

Aged care increases welcome, but UnitingCare Australia warns costs still outpace funding

UnitingCare Australia welcomes measures in the Federal Budget to support vulnerable older Australians and strengthen the care economy, but further investment is needed to address mounting pressures across the sector.

“As the Government delivers what it has described as an ambitious Budget, many Australians will be asking whether that ambition is felt in their everyday lives,” said Tamara Thomas, National Director of UnitingCare Australia.

“We recognise the Government is facing competing demands, but this Budget does not go far enough to address the strain facing social and community services.”

UnitingCare Australia’s [Pre-Budget Submission](#) called for systemic aged care investments to ensure no older Australian misses out on care because of their income or where they live.

“An increase to the Accommodation Supplement is a welcome step, but the reality is this increase doesn’t cover the true cost of delivering the safe, high-quality care older Australians deserve, or what we expect for our ageing loved ones.” Ms Thomas said.

Tracey Burton, Chief Executive of Uniting NSW.ACT, said funding settings are pushing providers to make unfair choices that risk leaving older Australians without access to care.

“We are beginning to see the emergence of a system of ‘haves and have nots’, where access, quality and choice are shaped by capacity to pay. Aged care must work against that future and remain grounded in fairness, where access is based on need, not means,” said Mrs Burton.

UnitingCare Australia welcomes recognition of the challenges facing providers in remote Australia through funding for the Aged Care Remote Accord.

“Ongoing investment is critical to ensure remote aged care services remain viable and can deliver culturally appropriate support for First Nations communities,” said Ms Thomas.

The Government’s commitment to reforming Children and Family Support is a positive move, supporting a more flexible, partnership-focused system centred on long-term outcomes.

“For children and families who are too often overlooked and in desperate need of relief, this funding is a positive step towards providing essential support, and we stand ready to work with Government to deliver meaningful change,” Ms Thomas said.

UnitingCare Australia will continue to advocate for a system that prioritises its services and the people who rely on them, so more people aren’t pushed to the edge.

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About UnitingCare Australia

UnitingCare Australia is the national body for the Uniting Church's community services network and an agency of the Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia. Through advocacy and by strengthening service provision, UnitingCare Australia gives voice to the Uniting Church's commitment to social justice.

The UnitingCare Network is the largest network of social service providers in Australia, delivering 5.8 million interactions annually across 1,600 service locations in urban, rural, and remote communities, with over 55,000 staff and 17,000 volunteers.

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