

Aspect

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 In this issue

From the Executive Director

SURE WE CARE - WE JUST DON'T CARE TO ACT



Kasy Chambers
Executive Director

At a time when popular sympathy and awareness is going out to women trying to escape domestic violence, to isolated unsupported people living with mental illness, and to young adults graduating from a childhood in out-of-home care into homelessness and joblessness, the terrible shortage of secure affordable housing that they face is rearing its head.

We've got some numbers to show you what that means. Anglicare Australia's annual [snapshot of rental housing](#) released today has found less than 1% of the 65,600 properties for rent across Australia would be suitable for a woman with children – in desperate need – on income support. There were only 16 rooms or dwellings out of 65,600 that a young person relying on the Youth Allowance could afford. We found only 10 properties suitable for someone living with a mental illness and looking for work.

And it's no surprise to those of us who work in the social services. When Anglicare Australia asks its members to list the key challenges they face in their work, and when ACOSS asks the same of the broader community sector, housing for people on low incomes comes in at the top of the list.

Care has a double meaning. We care about people when we see they are facing hardship, but that feeling can be a fleeting emotion. However, the other meaning of care is directly related to doing something for people, it is caring for them. If we want to care in that way for the people who are presently excluded from secure housing – and all the opportunities which depend on that – we have to do something concrete.

And that's the trouble. The cost of inadequate and insecure housing – the emotional, social, economic and spiritual cost to us all – is stark and evident, but there is no concrete national plan to put the bricks and mortar in place.

There appears to be a fabulous disconnect between how we care briefly about people who are doing it tough (with a tweet or a like, perhaps), and what, as voters, it's assumed we'll accept in term of policy and action.

Perhaps people are afraid that housing someone they don't know will cost them a little of what they have themselves. Even (or especially) when they are well off. I don't think that's true, but it might be what people think.

Or it may be that any effective approach at scale requires shaking up the housing market, and now the mining boom has vanished no one wants to tinker with the other golden goose.

So sure, we feel good about feeling bad for people, but too many of us are thought to be wedded to the notion of investing in property, seeing our own home values rise, and our neighbourhoods remaining safe and familiar, that we won't accept any real change to the way the housing market works, even if it further disadvantage those in desperate need of somewhere safe to live.

Is that it? Is that where we leave it?

Leadership is about drawing on the best, rather than the worst in people, and offering a positive way forward. Just because popular discourse suggests we are too limited by self-interest, doesn't mean government can't put a plan place to solve this housing problem. And with a big budget coming up, a review of taxation underway, and an ongoing federation white paper process looking at the roles of the states and the commonwealth, the Australian government is actually well placed to do something now.

The way our tax system works is certainly one of the levers that's been steering us in the wrong direction here. The general absence of a partnership approach across all levels of government is another, and the lack of integrated urban planning – with the most vulnerable people in mind – might be another yet.

Let's look at tax.

Right at the moment there is a dispute about one element of the existing tax system, negative gearing, which directly impacts on housing supply. Some people look at it as an extremely unhelpful influence on a failed market. Others argue it has ensured there's more money going into housing. Anglicare Australia, for one, would love to see a broad agreement to changing the negative gearing tax rules in order to grow the supply of the kind of housing we so desperately need. Even small changes here might make the difference. Let's pitch it as a way everyone can be a part of the solution. And everything about tax – including GST, business tax competition, capital gains tax exemptions – is on the table. We need to look at it all with these outcomes in mind.

And let's look further too.

The diminishing supply of social housing is becoming increasingly expensive for states to maintain, and the federation white paper gives us the chance to talk about the roles of every level of government in changing the way we live together and growing that supply.

Meanwhile the stock of low cost private housing (where it exists) is generally in poor condition, badly designed and far from services. Our most vulnerable citizens are using most of their inadequate benefits to pay for it. The top end of the housing market is seemingly overpriced but still rolling along, unaffected, and there are trillions of dollars in superannuation potentially available for investment if they had some security.

It's pretty clear we need a bigger picture view.

No one thinks it can be solved overnight but there is no shortage of evidence - and the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) springs to mind here - and innovative models around that could inform an effective national plan. Bipartisan? Why not? Things won't get better unless we act, and we can all see the cost of the problem now.

From the Executive Director

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Government Policy and

Unless of course we and our governments are happy to show our care and compassion for people with nowhere safe to live - with a "like" and a tweet. Before the dogs bark and the caravan moves on.

National Office News

RENTAL AFFORDABILITY SNAPSHOT HITS THE MARK

The Anglicare Australia Rental Affordability Snapshot certainly hit the mark this year, with widespread coverage across the nation.

