

1 Introduction

This report is the second annual compilation of national administration by-product data prepared by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare on Community Aged Care Packages—a Commonwealth-funded program designed to provide assistance to enable frail older people with complex care needs to continue living in the community.

The report contains a set of statistics compiled from the Aged and Community Care Management Information System (ACCMIS), managed and regularly updated by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care. The aim of this report is to highlight the patterns of service provision and characteristics of recipients of the Community Aged Care Package Program. The data reported provide a summary of:

- growth trends in Community Aged Care Packages over time;
- the number of Community Aged Care Packages as at 30 June 2000;
- the number of outlets providing these packages throughout Australia;
- socio-demographic characteristics of care package recipients;
- service provision in relation to 'special needs' groups;
- the number of admissions and separations between 1 July 1999 and 30 June 2000; and
- State and Territory variations.

To date, not all service-providing outlets are required to periodically report information such as the type of assistance received by care recipients, their levels of dependency and carer support. Some State/Territory offices are collecting a wide range of data, including types of assistance received, carer availability and staff composition. However, generalisation of these practices has not been required at the national level and, hence, these aspects of care packages are outside the scope of this report.

There is a move, however, towards more comprehensive and regular collection of information about care package recipients and the assistance they receive, as well as the nature of the service-providing outlets. It is expected that ACCMIS will cover a broader range of activity of Community Aged Care Packages in the future and hence, future reporting on the Community Aged Care Package Program will be more wide ranging.

For detailed background information on the program as well as earlier data on the use and provision of Community Aged Care Packages, readers should refer to the report entitled *Community Aged Care Packages. How Do They Compare?* (Mathur et al. 1997). National publications such as *Australia's Welfare* (AIHW, various years) and the *Report on Government Services* (SCRCSSP, various years) also report on selected aspects of the program.