



12 February 2014

The Hon. Peter Dutton MP
Minister for Health
Suite MG-46, Ministerial Wing, Ground Floor, Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Via email: Minister.Dutton@health.gov.au

Dear Minister

Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC) is an association of sixteen local government Councils formed for mutual benefit through collaboration and cooperation. Member Councils deliver and maintain in excess of \$20 billion in local infrastructure and other assets across an area covering more than 600 square kilometres, with a population approximately one quarter of the population of Greater Metropolitan Sydney.

SSROC seeks clarification from the Department for Health on the progress of the review of Meals on Wheels service delivery mechanisms under the Commonwealth Home Support Program *Living Longer, Living Better* initiative. We understand that the Government is reviewing a range of services, including Meals on Wheels, to inform a move to more consistent and equitable service delivery arrangements and national consistency in the cost of service provision.

SSROC member Councils have an important role to play in ensuring that residents receive sustainable, high-quality Meals on Wheels and other food services. Across our region, many member Councils provide these services directly, while others actively support the organisations that do. We are therefore greatly interested in any changes to the Commonwealth funding arrangements that will require the development and implementation of alternative models of service delivery.

Although we understand that funding is assured until the end of the 2014/15 financial year, it is critical that we be given appropriate direction now in order to start planning for alternative models and then prepare budgets for 2015/16.

To this end, we seek clarification of the Commonwealth's intent as to the future of Meals on Wheels delivery, and more specifically, information as to implementation and transitional arrangements, funding requirements and likely performance indicators.

We look forward to your advice on this matter.

Yours sincerely



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Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils

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