

Terms of Dialogue: LCA Aged Care and Community Services Governance Dialogue

Name

Lutheran Aged Care & Community Services Governance Dialogue

Summary

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

Background

At its Convention in April 2013 the LCA General Synod adopted the following resolution: *THAT the GCC, consistent with the Strategic Direction of the LCA - especially regarding improving our "Governance and Leadership capability" and being "good stewards of our available resources" - undertake a review of the current governance and administrative structures of the LCA including at the National level, District level, Boards, Commissions, Councils and Agencies during the next synodical term.*

GCC engaged an external consultant, Dr Maureen Cleary to conduct the review. The consultant noted in Part J of her final report that due to time constraints no in-depth analysis of Aged Care was conducted.

One of Dr Cleary's recommendations was that "GCC initiates a governance review of LCA's aged and community care organisations with a view to identifying the various models of service provision and how they fulfil the Object of the Church to: 'Minister to human need in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord in the spirit of Christian love and service, and to provide institutions and agencies for this purpose'."

In November 2015 GCC partially adopted the Cleary recommendation in the following resolution: "that consideration be given by GCC to a national 'system' model for the governance oversight of aged care facilities within the LCA."

It is considered the most appropriate way to consider the future of Aged Care Governance and Leadership capabilities is through a dialogue process designed in a manner that creates an open, transparent and trusting environment; all key stakeholders are given opportunity to have their point of view heard; and moves commensurate with the stakeholders' ability to embrace change.

The intent of the dialogue is to strengthen and build on the rich history of service provided to the community by over 20 aged and community service organisations across Australia.

Objects

Commensurate to a body of the nature and size of the LCA and its aged care* organisations, the dialogue will consider future Governance and Leadership capabilities for Lutheran aged care (defined as including Residential Aged Care, Retirement Villages/ILUs, and Community Care/Home Support Programs) that:

- 1 Ensure all Lutheran Aged Care Organisations deliver the highest possible standard of services and effective missional outcomes;
- 2 Align with and support the LCA's Strategic Direction;
- 3 Ensure the LCA's Aged Care organisations meet the LCA's requirements for governance and Aged Care leadership;
- 4 Enable the LCA and its Aged Care organisations to meet its legal and compliance requirements in an effective and efficient way; and
- 5 Achieve effective accountability and risk management.

(Read 'Community Services' throughout for the community service organisations involved in this project)*

Scope of Work

The scope of work is the Lutheran Aged Care sector in Australia, including Retirement Villages/ILUs, Residential Care, Community Care/Home Support Programs as well as certain identified Lutheran Community Services organisations.

The Dialogue, in considering suitable aged care and community services ministry models/arrangements, will include consideration of the following issues:

- current Governance structures, practices and standards of governance;
- current levels of interaction to/from the LCA: at the National, District and Congregational level;
- opportunities to maximise Mission and Ministry in the local congregation/aged care context;
- current processes for appointments of Senior Management;
- allocating resources effectively to maximise equity of aged care service and support for people living in and/or care for by all Aged Care facilities;
- achieving nationally consistent standards in LCA Aged Care philosophy, theological identity, staff formation, and employment-related policies;
- the degree of national consistency in the implementation of Church-wide aged care-related policies;
- the extent of national policies that satisfy both Church and State requirements;
- the risks to organisations and the wider Church, including financial and reputational;
- the extent to which, national, district and individual facility level as to their responsibilities in respect to financial and risk-related matters are clear and appropriate;
- the most effective Accountability and Risk Management arrangements at national, district and Aged Care Facility level and the most appropriate governance and legal structures to achieve that end;
- the competency of governing bodies to meet their obligations; and carry out effective decision-making, particularly in an increasingly challenging market environment;
- the appropriateness of existing lines of authority and delegations of authority;
- the level and appropriateness in reporting from and to accountable bodies; and
- opportunities for learning, sharing and growing.

This dialogue will also recognise the LCA's expectations and oversight of its aged and community services as an important part of its mission and ministry.