Earlier this month we surveyed more than 65,600 rental properties advertised across Australia. The figures that came back were once again alarming and clearly showed a serious lack of affordable housing for too many people on a low income or government benefits.

The Snapshot was launched nationally at Parliament House on 30 April. Anglicare Australia Executive Director, Kasy Chambers was supported on the day by a number of peak advocacy bodies, including COTA Australia, Mental Health Australia, Australian Youth Affairs Coalition, People with Disability Australia, WESNET and Homelessness Australia.

Anglicare member organisations were also kept busy with data collection, analysis and local media relations. Some of the national statistics included:

- just 618 properties across the country were suitable for a couple on Newstart with two children
- a single person on Parenting Payment with two children had just 165 options
- less than 2% of the properties were affordable for people with disability
- there were only 8 rooms or dwellings that a young person on Youth Allowance could afford
- only 10 properties suitable for someone living alone and looking for work.

The day before the launch, Kasy began the day with an early morning interview with Australian Regional Media which was closely followed by The Saturday Paper, Fairfax media, AAP, ABC Brisbane and 2SER.

The launch morning began with an interview with ABC Radio National Breakfast, Sky News, ABC TV Midday News, ABC Radio National Afternoon, The Project, SBS, The Wire radio, New Matilda, ABC Radio Queensland.

In between these interviews, Kasy and Deputy Director, Roland Manderson met with one of Minister Morrison's advisers, and also briefed the opposition and the Australian Greens.

We also got national stories in [The Australian](#) and [The Guardian](#), and an opinion piece in [The Drum](#).



Kasy Chambers presents the findings of the Rental Affordability Snapshot at the press conference at Parliament House, supported by representatives of key peak advocacy bodies.

Information

- EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST OLDER PEOPLE
- \$1.7 MILLION FOR EMERGENCY RELIEF
- PURCHASING PROCESS FOR JOBSITE
- ALCOHOL & DRUG TREATMENT FUNDING EXTENDED
- FIRST AUSTRALIANS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
- PRIMARY HEALTH NETWORKS REPLACE MEDICARE LOCALS
- PC REPORT: HOUSING ASSISTANCE AND EMPLOYMENT
- MENTAL HEALTH EXPERT REFERENCE GROUP

Anglicare Events

- ANGLICARE EVENTS

Sector Events

- SECTOR EVENTS



At the Rental Affordability Snapshot press conference at Parliament House [left to right]: Glenda Stevens (Homelessness Australia), Susan McGrath (COTA Australia), Kasy Chambers, Sarah Jewell (Youth Coalition of the ACT), Sophie Hardefeldt (Australian Women Against Violence Alliance) and Hannah Gissane (Equality Reliance Alliance, YWCA).

MEDIA COVERAGE SO FAR:

[ABC Radio National Breakfast](#)

[ABC Online](#)

[The Canberra Times](#)

[Bendigo Advertiser](#)

[Business Insider Australia](#)

[Anglicare North Coast snapshot reveals hard times](#)

[The Mercury](#)

[Sydney Morning Herald](#)

[The Advertiser](#)

[ABC Online – Victoria](#)

[ABC Online – WA](#)

[Pro Bono Australia](#)

[Australian Broker Online](#)

This list is just the tip of the iceberg. An internet search will reveal dozens more stories across the country about housing unaffordability.

SUPPORTING PEAK BODY MEDIA RELEASES:

[COTA Australia](#)

[People with Disability Australia](#)

[Mental Health Australia](#)

[Homelessness Australia](#)

[National Shelter](#)

[Benevolent Society](#)

[National Welfare Rights Network](#)

ANGLICARE AUSTRALIA SUBMISSIONS

Younger people in residential aged care

Anglicare Australia put forward a [submission](#) to the Community Affairs Reference Committee inquiry into the adequacy of existing residential care arrangements available for young people with severe physical, mental or intellectual disabilities in Australia.

The submission offered evidence of the accommodation of young people with disability in network aged care residences with the Anglicare network. The problems that face those residents, and the challenge for staff in providing appropriate support and

opportunities, are well documented. The reality of course is that in many instances there is simply no other choice.

Commonwealth Home Support Programme

Anglicare Australia provided a [submission](#) in response to the Department of Social Services' Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP).

In the submission, Anglicare said it supported the introduction of an equitable national scheme to deliver home support as an entry point to the broader aged care system, and welcomed the opportunity for consultation on the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (to start on 1 July).

