

## Show us the money - reform aged care through financial transparency

What are we spending on the people who care for older Australians? Well targeted aged care reforms can only be achieved if we know where the money goes.

The HSU today tendered its submission to the Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee in support of Senator Griff's Aged Care Legislation Amendment (Financial Transparency) Bill 2020.

The Federal Government provides a significant amount of taxpayer subsidies to the sector and should have a vested interest in knowing how these monies are spent.

The HSU says compelling providers under legislation to be transparent about how they allocate public funds should be a priority for Government; as it is for older Australians, aged care workers and the wider community.

"The HSU believes that ambiguity persists as to how the taxpayer money is spent, this is unacceptable and Minister Colbeck has a case to answer here around transparency," HSU National Secretary Lloyd Williams said.

"Labour costs get cut to increase the profit margin, which has led to the chronic issue of understaffing and if aged care workers are hired, they aren't paid well or trained well," he said.

"This all leads to poor care outcomes for the elderly."

The HSU recommends the Committee support the Bill and recommend its passage in the Senate, with some amendments, for greater clarity in expenditure reporting, being sought.

The COVID-19 pandemic had laid bare the problems in aged care in Australia with chronic understaffing, inadequate training, insecure work and staff working across multiple employers in order to pay the bills.

"The HSU has been calling for greater financial transparency for a long time, the sooner expenditure practices of providers are known, the better-informed future reforms will be," Mr Williams said.

Beyond the current crisis presented by the pandemic, an estimated 640,000 additional workers across the full spectrum of roles will be needed in the next 30 years to meet the demands of an ageing population. These roles must be appropriately resourced.

"Holistic, person-centred care requires adequate staff, appropriate skills mix and job security."

"Show us the money, so we can move quickly to targeted solutions for the aged care sector."

ENDS