Principles of Dialogue

The dialogue will adopt the five principles of dialogue in the LCA:

- Communion: Because God has gathered us in communion with one another, there is freedom to dialogue with one another on potentially contested matters

- Trust: Because God has made us brothers and sisters in Christ, we can trust God to use our communion to build us up in love and overcome any mistrust that may affect our capacity to dialogue openly with each other
- Listening: As we listen we will grow in understanding of ourselves, of other people and the opinions they hold, and of God's will
- Speaking: As we speak we will grow in understanding of ourselves, of other people and the opinions they hold, and of God's will
- Patience: We can be patient in listening and speaking with each other, trusting that God will deepen the unity he has already given us.

Dialogue Facilitation

An externally appointed facilitator will lead and facilitate each of the phases of the dialogue.

Project Advisory Committee

The project will benefit from advice and support from a small GCC auspiced advisory group known as the 'Dialogue Group'.

The consultant is accountable to the LCA Executive Officer of the Church for the delivery of the project, as outlined in this Terms of Dialogue.

Timeframe

A final report with recommendations will be submitted by the facilitator to GCC by no later than February 2018.

Agreed Methodology

Phase 1: Planning & Preparations

Aim: To finalise the planning & preparations for the Dialogue.

The lead facilitator will prepare for the dialogue in consultation with LCA Executive Officer, LCA Bishop, Dialogue Group & the LCA Committee for Ministry with the Ageing. Key stakeholders to engage will be identified. *(December 2016)*.

Phase 2: Stakeholder Engagement

Aim: To achieve a broad brush 'stocktake' of current governance arrangements and obtain advice from key stakeholders on future options & recommendations. Steps proposed are:

1. Relationships with key stakeholders will be initially established through project updates, telephone contact & an 'info pack'.
2. Engagement with identified Lutheran aged & community services organisations will be achieved through small group interviews with representatives of governing bodies. These organisations will also be offered the opportunity to have their current governance arrangements assessed free of charge (including a high-level review of their registering instrument eg Constitution) and receive a 'complementary & confidential Governance health check'.
3. Any feedback or ad hoc reports received from stakeholders will be incorporated into the dialogue process.

(December 2016 to March 2017).

Phase 3: Consensus Building on a ‘Way Forward’

Aim: To identify probable areas of ‘sector-wide’ consensus. Steps proposed are:

1. A *Stocktake, Future Options & Recommendations Paper* will be developed based on the stakeholder feedback of Phase 1, in consultation with subject experts & ‘benchmark’ organisations. This paper will identify both ‘future options’ and possible areas of future consensus. It will be circulated to all identified key stakeholders within the Lutheran aged care & community services sector for their consideration.
2. Key stakeholders then will have the opportunity to discuss the paper within their organisations/constituency groups.
3. A one day ‘*Options for Our Future*’ Workshop will be conducted for representatives of each agency’s governance & leadership team and other key stakeholders to attend and dialogue about the ‘way forward’, including identifying probable areas of ‘sector-wide’ consensus.
4. The *Stocktake, Future Options & Recommendations Paper* will be updated based on workshop discussions and then re-circulated to key stakeholders for further consideration within their organisation/constituency group.

(April to July 2017).

Phase 4: Discerning Our Future Governance Arrangements

Aim: To discern recommendations and a transition/implementation plan to improve governance arrangements throughout the Lutheran aged care & community services sector. Steps proposed are:

1. The governing bodies of aged & community services & relevant other groups (eg Committee for Ministry with the Ageing, Districts, Congregations) will be invited to consider the results of the earlier workshop and the updated recommendations.
2. A two day ‘*Discerning Our Future*’ Conference will then be held. The aim of Day One & part of Day Two will be to discern recommendations to GCC for improving current governance arrangements. In the afternoon of Day Two the aim will be to discern the beginnings of a Development & Transition/Implementation Plan.
3. A *The Way Forward & a Development & Transition/Implementation Plan* document will then be written by the facilitators.
4. This Plan will be circulated to identified stakeholders for feedback.
5. The Plan will then be updated by the facilitators and submitted to General Church Council.
6. This Dialogue project then concludes (unless decisions are made to the contrary).

(July 2017 to February 2018).

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