Anglicare Australia sought the views of network members in developing the response to the recently released CHSP fee policy consultation paper, draft program manual and best practice notes. Ten network members provide aged care in the community, five of whom also provide residential care; with more than 3,600 residents, 4,500 clients with community packages and more than 22,000 accessing home support or HACC services.

KASY IN BRISBANE AND ADELAIDE

While in Brisbane this month, to meet with Senator Glenn Lazarus, and Anglicare member, EPIC Employment Services CEO, Bill Gamack and participate in the Anglicare Southern Queensland planning day, Kasy was also able to attend the National Youth Week Awards ceremony. Senator Lazarus promoted the visit on his Facebook page (below). Kasy also attended the Anglicare Southern Queensland strategic planning day.

In a media release about the Week, Kasy said people often talk about taking a 'jobs first approach', but the evidence from our network is you need to take a 'life first' approach with young people instead. That's about education, housing and support when you need it, as well as a real job in your line of sight.

National Youth Week provided Anglicare Australia with the opportunity to highlight the benefits of investing individually in young people and ensuring they have a safe place to live.

Earlier in the month, Kasy attended the South Australian CEO Forum.



[Left to right]: Bill Gamack (EPIC Employment Services), Sue Cooke (Anglicare SQ), Senator Lazarus, Kasy Chambers and Alison Zeppala (Anglicare SQ).

ANGLICARE COMMENTS ON COMPETITION POLICY REVIEW

Upon the release of the Final Report of the Competition Policy Review on 31 March, Anglicare Australia provided comment via [media release](#) cautioning the government against locking on to a business model for the delivery of human services at the expense of investing in human relationships and connectedness, in the mistaken belief that it will be more efficient and effective.

Executive Director Kasy Chambers said the Review's support for diversity, choice and innovation in human services is to be welcomed, but its lack of discussion on the risks of shifting towards a less inclusive business model is a concern.

Anglicare Australia will lodge a formal submission on the report towards the end of May.

ENERGY SAVINGS THAT DON'T COST THE EARTH

As a member of the Australian Council of Social Services, Anglicare Australia is pleased to promote the benefits of [The Give Grid](#).

The Give Grid was created after an ACROSS survey identified that electricity price rises are starting to be a significant impact on community service delivery, and that services are keen to do an energy audit but can't afford to bring in external expertise. The Give Grid helps organisations with low cost, easy ways to save power, and is designed to help community services that don't have funding for higher cost upgrades or sustainability expertise.

There are lots of low and no-cost ways to cut electricity costs in community services. The Give Grid offers an abundance of ideas, handy tips, calculators and resources to get you started – everything you need for a DIY energy efficiency overhaul. You can also find inspiring stories from other community service organisations, and see the big changes that others in the sector have achieved with even small actions.

THE GIVE GRID

A SOURCE OF GOOD ENERGY

01. THE PROJECT • About The Give Grid

02. JOIN IN • Get Involved

03. WHO'S DOING WHAT • See What's Already Happening

04. FREE WORKSHOPS • Energy Saving Made Easy

05. TIPS + TRICKS • Handy Support Tools

06. THE STORY SO FAR • See What We've Been Up To

ENERGY SAVING IDEAS BY AND FOR THE COMMUNITY SECTOR

Our ultimate goal is to help a host of community organisations large and small - become more energy efficient, and enjoy all the savings that brings!

POSITIVE POWER! WIN A SUMMER GOOD ENERGY EXPERIENCE!

ALL • 01. UNIFY HABITS • 02. STOPPING WASTE • 03. LIGHTING • 04. OFFICE EQUIPMENT • 05. STAYING COOL • 06. ENERGY LAZINESS

THE STORY SO FAR...

We want to share all the great stories about this project with you as they happen along the way. Here's what you've been up to so far...

Stamp Out Standby Power: Win a Box of EcoSwitches for Your Team!
26TH APRIL 2024 BY (1) (1) (1)

Judene Andrews: How Energy Efficiency Paid for Itself at Unitingcare Community
16TH APRIL 2024 BY (1) (1) (1)

Get Inspired by Liam: Henderson About Baptistcare's Sustainability Mission
27TH APRIL 2024 BY (1) (1) (1)

Anglicare Network News

RESEARCH FUNDING FOR BENETAS

Anglicare Australia member, Benetas, has received \$1.2 million in government funding to undertake a significant new research project focused on identifying and mitigating frailty in older people.

The project, [Frailty in community dwelling older people – using frailty screening as the canary in the coal mine](#), will trial frailty screening in health and aged care assessment, and establish resource pathways to empower older people to self-manage their health and wellbeing.

