



**Australian
Aged Care
Collaboration**

MEDIA RELEASE

TUESDAY 20 April 2021

The real test of aged care reform will be the Federal Budget

AUSTRALIA's aged care sector expects the Federal Government to immediately commit to implementing the major recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, through the twin pillars of the upcoming Budget and a subsequent longer-term aged care plan.

With media speculation indicating that an additional \$2.5 billion a year for four years (\$10 billion) will be committed to aged care in the Budget, the Australian Aged Care Collaboration (AACC) is calling for a more comprehensive program that will ensure older Australians receive the care, respect and dignity they deserve.

Independent research by the Grattan Institute suggests that an additional \$7 billion per year is required to lift Australia's aged care system to an acceptable level.

"We've been calling for an end to the drip-feed of ad hoc measures for more than a decade – anything less is not what the Royal Commission demanded," AACC joint representative Patricia Sparrow said.

"Older Australians need a much more comprehensive aged care reform program where people don't die waiting for services, and where providers can employ more and better paid and trained staff so the overall standard of care steadily increases."

AACC joint representative Sean Rooney said an additional \$2.5 billion a year over four years would not adequately meet the needs of older Australians.

"The AACC has submitted a 15-point plan of reform to government, focusing on the priority areas of human rights, access and choice, workforce, transparency and sustainability," he said.

"These are the areas that should receive funding to ensure older Australians receive the care and choice they need."

The need for reform is clear, with Australia spending only 1.2 per cent of GDP on aged care compared to an international average of 2.5 per cent.

The AACC released its report "[Aged Care - the way forward](#)" last week which highlights the immediate priorities in these areas for Government action.

Ms Sparrow said older Australians deserved quality care, not rationed care.

“Australians who need to see a doctor can do so at any time through Medicare, but home care places for older Australians are restricted,” she said.

“This has seen 30,000 older vulnerable Australians die in the past two years waiting for the care they need in their own home.”

Mr Rooney said communal residential care facilities also needed more financial support, with an independent report forecasting that up to 65 per cent of aged care homes will lose money in the next financial year.

“We respect Prime Minister Scott Morrison’s decision to call this Royal Commission in 2018 and his repeated commitments to follow through to fix the system,” he said.

“The Prime Minister’s legacy will be measured by his overall and far-reaching response to the Royal Commission’s recommendations and we are determined to see his Government deliver.

“He has the opportunity to succeed where other Prime Ministers and governments have desperately failed, realising a world-leading aged care system that older Australians need and deserve, now and into the future.

About the Australian Aged Care Collaboration (AACC)

The AACC is a group of six aged care peak bodies: Aged & Community Services Australia (ACSA), Anglicare Australia, Baptist Care Australia, Catholic Health Australia, Leading Age Services Australia (LASA) and UnitingCare Australia. Together we represent more than 1,000 organisations that are responsible for about 70 per cent of the services delivered to the 1.3 million Australians receiving aged care – either at home or in communal residential settings.

Our members include not-for-profit providers, primarily church and other charity organisations, but also a number of private operators. Sean Rooney is the CEO of Leading Aged Services Australia (LASA) and Patricia Sparrow is the CEO of Aged & Community Services Australia (ACSA). For more information, visit CareAboutAgedCare.org.au.

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