

ACIA welcomes renewed focus on quality, integrity and safeguarding across disability and community supports

The Australian Community Industry Alliance (ACIA) welcomes Minister Butler's announcement outlining the Commonwealth Government's reform agenda to strengthen the sustainability, integrity and quality of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

ACIA supports the Minister's focus on safeguarding vulnerable Australians, lifting provider accountability, strengthening payment integrity, and expanding mandatory registration for higher risk supports including personal care, daily living supports and supports delivered in closed settings.

ACIA Chief Executive Officer said the announcement recognises a critical issue that ACIA has long advocated for: quality and safeguarding must sit at the centre of every publicly funded support system.

"The Minister's announcement rightly identifies that quality, integrity and accountability are not optional features of care systems — they are the foundation of public trust."

"Australians with disability, older Australians, veterans, people injured in transport or workplace accidents, and others receiving community supports deserve safe, accountable and high-quality services, regardless of which funding stream pays for their care."

The Minister's announcement highlighted concerns about fraud, weak market controls, inconsistent provider quality, and the need to strengthen safeguards in higher risk supports. It also proposed expanded mandatory registration, a digital payments system, tighter controls on intermediaries, and a stronger focus on accountable providers.

ACIA said these reforms are an important step, but the broader care economy also requires attention.

ACIA represents providers delivering essential community support services across Australia. It is the custodian of the Australian Community Industry Standard (ACIS), a nationally recognised and JASANZ-endorsed framework supporting safe, high-quality community care. ACIA's membership includes more than 100 provider members employing more than 35,000 staff and supporting more than 150,000 clients nationally.

"The NDIS is a vital national scheme, but it is not the only system where Australians receive community-based support."

"Several million Australians receive community supports outside the NDIS and aged care systems, including through personal injury schemes, veterans' services, other government-funded programs and private arrangements. Many of these services are not covered by mandatory quality standards, creating gaps in quality, safety and accountability."

ACIA said the Government's reform direction creates a timely opportunity to adopt a more nationally consistent approach to quality across community supports.

ACIS is a tried, tested and independent quality framework that has operated for more than 15 years. It provides practical requirements for governance, incident reporting, risk management, service delivery and continuous improvement.

ACIA stands ready to work with the Commonwealth, states and territories, funders, regulators and providers to help close the quality gap across the broader care economy.

ACIA is calling for:

- **Mandatory quality standards** for providers delivering higher-risk community supports outside the NDIS and aged care systems.
- **Recognition of ACIS** as a ready-made national framework for safe, accountable and high-quality community support.
- **Partnership with government and funders** to co-design proportionate, staged and practical implementation models.
- **Broader consultation** with providers, participants, veterans, carers, funders and regulators to ensure reforms improve outcomes without reducing access to essential services.

ACIA is currently commencing the scheduled three-year review of the Australian Community Industry Certification Scheme (ACICS) and ACIS Version 5.0. The review will include structured stakeholder consultation to ensure the standard remains contemporary, evidence-informed and aligned with evolving expectations across community care, disability and compensable care systems.

"The Minister's announcement reinforces that Australia must move beyond a fragmented approach to quality. The goal should be simple: wherever vulnerable Australians receive care and support, there should be clear standards, independent oversight, strong incident reporting and a culture of continuous improvement."

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Source note: Prepared using ACIA's DVA pitch deck, "Delivering Better Supports for All Australians: Closing the Quality Gap in Community Support Services" (April 2026), and Minister Butler's announcement dated 22 April 2026.