

MEDIA RELEASE

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Government review of aged care quality regulatory arrangements welcomed by Catholic Health Australia

Catholic Health Australia (CHA) welcomes today's announcement by Minister Wyatt that the government will respond to the Oakden Older Persons Mental Health Service review with an independent review of aged care quality regulatory arrangements.

Minister Wyatt announced that the review will investigate the Commonwealth's aged care quality regulatory processes to determine why the extent of the failures of care at Makk and McLeay wards, as documented in the recent South Australian Oakden Older Persons Mental Health Service review, were not identified.

"A review of the regulatory processes relating to the quality of aged care is timely. Ensuring older Australians in need of care and support receive high quality services that meet their needs and preferences is a prerequisite for a civil society," said CHA's CEO, Suzanne Greenwood.

"The review provides an opportunity to examine the effectiveness of the current regulatory processes to see whether improvements can be made, particularly in relation to specialist care and support services for older people with severe and psychological symptoms of dementia and severe mental health issues."

Mrs Greenwood said that regulation alone, however, cannot guarantee the elimination of care failures across aged care, and that excessive and heavy-handed regulation would stifle flexibility, innovation and responsiveness in delivering care that best meets individual needs and preferences.

"As envisaged by the [Roadmap for Aged Care Reform](#), regulation of aged care should be complemented by greater consumer choice and control over their care and support in order to drive innovation, increased competition in service delivery and more responsive providers," said Mrs Greenwood.

Mrs Greenwood said that letting consumers have more say in what care they receive and who provides it will strengthen the quality framework. History clearly tells us that regulation cannot do the 'heavy lifting' alone.

Catholic Health Australia represents Australia's largest non-government grouping of hospitals, aged and community care services, providing approximately 10 per cent of hospital and aged care services in Australia, including around 30 per cent of private hospital care as well as approximately 5 per cent of public hospital care.