

## Clarifying Aged and Disability Services

South Gippsland Shire Council seeks to clarify the uncertainty surrounding the future of its Aged and Disability Services.

The Federal Government is changing its method of supporting people with disabilities, older frail citizens and their carers who need support services by redirecting funding directly to these people. This is designed to enable them to select their own service provider/s. These changes start with disability support services later this year, with aged care services following in 2020.

At the moment the Federal Government provides funding directly to Council to provide services for those South Gippslanders who require support. The new model may be better suited to health service providers that provide a broad range of home care, health and allied health services.

With this in mind, Council is exploring options for future provision of Aged and Disability Services in South Gippsland through discussions with Gippsland Southern Health Service (Leongatha hospital).

South Gippsland Shire Council's Chief Executive Officer Tim Tamlin wanted to set the record straight as the various stories circulating in the community had the potential to upset both clients and Council officers.

"I would like to stress that as discussions are ongoing there will certainly be no job losses in the next six months, contrary to some reports. No services have been cut and no decisions have been made to cut services. I have met with most of the Aged & Disability staff over the past few days and have made a commitment to work with them and to support our clients during our discussions regarding future service delivery models.

South Gippsland Shire Council's Director Corporate and Community Services Faith Page explained that Council was working to find the best solution for all involved.

"It is about securing sustainable and consistent quality service provision for all the people in South Gippsland who require home care services now, or are likely to in the future.

"Cost savings are certainly not the objective, rather the security of services delivered by people employed locally is the priority," said Ms Page.

If any agreements are made they will need to obtain both State and Federal Government support before finalisation.

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