

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Area 1 - Promote positive ageing

There appears to be a vast generational difference about the value of older people in society. The study revealed that younger generations hold ageist attitudes toward older people and perceive older people as unproductive and unambitious. Numerous research studies have identified that many older people have a constellation of skills, knowledge and experiences of value that they would be willing to share.

Recommended Actions:

1. A range of intergenerational initiatives focused on sharing the skills, knowledge and experience of older people are developed. Examples of initiatives include older people working alongside young parents to teach them parenting skills and home making skills, and older people partnering with schools to provide life skills to young people.
2. An active media campaign (similar to Aged and Community Services Australia's current *Can't do it without you* social media campaign) is developed and implemented to raise the profile of older people and the positive contributions they make to society.
3. An annual media prize is developed and awarded to the most positive photographic image and news story that promotes positive ageing and raises the status of older people.
4. The Federal and State Government policy approach to *Active Ageing* for Home and Community Care program (HACC) services continues to be developed and implemented.
5. Health promotion and positive ageing programs are developed and implemented to encourage optimum health and independence of older Victorians.
6. Programs and strategies which promote the rights of older Victorians and address issues of elder abuse are further developed.

Area 2 - Social inclusion of older people

The Federal Government's Social Inclusion agenda states that social inclusion involves having the opportunities for: employment, access to services, connecting with others, dealing with personal crisis and being heard. The results from this study revealed that older people have difficulties with at least two of these areas: connecting with other people and being listened to and consulted with.

Recommended Actions:

1. An analysis of learnings from existing projects aimed at reducing social isolation among older people is undertaken and strategies for the establishment of new initiatives and/or expansion of existing initiatives are implemented.
2. Opportunities for older people to contribute to the planning and provision of programs and services are pursued, for example, consulting with older people regarding their preferences when developing a program of social activities.
3. Further development of assistive technologies that promote independence, community access and social engagement.
4. Older persons consumer group is established to investigate the feasibility of developing an initiative inspired by a United Kingdom program that focuses on older people taking on the role of 'Champions of Change' within communities.
5. With the support of government, initiatives are developed and explored by aged care providers, community groups, educational and employment agencies to increase opportunities for older and younger people to have greater contact and interaction.
6. An accessible and affordable transport system that is aged and disability friendly is provided.
7. Community hubs, services and programs that enable older people to pursue their lifestyle and recreational interests is pursued and expanded.

Area 3 - Consumer choice and participation

The results of the study identify that consumer choice is an important issue for older people. Increasing choice in aged care services was also a key recommendation in the final report of the NH&HR Commission Report in June 2009.

Recommended Actions:

1. Aged care providers are encouraged and supported to identify ways in which older people can exercise greater choice and participation in the receipt of care services (i.e. consumer directed care).
2. A range of training packages are available to aged care staff focusing on areas such as: person centred care, interpersonal relationships, consumer empowerment and rights.
3. A social marketing campaign that targets the 55+ aged group and focuses on preparing for older age is supported by government.

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