

19th July 2017



Email: peter.schirmer@lca.org.au

Dear Peter

Update 5: LCA Aged Care and Community Services Governance Dialogue

(A project of the Lutheran Church of Australia to enhance mission, governance & leadership in aged and community services within LCA).

'Options For Our Future' Workshop Conducted:

Thank you to everyone who attended and contributed to making the 'Options For Our Future' Workshop held in Brisbane last weekend such a success! Over 45 people from Lutheran aged care, retirement living, disabilities and community care organisations attended along with District and General Church Council representatives. The gathering was blessed with the attendance of the host LCA Bishop, John Henderson; the local Queensland Bishop Paul Smith and 2nd Assistant Bishop Andrew Ruddell from South Australia.

The Friday night Fellowship Dinner was a hit with attendees – a relaxed informal social and networking experience. Wendy Rocks, Managing Director of Lutheran Aged Care Albury (LACA) gave a presentation that explained the governance system of that organisation in relation to the two executive director positions on that Board. It appears only LACA and Fullarton Homes make use of executive directors within the LCA community services sector. Wendy also outlined a successful music therapy program that had been carefully conducted – the data showing a major benefit to client participants.

Jacqui Kelly, CEO of Lutheran Services Queensland, provided a presentation that highlighted how a large multi-service, multi-site organisation can still be focussed on local needs and local service delivery. Jacqui also wowed participants with the visions of Lutheran Services Queensland for future client-focussed living suites, modern multi-storey developments and a multi-acreage 'care-farm' community for rural residents – the 'care-farm community' being a first for Australia when developed. These future visions by Lutheran Services Queensland are based on international research and only possible because of the economies of scale resulting from Lutheran Services large size. Jacqui also overviewed the benefits of an innovative approach in using animals to engage with persons living with dementia.

The following day (Saturday) local Bishop Paul Smith opened the workshop in reflection and prayer. The morning session then saw five discussion groups cover almost all of the 40 draft recommendations contained in the "Stocktake, Future Options and Recommendations Report", along with a number of possible future structural options. In summary the vast majority of the draft recommendations were supported by the groups who discussed them. In relation to a few of the recommendations it was agreed that the 'devil was in the detail' and that those recommendations needed to be fleshed out more in the next report.

In the afternoon five specific 'key issue' groups discussed 5 key issues that had arisen from the morning discussions.

Afternoon Group 1 delved into the critical issue of the *role & responsibility of the Lutheran Church in regard to those community service organisations whose purpose and activity is about furthering the mission of the Lutheran Church in regard to ministering to human need*. The discussion canvassed issues such as 'ownership', 'authority' & 'interface with legal entities outside the structure of the Lutheran Church'.

Afternoon Group 2's task was to begin on the assumption that, in terms of good governance, the Lutheran Church has both a moral & legal imperative to intervene in the operations of dysfunctional or financially stressed community service organisations that exist to further the objects of the church. This group focussed on issues such as *"when to intervene – under what conditions?; What would the triggers be?; How should the church intervene? etc*

Afternoon Group 3 was formed to acknowledge the requests by a number of small Lutheran aged care services for the Church to provide a greater level of governance and policy support to them in areas such as governance advice, advice on government policy reforms, HR, IR & finance advice etc. The task of this group was to discuss *How the Lutheran Church could best support those community services seeking support from the church*.

Afternoon Group 4 looked at *what the future requirements should be in relation to the composition & skills of governing bodies of community services associated with the Lutheran Church of Australia*. Issues such as *members being Lutheran?, gender and age balance were canvassed*.

Afternoon Group 5 continued the discussion from the morning session in regard to fleshing out some *criteria that could be used by the Lutheran Church for assessing structural options in regard to future support of Lutheran community services*.

In summary, feedback from participants about the workshop was positive with people looking forward to project report number 2 and the opportunity to fine tune the final recommendations of the consultants in Adelaide on 13th & 14th October.

Bishop Paul Smith (as 'Chaplain for the day') led the closing session with a lovely true story, a devotion and then a rousing rendition of a favourite Robin Mann-penned song.

Next Steps

1. Ideas and opinions from the 'Options For Our Future' Workshop discussion groups are being forwarded to the project consultants (Les and his team).
2. Workshop participants are encouraged to report back to their senior management and boards on the outcomes of the workshop. If any ideas and opinions emerge from these internal discussions workshop participants and/or participating organisations, including District Church Councils, are invited to forward them to Les Stahl (cc Beatry Bear) – see email details below - over the next four weeks.
3. Information & registration details about the final two day national conference in Adelaide in October will be circulated as soon as possible.
4. A second report with updated recommendations will be prepared by the consultants. This Report No2 will be circulated in September to all identified stakeholders as per the earlier report - for discussion within all relevant church and community services organisations.

5. The two day national 'Discerning Our Future' Conference will be held over Friday 13th and Saturday 14th October in Adelaide to review the refined recommendations and provide final advice to the consultant facilitators about the best way for the Lutheran Church to improve governance arrangements in relation to all community services associated with the LCA.
6. A penultimate "The Way Forward" Report (incorporating a transition/implementation plan) will then be finalised by the consultants for final feedback prior to
7. The report being submitted to General Church Council in early 2018.

Dialogue Project webpage

When uploaded, information and copies of all key documents associated with this project can be found on the project's webpage at <http://www.lca.org.au/laccs-gov-dialogue>

Check out Project Updates, Report No1 and spiritual and other resources submitted to the project to date. New Items on the project webpage include:

- National Guidelines for Spiritual Care in Aged Care
- Draft Papers from the South Australian Chaplain's Network:
 - Lutherans in Aged Care – Implications for Practice
 - Christian/Lutheran Ethos – Induction Presentation Template
 - Aged Care Chaplaincy – Roles & Responsibilities.

Dialogue Contact Details:

- for 'Dialogue Group' or LCA level enquiries contact Peter Schirmer, Phone 08 8267 7300 Email: peter.schirmer@lca.org.au

(Dialogue Group members are: Nancy Fox, Colleen Fitzpatrick, Matt Johns, Nathan Klinge, Clare Seligmann and Mel Zerner).

- for Lead Facilitator Les Stahl: Mobile 0438 601 021. Email: facilitationplus@gmail.com
- Les Stahl's admin support: Beatry Bear Email: beatrybear@icloud.com

Further Update sheets are planned on a regular basis so keep an eye out for them.

For back copies of the Project Introductory Letter, Report 1 and/or Updates 1 to 4 please visit the website: <http://www.lca.org.au/laccs-gov-dialogue> or contact me as shown above.

Sincerely in Christ,



Peter Schirmer
Executive Officer of the Church