

MEDIA RELEASE

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CCOA urges Government to Budget for aged care

The Campaign for Care of Older Australians (CCOA) is urging the Federal Government to address critical aged care funding issues in tomorrow's Budget.

CCOA, which comprises 11 national organisations providing community and residential aged care and housing, said current funding did not match the costs of providing care and support for older Australians.

"We are delighted the Productivity Commission will canvas fundamental reforms necessary to meet future demands, and we welcome the other measures announced as part of the Government's health reform agenda," CCOA said.

"However, both the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission and Dr Ken Henry's review of the tax system, pointed to the need to address shortfalls in funding, among a range of other significant issues.

"Dr Henry's review recognised that major structural reform would be assessed by the Productivity Commission inquiry but said other issues including changes to current funding arrangements should be considered along side the inquiry."

CCOA said a significant portion of financing for the sector was required to retain and reward the dedicated carers who help define Australia's aged care excellence and high standards, comparable with the best in the world.

"Reform of the magnitude required in aged care cannot happen overnight but if the Government is serious about meeting the needs of our ageing population it will act now to address urgent priorities including:

- Increased funding and indexation for residential and community care until reforms are finalised;
- Integration of flexible funding options for aged care accommodation to allow more people to contribute to the cost of services;
- Consolidation of Commonwealth community care programs to provide flexible funding to meet individual needs; and
- Improving professional development, support and remuneration for aged care workers.

"Without a sustainable system, choice and access for older Australians will be further constrained.

"On behalf of older people and the organisations and their dedicated staff who provide care and support for almost one million Australians, we call on the Treasurer and the Government to act now."

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Aged & Community Services Australia, Aged Care Association Australia, Anglicare Australia, Baptist Care Australia, Catholic Health Australia, Churches of Christ Living Care, Sir Moses Montefiore Jewish Homes, Lutheran Aged Care Australia, The Salvation Army Aged Care Plus, The National Presbyterian Aged Care Network, UnitingCare Australia