

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Ageing Towards 2030

Professor Peter Phibbs of the Urban Research Centre is researching the possible future impact of an ageing population on local government resources and services. This project is supported by the Local Government Association of NSW, the Shires Association of NSW and funded by Ageing, Disability and Home Care, Department of Human Services NSW (ADHC).

'We know the population is ageing and the "Towards 2030" ADHC report highlights the responses needed at a state government level', says Professor Phibbs. 'What we don't know, however, is how to plan for this change at a local government level. Some regional areas will have a much higher proportion of citizens aged over 65 than others. Our previous smaller study has shown that councils need to provide additional services for their ageing residents (such as home care and leisure services), more resources (such as mobility access, senior citizen centres and cemeteries) and will face increased financial pressure as more residents will be entitled to concessions, thereby, affecting council income. However, some council resources to support community groups may be in less demand, with greater skill levels available in the retired community. As well as determining in greater detail the likely impact of an ageing population, this study will also attempt to quantify these impacts on local government areas and develop planning tools to be used by all NSW councils.'

A detailed analysis of how an ageing population will impact on services, budgets and financial planning will be carried out through case studies, analysis of current resource usage by people aged over 65 and by working with key managers in local governments. Case study areas will vary widely, from metropolitan to regional, rural and remote areas with differing sizes and ethnic populations.



With the knowledge of ageing population estimates, it is imperative now for local government to have specific strategic goals and management plans for their finances, resources and infrastructure to keep pace with the differing needs of their future population. With proper planning, local governments can avoid developing budget deficits and be adequately prepared to serve their ageing communities well into the future.

Project Title: Local Government and Ageing: Towards 2030 - Planning for a Changing Population
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