

20 July 2020



## UnitingCare Australia welcomes new Board Chair

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Mr Geoff Batkin, AM, has been appointed the new Chair of the UnitingCare Australia Board. The Assembly Standing Committee, national council of the Uniting Church in Australia, unanimously approved the appointment at their meeting via zoom yesterday.

National Director, Ms Claerwen Little, said Mr Batkin has dedicated his life to working in the Church and the community sector, and brings significant leadership, policy and management experience to the role.

“We are delighted to welcome Geoff to the role. His strong sense of social justice and commitment to the improvement of community service provision will be of great benefit to the UnitingCare Australia Board and national office, and most importantly those whom we serve”.

Mr Batkin says he is deeply honoured to take up the challenge.

“It has been my great privilege to have been part of the UnitingCare movement for over 30 years. As a committed member of the Uniting Church, I am very much looking forward to the opportunity to continue to serve UnitingCare at a time when community service provision is more important than ever,” Mr Batkin said.

Mr Batkin is the outgoing Chief Executive Officer of Wesley Mission Queensland, retiring late in 2020. Since commencing in 1997, Mr Batkin has successfully driven the growth of the organisation from one that was the first to offer residential aged care in Queensland, to now a leading Queensland organisation delivering more than 80 community service programs, aged care, retirement living, child care, Hummingbird House – Queensland’s only children’s hospice, Hopewell Hospice and the National Auslan Booking Service, with more than 3,000 staff and over 1,500 volunteers.

Prior to joining Wesley Mission Queensland, Mr Batkin spent 11 years as the Director of Corporate Services for UnitingCare Burnside, a leading child and family organisation in NSW and oversaw its expansion throughout regional NSW.

Mr Batkin holds a Bachelor of Economics and Diploma of Corporate and Financial Management. He is an existing member of the UnitingCare Australia Board and also serves on the UnitingCare Australia’s Aged Care Network and the Uniting Church Queensland Synod’s Finance Investment and Property Board. He will take up the role in November.

The UnitingCare Australia Board acknowledges and gives thanks to Mr Paul Linossier for his stewardship and important contribution in his role as Interim Chair.

*UnitingCare Australia is the national body for the Uniting Church's community services network in Australia. The UnitingCare network is one of the largest networks of social services providers in Australia, supporting 1.4 million people every year across urban, rural and remote communities and powered by over 50,000 staff and 30,000 volunteers.*

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