

## **ACTIVE AGEING WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES**

*Statement by Minister for Seniors*

**MR R.C. KUCERA (Yokine - Minister for Seniors)** [2.08 pm]: This morning I attended the opening of the first in a series of joint training programs conducted by the Office for Seniors Interests and Volunteering in partnership with the Singapore Action Group of Elders, led by its Senior Executive Officer, Mr Phua Kok Tee.

In 2004 my predecessor signed a memorandum of understanding with SAGE - I congratulate her for that - to put in place active ageing work force development strategies at the local and regional levels. This strategic partnership arose from the mutual recognition that the needs of our ageing populations can be met only through planning, training and a commitment to enhance the lives of seniors.

The purpose of the collaboration is to enhance and support sector work forces to develop and deliver quality programs and services, to build the capacity of service providers and to work towards the achievement of world standard delivery of the programs and services for the seniors within respective jurisdictions.

The MOU also provides a platform for the Office for Seniors Interests and Volunteering and SAGE to work as partners in providing training programs and imparting skills that will benefit professionals, the seniors sector and senior citizens within each jurisdiction. In addition, the Office for Seniors Interests and Volunteering and SAGE have met and consulted with a number of seniors and major stakeholders, including Carers WA and Alzheimer's Australia WA, to inform them of their strategies. The program is supported by the International Federation on Ageing and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. I will be meeting shortly with Mr Bhakta Bughaju from UNESCAP, who is participating in the workshop, to discuss ways of furthering international cooperation in this vital area of public policy. Mr Bughaju has expressed an interest in learning more about the ways in which the Gallop government is working to ensure that Western Australians age with security and dignity and to continue to participate in their societies as citizens with full rights. It is timely to point out that it appears easier to cooperate with groups from other countries than it is to get cooperation from our own commonwealth government when it comes to helping seniors. Should members have an interest in the program, I invite them to contact my office for a briefing.