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MEDIA RELEASE

Aged care industry supports quality reforms, consumer protection

The peak bodies representing Australia's aged care industry will work with government on proposed reforms to the National Aged Care Quality Regulatory Processes in mutual support of the future of quality aged care in Australia.

"Government, providers and the community all share a desire for a strong aged care sector, supported by an accreditation system that protects consumers' safety and upholds the standards the community rightfully expects when it comes to quality of care," the three peak CEO's said in reply to Federal Minister for Aged Care Ken Wyatt's address to the National Press Club in Canberra on Wednesday.

The industry peaks agree with Minister Wyatt's views expressed today that "aged-care safety and quality are non-negotiable" and his assessment that "overwhelmingly, the majority of facilities provide excellent care and are working continually to improve services."

As a sector, providers need to ensure that catastrophic breaches of those standards, such as those identified at the Makk and McLeay wards in the Oakden Older Persons Mental Health Service, a facility operated by government, must never happen again.

"Our commitment to ensuring that outcome is emphatic and we will work with the government to support initiatives that are effective in reaching this end," the CEO's said.

"The community must be assured of the safety, wellbeing and quality of life they expect when they move into a residential aged care facility and we, as an industry, are determined to have regulation that functions effectively to those ends," said Sean Rooney, CEO of Leading Age Services Australia.

Cameron O'Reilly, chief executive of the Aged Care Guild said, "We support measures to assist in swiftly identifying those operators who do not meet the standards of contemporary practice and consumer need. However, aged care providers operate in a consumer-driven world. Maintaining a good reputation and the trust of the public is crucial to providers' ability to attract consumers and this driver is just as important as regulation in delivering the highest quality standards."

"The industry will work collectively with the Government in coming weeks to ensure any proposed reforms are targeted and effective in their focus on achieving quality outcomes for older Australians in aged care," said ACSA chief executive Pat Sparrow. "If we are to create an aged care sector that truly meets the changing needs of Australians as they age into the future, then regulation must also provide the right conditions for service innovation to thrive."

Pat Sparrow, CEO of Aged & Community Services Australia

Sean Rooney, CEO of Leading Age Services Australia

Cameron O'Reilly, CEO of the Aged Care Guild

ENDS

Aged Care Guild
3 Spring Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Ph: (02) 8249 4778
E: info@agedcareguild.com.au

Aged & Community Services Australia
Level 9, 440 Collins St
Melbourne VIC 3000, Australia
Ph: (03) 9607 1395
E: communications@acsa.asn.au

Leading Age Services Australia
First Floor Andrew Arcade, 42 Giles St
Kingston ACT 2604
Ph: (02) 6230 1676
E: info@lasa.asn.au

Media contacts:

Emily Parkinson
Media Manager
Aged & Community Services Australia
0420 390 031

Ashley Oliver
Media & Public Relations Adviser
Leading Age Services Australia
0458 011 009

Emily Donnelly
Aged Care Guild
0423 159 473