

Thursday 9 July 2020

## **Dementia peak body welcomes Royal Commission extension and additional home care packages**

Dementia Australia has welcomed an extension of three and a half months to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety and a further 6,100 home care packages announced by the federal government.

Dementia Australia CEO Maree McCabe said the Royal Commission is an important opportunity to identify a clear path forward to improving the health and care outcomes for the more than 459,000 people living with dementia in Australia.

“Due to the suspension of hearings and workshops in relation to COVID-19, it is imperative that more time is allowed to ensure all concerns of the public are heard, including the impact of the pandemic on those in residential aged care and home care,” Ms McCabe said.

“The Royal Commission had started to reveal some of the challenges in the system and extending the reporting period will allow it to be as comprehensive as possible.

“We want to ensure that dementia is core business for the sector – not just in principle but in practice.

“We need to see legislative changes that address the overuse and inappropriate use of medications and restraints, a focus on quality dementia care through the new Aged Care Quality Standards, and a focus on workforce levels, leadership, culture, training and education.

“We appreciate the level of rigor the Commission is taking to ensure all voices are heard and look forward to continuing to work together to improve the lives of people of all ages, living with all forms of dementia in Australia, their families and carers.”

The federal government has also announced an additional 6,100 home care packages which will support more senior Australians, including those with dementia, to remain living independently in their own homes.

Ms McCabe said as the prevalence of dementia continues to increase so does the need for high quality home care packages.

“Currently, around 70 per cent of the more than 459,000 Australians with dementia live in the community. An increase of home care packages will help more Australians to live at home for as long as possible, in a supported way. This will make a substantial difference not only to their lives, but also to those of their families and carers, as well as the broader community,” she said.

“We welcome the federal government’s commitment to funding additional home care packages and the focus on supporting senior Australians, particularly those who live with dementia. We know there is much more to be done. Without a medical breakthrough, the number of people with dementia is estimated to more than double by 2058 to almost 1.1 million.

“It is essential that we work with government and providers to put in place the services and early intervention supports needed to help people live well at home for as long as possible.”

-Ends-

Dementia Australia is the national peak body and charity 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 459,000 people have dementia in Australia. This number is projected to reach almost 1.1 million by 2058. Dementia Australia’s services are supported by the Australian Government.

**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](http://www.dementia.org.au)

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