail address is stefanie.stankov@anglicare.asn.au

1. Twelve Days of Christmas



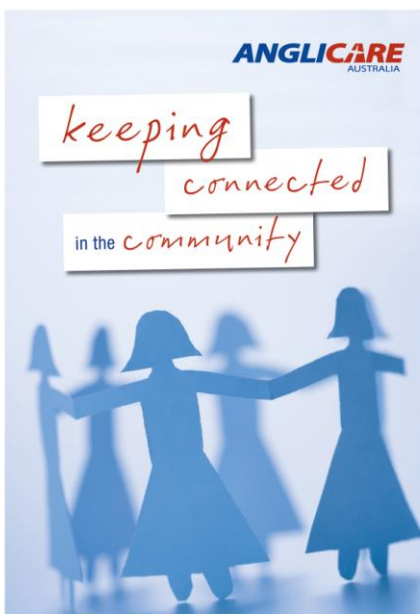
Anglicare Australia recently launched [Twelve Days of Christmas](#) on Anglicare Day Tuesday 10 November 2009.

Twelve Days of Christmas was put together by Anglicare agencies across Australia and presents twelve engaging stories about people we support. We are using it to illustrate many of the ways that our network cares for people in crisis and on a daily basis.

We linked the release of the Twelve Days of Christmas with the launch of the annual appeals that so many Anglicare agencies run. It puts a positive personal face on the work and the people involved.

We are pleased to have worked in this way with network members across Australia, and look forward to doing it again next year. In the meantime, look at the stories and show them to others in the lead up to Christmas.

2. Keeping Connected in the Community



This report was produced with funding from the Department of Health and Ageing as part of the Keeping Connected project which ran in 2008/09. The project was very special for Anglicare Australia in that it not only explored the little publicised issues of social exclusion in older Australians, it also brought together four Anglicare members; Anglicare South Australia, Anglicare Tasmania, Brotherhood of St Laurence and Spiritus along with Anglicare Australia to work together on a national project.

The Minister for Ageing the Honourable Justine Elliot MP has commended the projects for their contribution to the understanding of the issues facing elderly Australians remaining socially included. The report also offers important suggestions for future work.

Read more [here](#)

3. Human Resources special interest network

The Human Resources special interest network held a two day seminar in Brisbane. The two day meeting was well attended with people from every State and many different member organisations.

The meeting had sessions on working with people with injuries (sustained before and after recruitment); selecting and recruiting staff based on resilience; workplace culture and unwritten ground rules; as well as many others.

There was also plenty of opportunity for sharing and discussion of common issues. This network holds a two day meeting every six months. The next one is in Melbourne in March and then in September in Adelaide to coincide with the Anglicare Australia conference. Contact Lorraine Mumford at Anglicare South Australia on 08 8305 9200.

The network also has numerous documents to share from previous presentations and shared policy documents on the HR page of Anglicare Online.

4. Farewells and welcomes within the Network



Coralie Nichols, CEO of Anglicare Northern Territory has recently resigned as she will be expecting her third child next year. Coralie was a Council Member and an active member within our Anglicare network. We wish Coralie and her family all the best in the coming years and hope to see her around in the community sector in the near future.

The Board of Anglicare Northern Territory has recently appointed Ian Fisher to the role of CEO. He has previously held the roles of CEO of Swan Hill District Hospital and Interim CEO and Executive Director Corporate Services at Bendigo Health Care. He has just returned from working in Kuwait where for the last three years he has worked as a consultant with United Medical Services. Ian is also a father of five.

Our thanks also go out to Ann Buxton who has been acting CEO of Anglicare Northern Territory.



We bid another sad farewell to Keith Waters, CEO of Anglicare Canberra and Goulburn.

Keith was Treasurer for many years on Council for Anglicare Australia and was well known in the Canberra and Goulburn communities. We also send Keith and his family our warm wishes.

The Board of Anglicare Canberra and Goulburn has recently appointed [Peter Sandeman](#) to the role of CEO. Peter will be starting on 11th January. Peter is presently Executive Officer of the Anglican Diocese of Adelaide. He spent seven years with Adelaide Central Mission and in a leading national role in Mission Australia, and he has extensive experience in the South Australian public sector.

