

Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care

Future Directions

Older people, people with a disability and their carers

August 2004

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

I am pleased to present *Future Directions*. It sets out the Government's continuing commitment to improve support to older people, people with a disability and their carers.

Future Directions outlines the key challenges facing the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (DADHC), the immediate priorities that the Department must address and the longer term strategies that it will be adopting to achieve a sustainable and equitable system of services and supports.

For the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care to achieve its priorities and longer term strategies, it must work effectively with other organisations in Government and with its stakeholders. *Future Directions* sets out the consultative arrangements that the Department will use to ensure that it works with its stakeholders as it implements the initiatives set out in this document.

Future Directions was first presented in draft form to stakeholders at the first DADHC Stakeholders Forum in February 2004 and was made widely available. Many people have taken the time to provide feedback and suggestions which has greatly assisted the Department in finalising the document.

The priorities set out in *Future Directions* will be the major work of the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care over the next twelve to eighteen months. So that our stakeholders are kept well aware of this work, I have asked the Department to make available more detail about its plans (including timelines) for each of its priority initiatives and to provide regular updates of achievements against these plans. This information will be made available on the Department's website (www.dadhc.nsw.gov.au).

Further comments on the priorities or other matters contained in *Future Directions* can be forwarded to the Director-General of the Department. Contact details are on the last page of this document.



The Hon. Carmel Tebbutt MLC
Minister for Ageing
Minister for Disability Services

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (DADHC) assists older people, people with a disability and their carers to participate fully in community life.

In NSW 875,000 people are aged 65 years or over and more than 400,000 people have a severe or profound disability. In 2004/05 DADHC will spend almost \$1.4 billion on specialist services and initiatives to support older people, people with a disability and their carers across the state, an increase of \$109.9 million or 8.6% on the 2003/04 budget.

The services delivered through the specialist service system complement those of other NSW Government agencies which share the responsibility for delivering services and programs to older people, people with a disability and their carers, particularly in areas such as health care, education, transport, family and children's services, and housing.

The NSW Government recognises there are significant pressures challenging the ability of the current specialist service system to respond to the needs of this population.

Future Directions sets out the strategies that the Government will be pursuing to maintain a sustainable program of support for people who need assistance.

SOME OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

In the last decade, significant improvements have been made to supports for older people, people with a disability and their families and carers.

- Annual funding for disability services is now more than \$940 million, an increase of more than 90% on 1996/97 funding levels. This provides services for an estimated 80,000 clients each year.
- Funding for Home and Community Care (HACC) services is estimated to be more than \$437 million in 2004/05, an increase of \$31 million or 8.5% on 2003/04, and an increase of more than two thirds since 1996/97 funding levels. This provides services for an estimated 175,000 clients. Over 80% of HACC clients are aged 65 years or over.
- Non Government service providers have assumed a significant partnership role with almost 900 community based organisations delivering services at an annual cost of over \$690 million. Recognising this role, some \$83 million has been provided to assist these organisations meet cost increases stemming from changes to the Social and Community Services (State) Award.
- Significant resources have been invested in new initiatives and community partnerships such as new attendant care places (200% increase to 314 places since 1999), respite (120% increase since 1995 allowing 1900 more families to obtain respite) and local support co-ordination (28 positions introduced).

- Early intervention and prevention strategies have been extended, with more assistance for children and young people to remain at home and to encourage their development; a broader range of intensive support options; and the appointment of an additional 20 children's case managers within DADHC to improve the quality of assistance. Funding enhancements in the last two years total almost \$40 million.
- The Department has developed, implemented, and participated in initiatives aimed at improving the lives of older people, including the NSW Healthy Ageing Framework and the Future Directions for Dementia Care & Support in NSW 2001-2006.
- The Government has also acknowledged the important role that carers play through the establishment and provision of recurrent funding for the NSW Carers Program, and gearing other programs to more adequately meet their needs.
- The Department has introduced a new regional structure across NSW to enable decisions to be made close to clients and communities and to facilitate a more collaborative approach to local planning and service delivery.
- Other areas of Government have also taken significant steps to improve services for people with a disability and/or older people:
 - ◆ In 2003/04, funding for special education had risen to \$515 million, an increase of 84% since 1995.
 - ◆ There are now 72 easy access CityRail stations, 503 accessible buses (more than 26% of the fleet) and 371 accessible taxis (260 metro and 111 rural). In addition, nearly 1.4 million trips are supported each year through the Transport Subsidy Scheme.