Benetas CEO, Sandra Hills said the project will shed an important light on how we assess the health and wellbeing of older people and build greater support for self-managed risk across a range of services and health professionals.

Benetas Innovation, Research and Policy Manager, Dr Ameer Morgans said the new project would build on research developed through the organisation's Sub Acute Linkages in Later Years (SALLY) initiative.

[State-of-the-art facility for Benetas](#)

Anglicare member, Benetas has commenced development on a \$21 million state of the art aged care service in Frankston, which is set to define a new level of care.

The home will house 80 people and is based on the innovative 'cluster model' of housing which brings with it significant benefits to clients' wellbeing. The floor plan is designed to enable small groups of residents to live in clusters, increasing their access to inhouse amenities and contributing to a stronger sense of community. The design also works to keep the back of house operations, such as catering and laundry, behind the scenes and out of sight, contributing to the home-like environment.

Works are expected to be completed within 12 months, with the service opening to new residents mid-2016.



Artist impression of the state-of-the-art aged care centre in Frankston.

ANZAC commemoration

On 20 April, Benetas hosted a special intergenerational ANZAC commemoration event at Broughton Hall in Camberwell, connecting current and former Victorian servicemen to share and compare their experiences.

Benetas supports a large number of war veterans through its Residential, Home Care and Respite including Veterans' Home Care service, and Independent Living services.

Benetas clients, all of whom are war veterans, including one nurse, joined current soldiers from the Royal Victorian Regiment, 5/6 Battalion for a unique meet and greet.



Benetas war veterans commemorate ANZAC Day with members of the Royal Victoria Regiment [left to right] Lindsay Pritchard, Ted Steward, Peter Noonan, Audrey Houston, Karl Underwood, Stanley Ralph, John Corcoran and Luke Johnston.

KIDS IN FOCUS PROGRAM REFUNDED

Anglicare Tasmania is one of eight organisations to be refunded for two years to continue its [Kids in Focus](#) activities, which provide prevention and early intervention family support to dealing with the impacts of substance abuse.

HIPPY PROGRAM GUIDELINES RELEASED

The Brotherhood of St Laurence's HIPPY (Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters) initiative has released [Program Guidelines \(2015-2018\)](#), to outline the arrangements for the implementation and ongoing delivery of HIPPY in the 100 communities.

HIPPY is a two-year home-based parenting and early childhood programme that helps parents and carers to be their child's first teacher. HIPPY currently operates in 75 communities, with a further 25 communities to be announced soon. From late 2015, HIPPY will be operating in 100 locations across Australia, targeting around 4000 children each year.

HIPPY also builds the skills of parents and carers to help prepare their child for school and offers some parents and carers a path

to employment and local community leadership.

ADDRESSING ENTRENCHED DISADVANTAGE

Anglicare Australia member, the Brotherhood of St Laurence, has provided a chapter for a major new report, *Addressing entrenched disadvantage in Australia*, published by the Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA) that examines issues associated with the economics of disadvantage.

The Brotherhood's chapter is based on its research, [Persistent Disadvantage](#), which found almost a quarter of people who lifted themselves out of poverty are poor once again one or two years later.

The Brotherhood study demonstrates that poverty is relatively short-lived for many Australians who experience it, but for some groups it can be persistent. In particular older Australians, the long-term unemployed, people with limited education, households where no-one has a job, households where at least one member has a disability — not just individuals with disabilities themselves — and people living in highly disadvantaged areas are more likely to remain poor.

The CEDA policy perspective examines issues associated with the economics of disadvantage, such as:

- the nature and extent of disadvantage
- the cost and dynamics of disadvantage
- new ways to address entrenched disadvantage.

National Awards Profile

VOLUNTEER ACHIEVEMENT - ERIN YOUNG



Welcome to the next in our series of profiles on the winners and highly commended of the Anglicare Australia 2014 National Awards for Innovation and Excellence.

These profiles are also featured in [The Anglicare Australia Review](#).

The winner of Volunteer Achievement, for exceptional service by an individual who has made a significant contribution or significantly changed and improved the quality of service to the client or work environment of the agency, was Benetas volunteer Erin Young.

Erin Young has been a volunteer at Benetas Broughton Hall for more than 14 years. Every Monday and Thursday, she helps staff provide lifestyle activities for the 80 aged care residents, ranging from manicures and hand massages, running the footy tipping competition or spending time with individuals.

Residents at Benetas Broughton Hall look forward to Erin's volunteer days; the positive impact of her visits are enormous, especially to those who are socially isolated.