5. 2009 Conference – 20 September to 23 September 2009 Hyatt Regency Auckland – New Zealand

For those of you that haven't recently explored our website – [speakers and keynote presentations are up](#), also the [Award Winners](#).

Again, we are proud of our ongoing partnerships with HESTA Super Fund and Ansvar Insurance.

Thank you again to our hosts at The Selwyn Foundation, New Zealand and to our friends at the Hyatt Regency, Auckland, New Zealand.

We'd also like to thank the conference committee, that provided all the background work, and all the delegates for coming along, being open to new ideas and being part of the Anglicare network – as together we work as a stronger voice for care and social justice.



GLOBAL TRENDS
LOCAL VOICES

6. St John's Youth Services – Hand up from Next Steps recognised with awards

St John's Youth Services appeared in October's newsletter edition of 'Housing People' by Australasian Housing Institute as they received a special award ceremony in recognition of the Next Step program.

CEO Wendy Malycha was also the Innovation Award Winner (small organisation) at the Anglicare Australia Awards presented by Sir Paul Reeves in Auckland, New Zealand.

Read more [here](#)

7. New ACOSS board elected

Simon Schrapel, Executive Director of Strategy, Policy and Services at Anglicare SA, has been elected as the new President of the Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS).

Go to the ACOSS Website for more information on the [Board](#) and for [ACOSS' Annual Report 2008-2009](#). The report contains information on ACOSS' policy and advocacy activities, work with member organisations, as well as board and financial information.



1. Welfare changes – income management

The Australian Government has introduced several bills to reinstate the racial Discrimination Act, strengthen the Northern Territory Emergency response, and lay the ground work for more general welfare conditionality reforms.

Most contentiously, it plans to expand compulsory income management to welfare recipients across the country. From July 1, the measure that currently requires people in remote indigenous communities to allocate half their welfare payments to food, rent and clothing, will apply to people

in 'disadvantaged areas' with high levels of unemployment, welfare dependency and juveniles caught up in the justice system (initially the Northern Territory.)

The Government has said it is committed to progressively reforming the welfare and family payment system to "foster responsibility and to provide a platform for people to move up and out of welfare dependence." It argues that these reforms will help fight passive welfare with more money going to food, clothes and rent, and less on alcohol and gambling.

The Welfare Rights Centre has described these proposed reforms as "the most significant changes to the delivery of income support payments in Australia since the Social Security Act was first introduced in 1947." This view is strongly supported, to say the least, by many – but certainly not all – community sector social service providers.

Senator Siewert for the Greens has come out against it, while the Opposition appears to be in support, as do many of the state and territory governments.

In referring the Bills to the Committee for investigation the Senate noted that: "These are significant reforms to welfare policy which will affect a large number of disadvantaged Australians". Anglicare Australia welcomed the inquiry, making the point that it was the right forum in which to test the evidence and arguments for this profound change of policy. [See our media release: [Welfare changes – proceed with care](#).

Kasy's editorial at the top of this newsletter explores some of the underlying issues. She also makes it clear that in order to inform our submission to the Inquiry, we need your feedback.

The closing date for submissions to the Inquiry is 1 Feb 2010, and the reporting date is early March. So please test out the people you work with and support, and who are most likely to be affected by these changes, and let us know how you see it as soon as you can!

2. FaHCSIA - Report on the NTER redesign engagement strategy and implementation

The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) contracted Cultural & Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA) to review the engagement and communication strategy for the NTER Redesign consultations, and to observe a number of the consultations. The report provides an insight into the subtleties of the feedback from Indigenous communities to the Department particularly on contentious income management provisions.

Read more [here \(pdf\)](#)

3. FaHCSIA national homelessness research

Applications for funding are now open for two elements of National Homelessness Research. The National Homelessness Research Partnership Agreements are designed to provide large-scale, high-quality research through substantial multi-year funding agreements with a small number of research organisations.

