



## **Catholic Health Australia supports push for urgent aged care reform**

**Media Release**

**11 April 2019**

Catholic Health Australia is supporting a diverse coalition of aged care providers, unions, health professionals and consumer groups who are calling on candidates in the May 18 Federal election to commit to “getting aged care right for everyone”.

On Tuesday, the National Aged Care Alliance, which comprises 52 national organisations, lunched the *Age Well* Campaign, in anticipation of the May 18 federal election and in response to a disappointing Budget week for the sector.

Members are urging all candidates in the upcoming election to commit to the necessary policies and funding so that every person in aged care feels supported, whether it be older Australians needing care or aged care workers who are delivering the care.

As the largest single grouping of non-government health, aged and community care services across the nation, Catholic Health Australia has joined a raft of leading organisations to endorse the campaign.

Catholic Health Australia CEO Suzanne Greenwood said all Australians deserved to age well and with dignity, whether they chose to be at home or in residential aged care.

“Australia’s population is ageing and this poses many challenges and opportunities. This includes more pressure being placed on our aged care system than ever before, and as our population continues to age, demands will grow,” she said.

Ms Greenwood said with the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety underway, the time was right for the Government and sector to work together to future proof Australia’s aged care system.

“While the Royal Commission will be instrumental in guiding longer-term reform to ensure sustainable and quality aged care services, government has a responsibility to urgently address the more pressing issues that we need to get right now,” she said.

Access by residents of aged care homes to appropriate health services needed to be improved, especially as the population of older people living longer with chronic and complex health conditions increased, Ms Greenwood said.

“In particular, an aged care home is not a self-contained health service. Under Medicare, aged care residents should be able to access health services in the same way as anyone living in the community.”

Aged care requires an urgent expansion of in-reach health services so that aged care residents have access to services such as specialist palliative care and mental health services, and allied health, GP and dental health services.

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*CHA represents the largest single grouping of non-government health, aged and community care services in Australia.*

“All older people deserve access to the highest quality of care when they need it and where they need it, regardless of who they are, where they live or their circumstances.”

As part of the *Age Well* campaign, NACA has launched a petition calling on the Minister for Aged Care, the Hon. Ken Wyatt, and the Shadow Minister for Ageing, the Hon. Julie Collins, to commit to getting aged care right for everyone.

More information about the campaign is available [here](#).