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## UnitingCare Australia calls for a clear and robust way forward in aged care regulation and reporting

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UnitingCare Australia has called on the Albanese Government to provide a clear and robust way forward for the aged care sector in their [submission on the new regulatory framework](#).

“We need clear statements of responsibility, and a clear and accessible framework for success,” said Claerwen Little, National Director.

“In our submission we have called for community endorsed standards, and purposeful legislation to be drafted that provide accountability without a disproportionate burden of compliance causing yet further staff shortages on the front line of aged care.

“We must be accountable, and we must be able to attract, develop and retain a workforce to meet the growing need for aged care in our community,” said Ms Little.

UnitingCare Australia also called for increased accessibility by reducing the number and length of reporting documents but increasing the consistency of documents outlining responsibilities.

The submission noted the lack of alignment between aged care and the broader care and support sector which creates unnecessary barriers.

“All significant alterations to the regulatory landscape should be the subject of clear and direct consultation with a focus on how the proposed reform would impact older Australians, providers, and workers,” said Ms Little.

UnitingCare Australia cautioned against implementing a ‘gig’ economy approach to aged care, citing lower income security, more complex administration, less training and support and fewer conditions of service.

“We don’t think that putting workers out in the cold in terms of their conditions and pay is a positive way forward for the industry as a whole and any ‘Uberisation’ of the aged care industry will not help either costs or sustainability in the long term.”

“We’re also recommending a more streamlined reporting regime. One of our service agencies report the cost of meeting current reporting requirements as over \$1 million in addition to ongoing compliance costs of more than \$500,000 per annum.

“These costs are exacerbated by drastically inadequate indexation, and rising costs associated with both the COVID-19 pandemic and inflation,” said Ms Little.

“For that reason, we want reporting requirements to be as efficient as possible.”

*The UnitingCare Aged Care Network is the largest not-for-profit aged care provider nationally. We support approximately 97,000 older people, comprising 8.5% of total residential beds and 10% of Home Care Packages nationally. Over 80% of our workforce and 60% of our services recipients are women.*

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