OUR CHALLENGES

There are significant challenges facing DADHC in supporting older people, people with a disability, their families and carers in NSW:

- The potential for increased demand for services due to population growth and changes in the population:
 - ◆ The number of people of all ages with a moderate, severe or profound disability is increasing at a rate faster than the general population¹
 - ◆ The number of people aged 65 years and over is also increasing,² as is the proportion of older people coming from a culturally or linguistically diverse background.

¹ Predicted to number 742,000 by 2011, an increase of 18% over the number in 2000 (628,000). In contrast, the general population is forecast to increase by 8% over the same period (based on ABS data).

² Predicted to increase by almost 26% over the same period (based on ABS estimates).

- ◆ People with a disability are generally living longer and improvements in medical technologies are impacting on the nature of disabilities and supports required.
- Changes in family structures and work life will impact on the availability of people with the opportunity or capacity to provide informal care.
- Maximising the availability of early intervention and prevention services to reduce the likelihood that intensive support will be needed. This is particularly important in the context of children and families, where the Department has developed a comprehensive Action Plan to improve services.
- Delivering more equitable services by changing the mix and spread of specialist services that complement supports that are available in the wider community.
- Improving our effectiveness as a service provider to ensure the most efficient use of our resources.
- Supporting the non-government sector to respond to the growing and changing demand, and enabling community, mainstream and specialist services to work together to facilitate community participation
- Responding to and working with the Australian Government on the reform of the Community Care sector.

OUR IMMEDIATE PRIORITY INITIATIVES

The focus of our activity in the immediate future is to stabilise current funding and service delivery arrangements to take full advantage of the substantial funding growth that has occurred over the last decade. This will also allow us to set the scene for a longer-term improvement program.

To achieve this, DADHC is implementing nineteen immediate priorities. Work on many of these commenced in 2003-04 and they are the major activities that DADHC is undertaking during 2004-05 to improve services and outcomes. The Government has reinforced these strategies through the allocation of an additional \$72 million in 2003/04 as part of its mid-year review of budgets and an increase of \$109.9 million or 8.6% in the 2004/05 budget (as compared to 2003/04). The immediate priorities are:

- **Support for children.** Implement and extend the improvements to services for children that are set out in the *Improving Services for Children, Young People and Families Action Plan*. This will include establishing the new programs for children and young people at risk of being placed in voluntary care that were funded in the 2004-05 budget.
- **Emergency Response Capacity (Service Access System).** Continue to better target and support those people with the highest needs who cannot be appropriately supported through existing specialist disability services or mainstream disability services. This includes working to expand/enhance the capacity of existing resources in order to maximise the number of people

that can be supported and repositioning the program to achieve improved equity and more proactive capacity.

- **Transition from education.** Improve the effectiveness of post school support by introducing two new programs. Transition to Work Programs will focus on improving the transition to employment outcomes for school leavers who are able to move to employment within two years. Community Participation programs will provide long term funding and innovative support to improve community participation for school leavers who cannot transition readily to full time employment or employment programs.
- **Support for people who are ageing.** Develop a new Healthy Ageing Framework for NSW, a five year whole-of-government policy framework and action plan 2004 to 2009 to improve opportunities for older people to remain as independent and healthy as possible. One major step in this development is the Forum on Ageing hosted by the NSW Government on 28 September 2004. Complementing work on this framework will be a number of taskforces, work on dementia, intergenerational projects and the Seniors Card program.
- **Home and Community Care program.** Continue to grow and develop these services to enable frail older people and people with a disability to remain in their own homes. This will involve allocation of substantial growth (almost \$32 million in 2004/05) and, subject to agreement with the Australian Government, implementation of a program of capital works. Improvements in the program will also be sought through renegotiation of the HACC Agreement with the Australian Government.
- **Boarding houses.** Ensure ongoing support to those people who have or are being relocated from boarding houses to more appropriate accommodation support options in the community, including as a result of unplanned closures of boarding houses. Continue to provide services for residents in licensed boarding houses and work with operators to improve outcomes for residents. Recent work on options to improve the legislation covering licensed boarding houses has been released for public comment.
- **Closures of large residential centres.** Continue the work on relocating residents to more appropriate community housing arrangements. Stage One of the closure program will be substantially completed by December 2004: Many residents will have relocated, no children will remain in large residential centres and a significant proportion of centres will have closed. By the end of the year, 85 residents in Stage One will not have moved. For some, the timing of relocation depends on the delivery of suitable properties, for others, their complex needs require the development of new approaches to their care. However, full funding is available to support these relocations, and the planning process is well underway. In addition, by May 2005 the largest non-government operated centre will have closed, with over 100 people relocated to community housing arrangements.
- **People with High and Complex Needs.** Work with other agencies to develop support options for people with high and complex needs including