The National Homelessness Research Projects are designed to support small scale research and evaluation projects proposed by a broad range of organisations including those in the community sector. Projects will be of national significance, align with research priorities identified in the

National Homelessness Research Agenda and/or respond to the emerging needs of homelessness related policy and program delivery.

More information and for funding applications go to FaHCSIA's [Homelessness Research](#) page or contact the Homelessness Branch on 1800 668 35 and homelessness.research@fahcsia.gov.au.

4. Dept of Health and Ageing – risk management for emergency events

With many States already experiencing high temperatures and bushfires, and a heightened risk of other significant emergency events such as severe storms, floods or cyclones, an increased focus on emergency preparedness is warranted at this time of year. The purpose of this advice is to raise your awareness of recommended preparations for residential aged care services.

Read more [here](#)

5. Australian Institute of Criminology: domestic-related homicide

In December 2008, the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) held an international conference on homicide with a focus on domestic-related homicide. Undertaken as part of a project funded by the Australian Government to examine the issue of domestic-related homicide in Australia, the conference was an important opportunity to learn about international and national developments in research, policy and practice. This report includes the papers of keynote speakers, with an emphasis on policy- and practice-relevant research.

Read more [here](#)

6. News from Families Australia

For information, [here](#) is an update from KPMG regarding the status of the work to develop the national out-of-home care standards. If you would like to discuss this further, the contact numbers of the KPMG consultants are included in the note. The relevant FaHCSIA officer is Tracey Feeney, Section Manager, National Projects, Children's Policy Branch, Phone: 02 6212 9055.



1. Social Exclusion: The Sydney Experience (Update)

This latest report from Anglicare Sydney provides an additional five months data (to the end of July 2009) beyond that published in Social Exclusion: The Sydney Experience. The additional data highlights:

- An increase in demand for ER services;
- An apparent lag between the onset of the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) and increase in demand for ER;
- Increases in the proportion of clients living in insecure housing and increases in accommodation as a presenting issue among service users;

- An increase in unemployment as a presenting issue among service users that reflects the still rising NSW unemployment rate; and
- An increase in the proportion of single person households among service users.

The full impact of the Global Financial Crisis on the persons and families that ANGLICARE serves is only now being understood, as data collected over a longer period is examined and as the effects of the GFC can be better assessed.

Read more [here](#)

2. Mum's the word when it comes to welfare

A recent study conducted by researchers at The Australian National University, has revealed that young Australians' attitudes to income support and welfare provision are strongly influenced by the views and personal experiences of their mothers. The research, which has been led by Professor Deborah Cobb-Clark, questioned eighteen year-olds and their mothers on their view towards current levels of unemployment benefits, the role of the Australian Government in supporting the unemployed and the importance of ambition and effort in getting 'ahead in life'.

For more, read [here](#)

3. A fairer future? Addressing education needs of children in care

Education is central to the wellbeing of children and young people, affecting their quality of life and prospects in adulthood. The 2009 Neale Molloy Social Justice lecture, presented by Dr Sarah Wise (General Manager policy, research and innovation, Anglicare Victoria) examines the state of human rights and social justice in relation to out-of-home care children's education. While acknowledging the complexity of children's needs, the gap in education outcomes between children in care and their peers suggests corporate parents are not living up to their responsibilities.

Read more [here](#)

4. Research Australia: Rural Australia more vulnerable to GFC

Rural Australians are more likely to be negatively impacted by the global financial crisis than those in urban areas, according to a new report. Research Australia has released its report on the economy and health: *Australian Financial Crisis – Implications for Health and Research*.

Read more [here](#)

1. Anglicare Conference 2010

It was confirmed at our last Council meeting that the **2010 Conference will be held on 12 September 2010 to 15 September 2010 (inclusive)**. Our hosts will be the Anglicare network in Adelaide, SA and the venue is still to be announced. So lock these dates in your 2010 diaries.

The Sub-Committee for the 2010 conference will be:

Sandra Hills (Chair)
Ray Cleary (Ex Officio)
Peter Kell
Lynn Arnold
Kasy Chambers

Future conference venues: 2011 Perth 2012 Melbourne



Mission Statement

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