

MEDIA RELEASE

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Caring for Older Australians issues paper a green light for reform: CCOA

The Campaign for Care of Older Australians (CCOA) has commended the Productivity Commission's issues paper, *Caring for Older Australians*, saying it signals the potential for real reform in the aged care sector.

CCOA said the paper provided a considered overview of the sector and posed pertinent questions. "The Productivity Commission has covered all the bases necessary for a thorough assessment and understanding of aged care," CCOA said.

"The paper also acknowledges no less than five significant inquiries have been undertaken since 2004, with most of the recommendations for major reform around the funding and regulation unheeded. This time we need action.

"Appropriately the inquiry seeks to look at aged care in the context of the wider health system. Funding, access, choice, affordability and the specific issues confronting rural and remote communities have all been highlighted.

"The aged care sector has identified each of these areas, and more, in consistent pleas to have them addressed by respective governments.

"The Productivity Commission inquiry must be the final review and its recommendations a compelling directive for the Government to act in conjunction with consumers and aged care providers.

"Critical short term funding for aged care services and accommodation must be addressed well before the Commission is due to release its final paper. We urge all political parties to put the urgent needs of older Australians before short term political advantage in the lead up to this year's election and call on both the Government and the Opposition to commit now to significant reform of aged care within the next term of office

"Any reforms will come too late for some older Australians but as the Intergenerational Report, among others, has confirmed, older people will comprise a quarter of our population within several decades.

"With this knowledge it is incumbent upon us all to be properly prepared to ensure we have a sustainable aged care system with real choice and access to quality care and support for all Australians."

CCOA comprises 11 national organisations providing community and residential aged care and housing.

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Aged & Community Services Australia, Aged Care Association Australia, Anglicare Australia, Baptist Care Australia, Catholic Health Australia, Churches of Christ Living Care, Sir Moses Montefiore Jewish Homes, Lutheran Aged Care Australia, The Salvation Army Aged Care Plus, The National Presbyterian Aged Care Network, UnitingCare Australia