those requiring medical support and people who are in contact with, or at risk of being involved with the criminal justice system. Enhancements to behaviour intervention services will be introduced in 2005/06.

- **Respite Improvements.** The recent \$3.2 million expansion in flexible respite services has assisted hundreds of families with children and people with a disability who have ageing carers, giving them a much needed break from their full-time carer role. Work in 2004/05 will focus on improving access, utilisation and policy options for flexibility as well as reconfigurations of centre based respite facilities for children given the recent closure of the John Williams Memorial Centre.
- **Improving services for Indigenous people.** Continue to focus on enhancing outcomes for Aboriginal people. DADHC has recently appointed a senior executive to lead improvements to State-wide services for Aboriginal communities and to build on the strong service delivery achievements of Aboriginal Home Care.
- **Improving services for people from CALD backgrounds.** Continue to focus on enhancing outcomes for people of a CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) background. This will involve building on the recently implemented Joint Action Plan, a collaboration with twenty-one organisations representative of CALD communities and mainstream peak agencies. Work will be undertaken in consultation with the CALD Reference Group.
- **Prevention and early intervention.** Early intervention and prevention strategies are recognised as a key factor in supporting people with a disability to maximise their potential. To improve capacity in this area, work in 2004/05 will involve strengthening community support teams, putting in place improved behaviour management arrangements, and expanding Local Support Co-ordination. Work will also be undertaken with NSW Health to improve support for carers and diagnosis and assessment services.
- **Intake and assessment.** To improve the quality and responsiveness of access to DADHC services, work is underway to introduce coordinated intake, vacancy management and improved assessment arrangements. DADHC is redeveloping its client contact arrangements, as a community reception function, to respond earlier to requests for support and link families to information and services including by accessing mainstream services. In 2004/05, options for improving information and advocacy services will be canvassed. DADHC will also continue the development of its Client Information System.
- **Home Care.** Continue to improve arrangements to ensure that Home Care services are targeted to best address growing demand and that they are better integrated with services provided through the non-government sector. Work will also focus on continuing to improving Home Care's client service standards and its cost effectiveness.
- **Personal Care.** The recent \$7 million expansion of the attendant care program has increased places by 100 to a total of 314 places. Work in 2004/05 will build on this expansion. The various programs that provide

personal care for people with a physical disability will be drawn together under arrangements that will improve capacity to manage vacancies across them and provide a single intake procedure. Work will also continue on the pilot transition program for people with catastrophic injury in partnership with the Motor Accidents Authority.

- **DADHC operated accommodation services.** Building on the new networking structures for DADHC operated group homes, in 2004/05 we will focus on implementing local initiatives to improve client outcomes and operational productivity. Work will also continue to improve the operating arrangements in DADHC operated large residences.
- **Stabilising grants programs.** Building on the recent confirmation of the funding base for all 900 service providers, work in 2004/05 will focus on streamlining and rationalising funding arrangements within new agreements. In consultation with providers, a new system of monitoring performance and promoting continuous improvements will be introduced.
- **Commonwealth, State and Territory Disability Agreement.** Work will continue with the Australian Government on implementing the 2002-2007 agreement. A significant focus in 2004/05 will be on progressing the bi-lateral agreements for younger people in nursing homes, people with a disability who are ageing, and transition to employment programs. In addition, all Australian Disability Services Ministers agreed at their last meeting, in response to a request from NSW, to consider a report in November 2004 about the means of addressing increasing demand pressures on the disability services system.
- **DADHC organisational capacity.** Substantial work will be undertaken to improve the organisational capacity of DADHC. This is essential to enable it to implement these priorities and to provide services in a sustainable and responsive manner. The work will include improved planning, budgeting, reporting and policies that enable consistent regional practice. DADHC's Central Office is currently being realigned around the four business streams that operate in the regions, to enhance policy support to regions and to make the organisation more accessible to outside parties.

