



Wednesday 18 April 2018

NEW AGED CARE QUALITY AND SAFETY COMMISSION WELCOMED BY DEMENTIA AUSTRALIA

Dementia Australia has welcomed the Federal Government's decision to create an independent Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission that will provide a single point of contact for dealing with claims of sub-standard care.

Dementia Australia CEO Maree McCabe said the plan to merge the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency, Aged Care Complaints Commissioner and the aged care regulatory functions of the Department of Health into a single commission would benefit people living with dementia, their families and carers.

"As the prevalence of dementia increases in our community, it is critical that all aged care services are well-equipped and supported to provide safe, high-quality care for people living with dementia as part of their core business, and Dementia Australia welcomes the steps taken by Minister Wyatt," she said.

"The Commission, one of the recommendations of the Carnell-Patterson review, is a welcome announcement for people living with dementia, their families and carers, who have long been advocating for a simpler and more accessible safety and quality regime.

"Our current systems are complex and hard to navigate for most consumers, and more so for people living with dementia, who may also face issues such as lack of understanding of complaint mechanisms, limited capacity to engage with such mechanisms, communication difficulties and fear of reprisal."

Ms McCabe said Dementia Australia had been advocating a shift to aged care's fragmented quality assurance structure to a more streamlined function that made the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable consumers its main priority.

In addition, Dementia Australia welcomed the announcement of the Serious Incident Response Scheme, which will be set up to handle reports of abuse, breaches of standards and disease outbreaks.

"This is another recommendation that both the Australian Law Reform Commission's Elder Abuse report as well as the Carnell-Patterson Review made, and one that Dementia Australia strongly endorses," said Ms McCabe.

The Government's move to publicly report performance rating of providers against quality standards is to be commended.

"Too often families have to make the decision to choose a residential care setting with limited information on the quality of care that their loved one will receive," Ms McCabe said.

"The availability of this comparative data on the My Aged Care website will provide consumers with better decision-making support.

"We look forward to working with the new Commission and Commissioner to ensure a dementia focus is embedded across the aged care safety and quality systems."

Dementia Australia is the national peak body for people, of all ages, living with all forms of dementia, their families and carers. It provides advocacy, support services, education and information. An estimated 425,000 people have dementia in Australia. This number is projected to reach more than 1.1 million by 2056. Dementia Australia is the new voice of Alzheimer's Australia.

National Dementia Helpline 1800 100 500

Interpreter service available

(The National Dementia Helpline is an Australian Government Initiative)

Dementia is a National Health Priority Area

www.dementia.org.au

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When talking or writing about dementia please refer to [Dementia-Friendly Language Guidelines](#).