

Media Release

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ACH Group backs call to support for older workers

ACH Group has welcomed calls by Australia's newly appointed Senior Australian of the Year Graham Farquhar for better support older Australian workers.

In an interview with ABC Radio National last week, Mr Farquhar said employers needed to become smarter about the way they employed people and update their HR policies to cater for Australia's ageing population.

ACH Group General Manager Culture Business Quality Nichole Tierney said ACH Group recognised that older workers can and do make a valuable contribution to the workforce. A total of 55.4 per cent of the workforce is older than 45 and the average age of employees is 47.

"Older workers are able to draw on years of experience both in work and in life to help us create a diverse workplace. As an organisation, our staff and volunteers share the belief that older people should be valued and respected, connected to their communities and in control of their lives.

To support the needs of older workers, ACH Group offered flexible work arrangements, recruitment meritocracy and targeted wellbeing initiatives.

ACH Group employees Helen Vincent, 68, and Joyleen Thomas, 76, continue to enjoy rewarding careers and make a valued contribution to the not-for-profit organisation.

Helen began with ACH Group as a volunteer in 2010, seeking a career change. She now works part time on a Customer Experience Project which sees her contact current and former customers to uncover what they think of ACH Group. "Working is important to me – whether in a volunteer or paid capacity, because it's really important that we feel valued, connected, and contribute as part of a team."

As Senior Manager, Good Lives, Joyleen's role is to act as custodian of the organisation's values. In the early 2000s Joyleen and current COTA Victoria CEO Ronda Held developed a tool known as Customer Impact Statement (CIMPACT) to measure the impact of services on the lives of older people. "They say if you choose a job you love, you'll never have to work a day in your life," Joyleen says. "I think this job chose me, and I feel really privileged to work with so many people who want to make a difference."

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 13 per cent of people aged over 65 work today, up from nine per cent a decade ago. By 2020, it is estimated that 16.1 per cent of Australia's population will be aged 65 and over. By 2056, the number of people living in Australia over the age of 65 is expected to be one in four.*

Minister for Aged Care Ken Wyatt said Australia's ageing population presented great opportunities for Australia's society and economy. "Senior Australians also play important roles in helping maintain many volunteering and community based organisations and provide valuable mentoring to younger generations."

**Source: Federal Government's 2015 Intergenerational Report: <https://treasury.gov.au/intergenerational-report/>*

End Media Release

About ACH Group

ACH Group is a not-for-profit aged care organisation that has been offering services to support good lives for older people in South Australia since 1952. As well as accommodation options across Adelaide, the Fleurieu Peninsula and East Melbourne, the group offers a range of health, wellbeing, respite and support services, help at home and social activities. Our 1700 specialist staff and hundreds of volunteers share the belief that older people should be valued and respected, connected to their communities and in control of their lives.

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