



SENATOR THE HON RICHARD COLBECK

Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians

Minister for Youth and Sport

Ref No: MC20-034958

Mayor David O'Loughlin
President
Australian Local Government Association
8 Geils Court
DEAKIN ACT 2600

17 SEP 2020

Dear Mayor

Thank you for your correspondence of 21 August 2020 concerning motions put forward by the Australian Local Government Association that relate to my Sport and Aged Care portfolios.

The Australian Government continues to support encouraging more women and girls to participate in sport due to the strong mental and physical health benefits it provides. In the 2018–19 Budget, we announced a \$230 million package for sport participation and physical activity initiatives. This includes support for projects targeted at encouraging more women and girls to participate in sport and physical activity. Through the 2019–20 Budget, the Government is providing significant investments in women's sport across Australia. This includes \$150 million to support the development of female change room facilities at sporting grounds and for community swimming facilities across Australia.

The Women Leaders in Sport (WLIS) program is managed by Sport Australia in partnership with the Office for Women. Since 2002, WLIS has provided leadership development for over 24,000 women in sport through a series of programs – a year long targeted program for senior women leaders, individual and organisational development grants for leadership training and leadership workshops for individuals and organisations.

The Government's national sport plan – Sport 2030 notes there are opportunities to share facilities across community organisations and schools, in particular encouraging schools to ensure communities can access their facilities, where relevant and appropriate – essentially "Unlocking the School Gate".

The Government continues to focus on the unique challenges facing consumers and service providers in rural and remote Australia, as well as ensuring services are culturally appropriate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as aged care reform continues. The Government is providing unprecedented support through a range of programs and flexible care options including the Multi-Purpose Services and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Care Program.

The Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP has made a commitment to continuing to improve aged care for older Australians by announcing a Royal Commission in Aged Care Quality and Safety.

The Terms of Reference specifically covers how to deliver accessible affordable and high quality aged care services in regional, rural and remote locations.

Since 2016–17, the Government has invested in research to develop a new approach to funding residential aged care. The Australian National Aged Care Classification (AN-ACC), derived from the University of Wollongong's Resource Utilisation and Classification Study, is the proposed new funding model for residential aged care currently under consideration. The study found that the costs of providing residential care in rural and remote areas are considerably more than in other areas. As such, under the AN-ACC model these facilities would receive a greater fixed payment to account for these extra costs. The model is not prescriptive regarding specific care that needs to be provided to a resident to receive certain funding levels. This empowers health practitioners to use their clinical judgement, and take into account residents' preferences in developing care plans for residents. It also ensures facilities in rural and remote areas, with less access to allied health professionals, are able to access the same funding for high needs residents as their metropolitan counterparts.

A trial of the AN-ACC assessment framework started in November 2019, however was suspended in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The findings of the trial up to that point concluded that the model is fit for purpose, nationally scalable and able to be efficiently undertaken by an external assessment workforce. More information on residential aged care funding reform and the AN-ACC trial are available on the Department of Health's website at: www.health.gov.au.

Thank you for raising these matters.

Yours sincerely



Richard Colbeck

cc: The Hon Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government