



Aged & Community Services
Association of NSW & ACT

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

The Aged & Community Services Association is a registered industrial organisation of employers who are aged and community care providers in the non-profit, charitable sector.

ACS is a representative organisation. Politically at a Commonwealth and State level, it represents members' views either directly in its own right or indirectly via Aged and Community Services Australia. It also has direct access to Ministers at a State and Federal level on particular issues.

ACS provides industrial, lobbying, educational and policy services to members.

INDUSTRIAL

The Association is aware that aged and community care providers face an ever increasingly complex and demanding environment within which they are asked to provide services. Addressing the demands of the workplace and discharging employment obligations are examples where the Association can provide assistance.

Managers, Chief Executive Officers, not to mention Boards, need access to services upon which they can rely. ACS provides professional services to meet a wide range of employment needs. The services offered may be summarised under five areas - advocacy, advice, support, information and education.

Advocacy

Industrially, the Association is a major party in researching, advocating and negotiating terms and conditions of employment. Award reviews and development are a particular activity. The ACS objective is to effectively represent the interests of those members who form the not-for-profit private sector within the aged care industry. Our team of three Employee Relations Advisers represent those interests in both the State and Federal Industrial Relations jurisdictions.

Advice

Advice is provided via the medium of phone, fax, email, letter or personal visit. It ranges from simple advice on award conditions to more complex analysis of problems, sometimes involving resolution of differences of view with unions in the interpretation and application of award provisions. Guidance is also available in handling dismissals and, should it be necessary, representation where a former employee claims an unfair dismissal through the legal system.

Information

Members can obtain accurate information at all times by downloading awards and wage rates on our website.

Through our monthly ACS Industrial Update we provide advice on the ever changing face of Industrial Relations and the work environment, arising from government policies,

legislative variations, regulatory amendments and any other relevant matter having potential to assist ACS members in the operation of their facilities. An OHS News Update is issued to members in addition to the Industrial News Update to help members' staff gain a clearer understanding of OHS and employment issues.

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Seminars are conducted regularly in both Sydney and regional centres. The education program is revised annually to reflect the needs and requests of members. Through our Learning and Development Centre activities we are leading the aged care industry in establishing a framework of nationally recognised training qualifications for direct care and ancillary staff.

Our afternoon seminars and annual conferences for boards and senior managers also ensure industry leaders and decision makers are kept up-to-date with trends and changes in policy. ACS is the only peak body in Australia to host a conference dedicated to improving occupational health, rehabilitation and safety in the aged services industry.

REPRESENTATION AND ADVOCACY

Representation on behalf of members' interests is conducted with the full spectrum of government departments on all aspects of issues relating to aged and community care. Some current issues are -

- Impact of Tax Reform on charities
- Obtaining fair indexation levels for residential and community care services
- NSW Department of Health Review of Nursing Homes Act 1988
- Transfer of Government funded nursing homes to the charitable, non-profit, public benevolent sector
- Development of standards accreditation processes for community care
- Implementation of national and NSW health reforms, including development of Multi-Purpose Services
- Review of the NSW Retirement Villages Act and Code of Practice Review
- Workers' Compensation funding
- Promotion of continuous improvement systems for retirement villages.
- Support for members in regard to management issues for residential care in relation to implementing the RCS and meeting Accreditation standards.

REGIONAL COMMITTEES

Regional Committees are established and active in the Hunter, Riverina, Far North Coast, Mid North Coast, New England, ACT and Southern Tablelands, Central West, Orana and Far West, Far South Coast, Central Coast, Sydney South, Sydney North and Sydney West.

Information and local networking are vital to keep abreast of the constant changes taking place. The bi-monthly newsletter **ACS Update** and fortnightly **Brief Update**, advise on a full spectrum of information about nursing homes, hostels, retirement villages, community care services, industrial issues, education and commercial matters.

NATIONAL REPRESENTATION

Aged & Community Services Australia, of which the ACS Association of NSW & ACT Inc is a founding member, is the only association of care industry associations in Australia which can make a legitimate claim to being representative of the full spectrum of

residential care, community care and retirement village service providers on a national basis. Aged & Community Services Australia, which has a permanent secretariat in Melbourne, meets regularly with Commonwealth departmental officers at First Assistant Secretary level and Director-General level as well as with appropriate Federal Ministers.

ACS, similarly, meets regularly with NSW and ACT departmental officers and politicians to report the views of members. In NSW relevant portfolios to ACS members include the NSW Departments of Fair Trading (Retirement Village Industry Code of Practice), Health, Ageing and Disability, Local Government, Urban Development, Community Services and in ACT the Chief Minister's Department.

FEES

Membership fees are calculated on the basis of an owning organisation fee and then a bed or community care service fee basis.

WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN ACS

The Association has achieved much for its members and the aged care industry as a whole. Our staff team of 20 (full and part-time) includes personnel with qualifications and expertise covering every facet of aged and community care.

With a strong membership and by being representative of the whole of the non-profit and non-government sector, we can continue to influence the decision makers in government at both a State and Federal level. Because of the range and quality of services provided by ACS, membership subscription is one of the best business decisions any charitable aged or community care organisation can make.

DISCUSSIONS WITH YOUR BOARD

I am available to meet with you and/or your Board without obligation to discuss any aspects of membership and the benefits which the Association can provide. In the meantime, the enclosed information provides some additional background about the Association.

Jill Pretty
Chief Executive Officer