Erin gives up 520 hours of her personal time volunteering each year. Over 14 years this amounts to a staggering 7,280 hours or 303 days!

Our judges were impressed with Erin's substantial contribution over many years, and highlighted the mutual benefits of her volunteering; where Erin feels confident and valued and the residents feel loved and respected.

Anglicare Australia received six nominations for Partnership in 2014.

[Download full profile](#)



Anglicare Australia National Award winner for Volunteer Achievement, Erin Young (far left) at a Benetas event with residents of Broughton Hall.

Research and Resources

SUPPORTING YOUNG CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The National Children's Commissioner, Megan Mitchell, has launched a document that takes another significant stride for the development of the rights of children.

[Supporting young children's rights: statement of intent \(2015—2018\)](#) was developed by Early Childhood Australia (ECA) and the Australian Human Rights Commission. It highlights the central role of children's rights for quality teaching and learning.

ECA Chief Executive Sam Page said the report provides practical information for young children, educators and families. It highlights five key themes:

- The right to be heard
- Freedom from violence, abuse and neglect
- The opportunity to thrive
- Engaged civics and citizenship
- Action and accountability



NEW YOUTH CAMPAIGN

ReachOut Australia has launched a campaign showing young people there's life after making bad moves. The campaign is designed to remind young people it's possible to put their best foot forward and learn from mistakes or difficult situations.

You can get involved by posting your own story on Facebook or Twitter with the hashtag [#TheresLifeAfter](#) as a show of support for anyone who might be struggling.



END TEENAGE LGBTI DISCRIMINATION

beyondblue has launched a new campaign to end LGBTI discrimination among teenagers and young men.

The [Stop. Think. Respect. Left Hand](#) campaign features a cinema ad in which a group of boys bully a left-handed teenager, calling him a "freak", to highlight the absurdity of discriminating against people just for being themselves.

The campaign draws an analogy between discriminating against someone because they are left-handed and discriminating against someone who is not heterosexual.



RESPONDING TO CHILD DISCLOSURES OF ABUSE

The Australian Institute of Family Studies has produced an [infograph](#) to accompany a practitioner resource it produced last month, [Responding to children and young people's disclosure of abuse](#).

The resource outlines the how, why, and when children and young people are likely to disclose and suggests actions to take at the time of disclosure and in the longer term.

Most research into children and young people's disclosures has focused on disclosures of child sexual abuse; however, many of the issues canvassed are also likely to be relevant to disclosures of other types of abuse (i.e., physical, psychological and emotional abuse).

This document contains information that will help family, friends, other adults and professionals to respond to a child's disclosure of abuse. However, the way that individuals respond to abuse will differ according to their role in the child's life.



COMMUNITY LEADERS MOST TRUSTED

A major new study by the Swinburne Leadership Institute has found that community leaders are far more highly thought of than other Australian leaders in the areas of trust, competence and public interest.

The study, [Index of Leadership for the Greater Good](#), found that community leaders are also seen as the most concerned about the wider needs of society and to take a long-term perspective on problems.

Community leaders were also judged as the most trustworthy of the five sectors of leaders examined (political, business, union, religious, and community leaders) - with 81 per cent of people thinking community leaders were somewhat or very trustworthy.

Political leaders rank below all other categories of leaders –in terms of perceived trust and competence.

MONEY MANAGEMENT FOR VET STUDENTS

Apprentices and trainees keen to improve their money management skills now have access to an online training resource developed by the ASIC called [Be MoneySmart](#).

Be MoneySmart aims to help students in vocational education and training (VET) improve their financial literacy by better understanding personal taxation, superannuation, insurance, debt management and budgeting. It is also freely available to anyone offering training in money management skills including workplace training and small businesses.

ASIC's Be MoneySmart resource was developed with assistance from Innovation and Business Skills Australia, the Australian Tax Office, Group Training Australia, Fair Work Building and Construction and Bendigo Kangan Institute.

WHITE RIBBON REGIONAL FORUMS

[White Ribbon Australia](#) is hosting a series of regional forums from 22 May - 2 June 2015 across Australia.

The forums will showcase a whole of society, whole of community approach to driving long term change in the prevention of men's violence against women. The forums will feature international and local experts currently working in the prevention of men's violence against women.



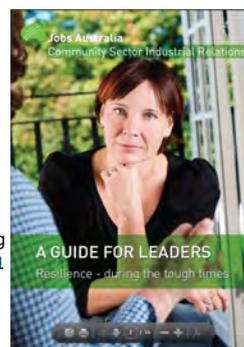
RESOURCE TO HELP ORGS NAVIGATE CHANGE

Jobs Australia has produced a booklet to assist leaders and managers through significant organisational change that may arise out of the results from tender processes and other future procurements.

