



MEDIA RELEASE

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New Australian Leadership Formation Program: a new era for Catholic leadership

Catholic Health Australia (CHA) and Catholic Social Services Australia (CSSA) are pleased to announce a new partnership to initiate the Australian Ministry Leadership Program, drawing on the support and experience of the Ministry Leadership Centre, USA.

The Australian Ministry Leadership Program is the first collaboration of its kind between these two leading agencies of the Catholic Church in Australia. This initiative represents what is anticipated will be a significant and shared future in supporting Catholic health, aged care and social services to thrive as ministries of the Church.

Catholic Health Australia's CEO, Suzanne Greenwood, explained that since 2013 Catholic Health Australia has been examining the suitability for Australia of this unique, world-class leader formation program developed by the US-based Ministry Leadership Centre.

"Leveraging the Ministry Leadership Centre's 12 years' experience in design, evaluation and program adaptation, the new program will support lay leaders of Church organisations to nurture Catholic identity and vision so as to ensure these ministries continue as effective witnesses to the Church's mission.

"The strength of Catholic health, aged care and community services in Australia – with a tradition of high-quality, compassionate care spanning some 170 years – may be attributed to those in key leadership positions having an in-depth and holistic understanding of what it means to be a Catholic provider, delivering essential services to some of the most underprivileged and marginalised people in our society," Mrs Greenwood said.

While many Catholic agencies already invest in the development of leaders of their ministries, Catholic Social Services Australia CEO, Marcelle Mogg, said that the program will not be just another course of educational study.

"This new program is a fully integrated experience; it will link leaders' knowledge and professional expertise with contemporary business and organisational best practice, and ground this in the wisdom of the Catholic tradition," Ms Mogg said.

The Boards of Catholic Health Australia and Catholic Social Services Australia have committed to bring the program to Australia. Over the next two years the Ministry Leadership Centre will work with CHA and CSSA to develop local program facilitators and presenters to ensure the future sustainability of the program in Australia.

Commencing in July 2017, the program will engage a cohort of 40 executives, being the most senior leaders, in a two year program through a series of residential sessions, backed up by between-session support for learning integration and transfer.

"We also envisage that, in the future, the program will be made available to leaders from across other Catholic Church ministries, including education and diocesan agencies," said Mrs Greenwood.

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