

14.02.24

**Department of Health and Aged Care  
New Aged Care Act Consultation**

**By email: [AgedCareLegislativeReform@health.gov.au](mailto:AgedCareLegislativeReform@health.gov.au)**

## **Introduction**

The Aged Rights Advocacy Service (ARAS) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Aged Care Exposure Draft.

ARAS has also had the opportunity to participate in the South Australian consultations held by KPMG in Adelaide, Port Augusta and Victor Harbor which also provided an opportunity to hear directly from older people and Advocates their views of the draft.

ARAS, as the only South Australian member of the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN), which delivers the National Aged Care Advocacy Program (NACAP), has also worked closely with OPAN members, the OPAN Policy and Systemic Advocacy Advisory Group, OPAN Human Rights Advisory Group to provide a comprehensive, relevant and timely submission that reflects the feedback of older people engaged with OPAN, Advocates, and aged care policy and legal experts.

ARAS endorses the joint submissions and table of recommendations as made by the OPAN.

## **About Aged Rights Advocacy Service (ARAS) Inc.**

ARAS is a state-wide, not-for-profit, independent, community-based organisation that has been providing information education and advocacy support for older adults across South Australia since 1990.

Older people who use community or residential aged care services or who live in retirement villages, and older people who are experiencing, or who are at risk of abuse from family or friends, can retain an ARAS advocate, at no cost, to assist them to address their concerns.

ARAS also has specialist Aboriginal Advocates who provide culturally safe and appropriate supports and who host annual intergenerational gatherings in regional South Australia.

ARAS hosted the annual South Australian World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) on-line in 2023. There were 815 registrants, including those from overseas and interstate as well as South Australians, with feedback signalling that the on-line event had provided greater access for registrants who were from rural and remote centres. WEAAD is supported by the United Nations and the World Health Organisation and is acknowledged annually on 15th of June. The conference brings together policy makers and frontline workers, covering the latest research and reviewing the progress that is occurring. At the forefront of the conference is the key message that abuse of any older adult is unacceptable.

ARAS has an experienced volunteer Board of non-executive Directors and a committed staff. In addition to supporting older adults through individual advocacy, ARAS provides information and education sessions about aged care rights, retirement villages entitlements and broader human rights. In these ways ARAS contributes to community understanding of issues effecting

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ARAS proudly acknowledges her Excellency  
the Honourable Frances Adamson AC,  
Governor of South Australia, and  
Mr Rod Buntzen as our Patrons.

Regional Offices by appointment only

### **Dulwich**

175 Fullarton Road  
Dulwich SA 5065

### **Berri**

21 Denny Street  
Berri SA 5343

### **Victor Harbor**

9/46-52 Ocean Street  
Victor Harbor SA 5211  
(access from Coral Street)

### **Nuriootpa**

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Nuriootpa SA 5355

vulnerable older people and helps to ensure that the voice of older adults, and younger people who are residing in residential aged care can be heard on issues that matter to them.

ARAS is one of five founding members of Elder Abuse Action Australia (EAAA) funded by the Commonwealth Attorney General's Department and volunteers its expertise and knowledge in support of the development of EAAA as a peak body and the ongoing refinement of the national knowledge hub "Compass."

ARAS is also a founding member of the South Australian Alliance for the Prevention of Elder Abuse and the only South Australian member of Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) which delivers the National Aged Care Advocacy Program (NACAP). ARAS is funded by OPAN, the Australian Government, SA Health, Office for Ageing well and APHN.

Fast facts on ARAS' support for older people in 2022-2023

- 3,911 individual advocacy cases & information enquiries handled
- 43 financial advocacy cases
- 576 education sessions with a total of 15,138 participants
- 137 community activities/events
- 57 networking events
- Navigator trial (344) transitioned into Care Finder (Salisbury & Playford) (109)
- 310 Home Care Check In Trial 3
- 346 callers referred to other relevant services
- Overall direct contact 22,432 with South Australians.

## **Conclusion**

ARAS, with its significant individual grass roots engagement supporting older people, has leveraged our extensive expertise and direct contact with older people to raise the voice of older people and inform the joint submission. Complimentary is the expertise of the ARAS Board members who with their lived experience and professional expertise, skills and knowledge in regards to aged care policy and law.

ARAS also wishes to acknowledge OPAN and the significant work of all who contributed to the joint submission and table of recommendations.

ARAS endorses the joint submissions and table of recommendations as made by the OPAN.