

Consumer Participation – Aged Care Reform

Continuing until December 2011, the Federal Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, Mark Butler, will be travelling throughout Australia to hold conversations with people, their families and carers about ageing. The conversations are supported by COTA Australia.

This comes as a response to the independent Productivity Commission's final report into the aged care system – 'Caring for Older Australians'.

The report has recognised a number of issues in the current system and recommends comprehensive reform. Some of the proposals include:

- Give older people and their carers more choice and control over the services they want.
- A Gateway would be established in each region of Australia, which can be accessed to receive information about positive and healthy ageing as well as enable people to be assessed for services. If you are assessed for services you would be given an entitlement which you would use to get the services you require. The Gateway would also assist and provide advice to help you choose to receive services at home or move into a residential care facility and which service provider/s you would like to use.
- Accessing aged care services needs to be made easier.
- People who can afford to contribute to the cost of receiving services do so. People with the same means, getting the same services, should pay the same no matter where they live. However, it is important to remember if you can't afford to pay the Government will pay your costs.
- Establish the Australian Aged Care Commission to ensure consumer protection against quality and pricing of services.

The Federal Government is considering the report and deciding what it should do to reform aged care. The Minister wants to hear from you about what is important as you get older and the support and services that are needed to assist you. Silver Chain encourages you to participate to help shape the future of your services.

To find out about conversation dates please visit www.agedcareconversations.govspace.gov.au. Or, to read the full report 'Caring for older Australians' visit www.pc.gov.au/projects/inquiry/aged-care/report.



Aged Care Complaints Scheme – news website

The Aged Care Complaints Scheme has launched the Aged Care Complaints Scheme news website www.agedcarecomplaints.govspace.gov.au.

The website will keep aged care providers, consumers and stakeholders up to date on progress implementing reforms to the Scheme; provide information about the complaints process and address topics of interest through regular blog posts and the 'frequently asked questions' section. The website will also be an important channel for consumers and the industry to provide feedback as well as ensure the aged care industry, care recipients, their carers and their families know where to go for the latest online information about the Scheme.

If you would like to find out more please visit the Aged Care Complaints Scheme website or call 1800 550 552.