[A Guide for Leaders: Resilience – during the tough times](#) is designed to assist leaders and managers to navigate their way through a period of difficult change.

The aim is to help you manage the process in a way that is consistent with your organisations own values of fairness, dignity and respect, and in a way that will achieve the best outcome possible for all in the circumstances.

For detailed information about the important legal and industrial obligations of employers managing potential redundancies, please see Jobs Australia's comprehensive publication [Guide to Managing Redundancy](#).



AUSTRALIA'S HOUSING CRISIS

A new research paper from [The Australia Institute](#) reveals that home ownership rates in Australia are falling across all age groups, most significantly for people in their 50's. Middle income earners are experiencing the sharpest decline in ownership rates.

The report analyses policy and market trends reveals:

- Negative gearing allows investors to deduct losses incurred on their investment property from their taxable income. This works to both boost house prices and reduce tax revenue by an estimated \$6 billion in 2014-15.
- Capital gains tax treatment of housing favours house owners and reduces government revenue.
- Government expenditure on home owners, primarily through tax concessions, amounts to \$36 billion per year.
- Australian house prices have been significantly outpacing income growth for the majority of the last 15 years.
- Australia has the second most expensive property market of advanced economies when measured against incomes and rent.

STABLE HOUSING KEY TO EMPLOYMENT

A new report from the Productivity Commission dispels the myth that public housing is a disincentive to work and highlights the role of stable housing in employment outcomes.

The Commission's report, [Housing Assistance and Employment in Australia](#), found that employment rates among income support recipients in public housing are likely to remain very low — at about 10% of the working age population — even if tenants are moved to market rents and CRA, if no other efforts are made to address directly the disadvantages of tenants.

FIRST TIME HOMELESSNESS AMONG AGED

Many older homeless Australians have never experienced homelessness before. Prevention, rapid rehousing and support that recognises their unfamiliarity with the homelessness system are critical in addressing this issue.

[AHURI \(Australian Housing & Urban Research Institute\) Bulletin: Issue 191](#) is based on research conducted by Dr Maree Petersen, Dr Cameron Parsell, Rhonda Phillips and Dr Gentry White at the AHURI Research Centre—The University of Queensland. The research examined older people's homelessness, with a particular focus on the experience of becoming homeless for the first time in later life.

STUDY: TRUE COST OF DEMENTIA

For the first time Australia will have a [robust economic evaluation](#) of the cost of providing quality dementia care in residential aged care to inform policy making and service planning.

The research, funded by NHMRC Cognitive Decline Partnership Centre (CDPC), aims to develop innovative models that both meet the preferences of people with dementia and are cost effective.

A significant part of this study is to give people with dementia a voice about their own care preferences and choices.

Residents with dementia, with the support of their families, will be surveyed on their quality of life and quality of care and their care preferences in an ideal care setting. From this the researchers will be able to rank service features according to their importance to people with dementia.

POSITION PAPER ON OLDER AUSTRALIANS

Seniors advocate COTA Australia has released a position paper, [A secure, livable income for all older Australians](#), which was developed in response to, and as a further contribution to, the refreshed debate currently occurring around superannuation, pensions, tax and mature age employment.

The position paper includes seven recommendations designed to improve the standard of living of vulnerable older people and to create a fairer retirement system that will provide income security in retirement for all older Australians at sustainable cost to the Budget.

They include:

- an urgent, independent Retirement Incomes Review considering all factors in the retirement income space
- withdrawal of the current Bill to change pension indexation to CPI only to ensure any future pension changes do not erode the living standards of people who rely on the age pension for all or most of their income
- consider the effectiveness and sustainability of superannuation tax concessions as part of the Retirement Incomes Review
- reinstate the funding for pensioner concessions in the states and territories while the Retirement Incomes Review is undertaken.

REPORT: FIXING THE PENSION

The Centre for Independent Studies (CIS) has released a report,

[The Age Old Problem of Old Age: Fixing the Pension](#)

, which suggests that the pension could be reformed to deliver income gains of more than \$5,900 a year to almost 98% of pensioners and also reduce the cost of the pension by \$14.5 billion a year.

The report says that with four out of every five retirees on the pension, and pensioners with over a million dollars in assets getting the same payment as those with almost nothing, the pension clearly needs reform.

It argues that the way to boost pensioner living standards lies in unlocking the savings in the family home – rather than continually increasing pension spending.