OUR DIRECTIONS

The need to develop long-term strategies that address our challenges in an equitable and sustainable fashion was recognised in bringing together the three agencies that now make up DADHC.

We also need to build on our achievements and current priority work by establishing longer term strategic directions that:

- Develop a more equitable, sustainable and balanced service system which recognises that:
 - ◆ most support for older people and people with a disability is provided informally by family, friends and others in the community. To strengthen this support requires:

- ▶ effective responses at critical times in the lives of a relatively small part of this population; and
- ▶ the provision of, often minor levels of, assistance to enable older people to stay at home for significantly longer periods³.
- ◆ a small proportion of older people and people with a disability need and use regular and substantial formal supports, because they have high and complex support needs and limited community supports. These may include people with high medical support needs, dual diagnosis, acquired brain injury, challenging behaviours, or people involved or at risk of being in contact with the criminal justice system.
- Structures and services need to be put in place that create a seamless system of delivery across government and non-government providers, so that services are integrated and focus on the needs of people and their carer(s), not on programs.

OUR LONGER TERM STRATEGIES

The Department's longer-term strategies focus on:

- **Working with other agencies.** Taking opportunities to influence and improve cross-sector engagement (both government and non-government) to enhance and sustain informal care systems and generic or mainstream services.
- **Prevention and early intervention.** Investing in preventative and early intervention strategies that minimise crisis responses and reduce the need to draw on higher cost services.
- **Managing longer-term issues for sector sustainability** such as the best mix of government and non-government providers, ensuring the non-government sector is sustainable and looking at new funding models.
- **Developing new service options.** Working with other agencies to develop new service options that meet the changing needs of our diverse client group and enable us to continue the program of closures of large residences.

WORKING TOGETHER

To achieve our vision we need to develop and maintain service systems that are based on organisations working together effectively.

This requires Government to address complex issues that fall across the responsibilities of several agencies. In recognition of the importance of across Government cooperation on human services issues, the Government has established a Human Services Committee of Cabinet.

³ Approximately 30% of people aged 70 years and over currently receive this form of support

It is also critical to ensure that DADHC shares information, exchanges ideas and tackles 'hard questions' with its stakeholders. It will consult with older people, people with a disability, their families and carers, service providers and experts in the field to help inform and guide its future decision-making, and to improve the focus and design of its priority initiatives. It will build on its existing consultative mechanisms by establishing the following structured approach:

- **Stakeholder Forum:** Held twice a year – to help identify issues facing stakeholders and to disseminate information about what we are doing and how initiatives are progressing – led by the Minister and the Director-General, DADHC.
- **Expert Advisory Groups:** For priority issues and initiatives – experts, key stakeholders and DADHC – examples include the Devolution Expert Advisory Group, Home Care Advisory Board, CALD Reference Group, Funding Expert Advisory Group, Boarding House Expert Advisory Group, the NSW Dementia Reference Group, and Physical Disability Working Group. In addition, the Office for Ageing is forming a number of taskforces to explore issues relating to ageing policy.
- **Regional information exchanges:** Regular regionally based arrangements about local service delivery, future plans and practical matters in local areas. To include parent groups, families, carers, service providers to discuss DADHC activities and to address local solutions to local problems. The Ministerial Advisory Committee on Ageing also hosts regular consultations in regional areas.
- **Ministerial Committees:** The Disability Council, the Home and Community Care State Advisory Committee and the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Ageing provide advice and guidance to the Minister on disability and ageing issues.

The Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care welcomes your feedback on Future Directions. Should you wish to comment on the Department's priorities or other issues mentioned in this document, please write to:

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Or email us at publications@dadhc.nsw.gov.au.