

MEDIA RELEASE

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## AMA on point joining call for greater investment in quality end of life care

Catholic Health Australia's (CHA) CEO, Suzanne Greenwood, has welcomed the Australian Medical Association's call for greater investment in quality end of life care services and a campaign to increase community awareness to better support healthy end of life choices.

"Representing Australia's medical doctors, the AMA is an important authoritative and ethical voice in the assisted suicide debate," said Mrs Greenwood. "Doctors are confronting the realities of caring for the terminally ill every day, and policy-makers should be taking note."

Representing the single largest non-government provider grouping of hospital, community and aged care services in the country, CHA shares the AMA's objective to achieve greater investment in quality end of life care to ensure every Australian has equitable access to affordable high-quality palliative care services.

"The common ethos binding Catholic health and aged care services Australia-wide is to care for the most under-served and vulnerable people in our communities," said Mrs Greenwood.

"Some of the most vulnerable are those who are dying of a terminal illness, and we must work together to ensure each Australian has equitable access to first-rate information and affordable high-quality palliative care services first and foremost – this must be our priority."

CHA welcomes the AMA's call for a comprehensive information and education campaign to support end of life care knowledge so that some of the most vulnerable patients will be better equipped to understand the expert services available to them.

"In the absence of easily accessible, authoritative information about end of life choices, uncertainty, myth and fear will take its place. And fear does not inform healthy, considered decision-making," said Mrs Greenwood.

"AMA President Dr Gannon is on-point when he says that the doctor's duty of care is to ensure every effort is made to assist patients to live with dignity and in comfort with reduced pain and suffering," said Mrs Greenwood.

"Policy-makers should be listening to the doctors whose priority is providing compassionate care to those who are dying."