RESEARCH: SPORT DRINKING CULTURE

A new study shows alcohol companies are finding new and sophisticated ways to use the power of social media to pitch drinking as pivotal to the sporting experience.

[Merging sport and drinking cultures through social media](#), funded by the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) and undertaken by RMIT University, found the alcohol industry cleverly timed its posts to tie in with professional sporting events to encourage consumption.

The study explored sport-linked alcohol communication appearing on the most frequently used social media platforms, including Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.

The focus was primarily on the major alcohol brands sponsoring the Australian Football League (AFL), the National Rugby League (NRL), and Australian Cricket during the latter part of 2013 and throughout much of 2014.



ARTS LEADERS WITH DISABILITY PROGRAM

The Australia Council is offering up to 10 arts leaders with disability the opportunity to join the [Sync Leadership Program](#), providing a focus on the interplay between leadership and disability.

The program will be held from 12 to 16 October, providing training through a five-day residency in Adelaide, followed by individual coaching sessions delivered by the two program creators and presenters.

The Council is inviting expressions of interest from cultural leaders and influencers with disability to apply for the intensive leadership program. Applications for the Sync Leadership Program close on 2 June 2015.

SURVEY: AGE DISCRIMINATION IN WORKPLACE

The results of the nation's first survey of age discrimination at work, [National prevalence survey of age discrimination in the workplace](#), were released in April.

The results show that over a quarter of Australians aged 50 years and over had experienced some form of age discrimination in the last two years, and 80% of those spoke of negative impacts.

One third of people who had experienced age discrimination gave up looking for work as a result and almost half began to think about retirement or accessing their superannuation fund.

The report also shows how age discrimination impacts on men and women differently.

Government Policy and Information

EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST OLDER PEOPLE

Willing to Work: A National Inquiry into Employment Discrimination Against Older Australian and Australians with Disability was announced in April and will be led by the Age and Disability Commissioner, Susan Ryan.

Commissioner Ryan said employment rates for both older people and those with disability remain unacceptably low. While about a quarter of the population is older, they make up just 16% of the workforce. Australians with disability make up 15% of the working age population, but only 10% of them have jobs.

The inquiry will seek to identify the barriers that prevent people from working, and in consultation with employers, affected individuals and other stakeholders establish strategies to overcome these barriers.

The Inquiry will shortly publish an issues paper, a call for submissions and plans for consultations around the country. The Inquiry will conclude and report by July 2016.

\$1.7 MILLION FOR EMERGENCY RELIEF

The government announced it is providing an extra \$1.7 million in Emergency Relief grants.

This funding is to allow organisations to fill identified service gaps arising from funding allocations under the Department of Social Services grants scheme.

If any other gaps or unintended consequences are identified, the government says it will seek to address them while also being mindful of the significant budget repair task.

PURCHASING PROCESS FOR JOBACTIVE

On 1 July 2015, a new employment service, [jobactive](#), will replace the current Job Services Australia, to better meet the needs of job seekers and employers and improve job outcomes.

Under jobactive, Work for the Dole coordinators will start on 1 May and other services will start on 1 July, and operate for five years.

jobactive organisations will assist eligible job seekers to find and keep a job and ensure employers are receiving candidates that meet their business needs.

Work for the Dole coordinators will source appropriate Work for the Dole places and projects with not-for-profit organisations. The New Enterprise Incentive Scheme will support job seekers start up and run a viable small business. Harvest Labour Services and the National Harvest Labour Information Service will support the harvest requirements of growers in the horticulture industry.



ALCOHOL & DRUG TREATMENT FUNDING EXTENDED

The government has extended the funding of around 160 alcohol and drug treatment organisations to 30 June 2016. This includes 12 months extension of funding to state and territory alcohol and drug peak bodies.

A review of the drug and alcohol treatment services sector, commissioned by the Department of Health, is currently under consideration by the Commonwealth and state and territory governments. The review, which began in 2013, addresses issues of duplication and overlap between services.

FIRST AUSTRALIANS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

The First Australians Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FACCI) was launched in April, to drive more opportunities for Indigenous business.

Developed in partnership with Indigenous business leaders and Indigenous business chambers and associations throughout Australia, the FACCI has been set up to represent more than 2000 businesses.

PRIMARY HEALTH NETWORKS REPLACE MEDICARE LOCALS

From 1 July 2015, [Primary Health Networks](#) will replace Medicare Locals, with the aim of working directly with GPs, other primary health care providers, secondary care providers, hospitals and the broader community to improve outcomes for patients.

The 31 new PHN's will also align with state local hospital networks with the aim of reducing the agitation of movement for patients with chronic or complex conditions between primary care and hospital treatment.

PHN Community Advisory Committees will ensure all patients and local communities can provide feedback to, and have direct input into, the PHN to ensure they deliver the localised health care requirements that were unique to their region.

PC REPORT: HOUSING ASSISTANCE AND EMPLOYMENT

[The Productivity Commission released a research report](#) in April examining the links between housing assistance - social housing and Commonwealth Rent Assistance - and employment.

The Commission's research found that employment rates among income support recipients in public housing are likely to remain very low — at about 10% of the working age population — even if tenants are moved to market rents and CRA, if no other efforts are made to address directly the disadvantages of tenants.

The research revealed that it is the characteristics of individuals, and not the characteristics of the housing assistance that they receive, that matter to participation in employment.

MENTAL HEALTH EXPERT REFERENCE GROUP

The government has admitted the National Mental Health Commission's [Review of Mental Health Programmes and Services](#) paints a complex, fragmented, and in parts, disturbing picture of Australia's mental health system.

In light of this, it will establish an Expert Reference Group (ERG) to inform the development of short, medium and long-term strategies in four key areas based on the findings and recommendations, in four overarching mental health areas:

- suicide prevention
- promotion, prevention and early intervention of mental health and illness

- the role of primary care in treatment of mental health, including better targeting of services
- national leadership, including regional service integration.

The ERG will also be supported by:

- broad stakeholder workshops to ensure mental health services and organisations at the frontline can have direct input into this process
- an NDIS Mental Health working group
- an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Advisory Group
- setting better access to mental health services as a priority for the government's new Primary Health Networks
- an intergovernmental approach to ensure Commonwealth agencies respond to the report's concerns about fragmentation of payments and services, and better coordinate future systems and policies.

The government also says the mental health sector must play a direct part in the development of any policies and work hand-in-hand with governments to develop a national approach.

Anglicare Events

ANGLICARE EVENTS

[Brotherhood of St Laurence lunchtime seminar](#)

Date: 7 May 2015

Venue: Father Tucker's Room, BSL, 67 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy

Presenter: Dr Tim Moore, Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Community Child Health, Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Royal Children's Hospital

RSVP: jdouglas@bsl.org.au

Chaplaincy and Parish Community Work Network gathering

Date: 13-15 May 2015

Location: Adelaide

Anglicare Australia National Conference

Date: 13-16 September 2015

Location: QT Canberra

Sector Events

SECTOR EVENTS

[National Volunteer Week](#)

Date: 11-17 May 2015

National

[National Families Week](#)

Date: 15-21 May 2015

National

[Child Aware Approaches Conference](#)

Date: 18-19 May 2015

Venue: Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre

[Financial Counselling Australia Conference](#)

Date: 18-20 May 2015

Venue: QT, Canberra

[The Australian and New Zealand Addiction Conference](#)

Date: 20-22 May 2015

Venue: Outrigger Surfers Paradise, Queensland

[13th National Rural Health Conference](#)

Date: 24-27 May 2015

Venue: Darwin Convention Centre

[2015 National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation \(NACCHO\) Health Summit](#)

Date: 16-18 June 2015

Venue: Gold Coast Convention Centre

[No2Bullying Conference](#)

Date: 29-30 June 2015

Venue: Outrigger Surfers Paradise, Gold Coast

[16th International Mental Health Conference](#)

Date: 12-14 August 2015

Venue: QT Hotel, Gold Coast

[9th National LGBTI National Conference](#)

Date: 13-15 August 2015

Venue: National Convention Centre, Canberra

[National Op Shop Week](#)

Date: 23-30 August 2015

National

[Relationships and Intimacy as We Age \(COTA-Alzheimer's Australia\)](#)

Date: 8-9 September 2015

Venue: Pullman on the Park, Melbourne

[Anglicare Australia National Conference](#)

Date: 13-16 September 2015

Location: QT Canberra

[SNAICC \(Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Care\) National Conference](#)

Date: 15-17 September 2015

Venue: Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre

[Australian Social Policy Conference](#)

Date: 28-30 September 2015

Venue: University of NSW, Sydney

[LASA National Congress](#)

Date: 11-14 October 2015

Venue: Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre

[6TH National Australian Men's Shed Association Conference](#)

Date: 17-20 October 2015

Venue: Civic Precinct Newcastle

[National Housing Conference 2015](#)

Date: 28-30 October 2015

Venue: Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre

[National Complex Needs Conference](#)

Date: 17-18 November 2015

Venue: Canberra Rex Hotel