# CATHOLIC HEALTH
Australia

# M E D I A   R E L E A S E

## Catholic Health Australia congratulates returned Coalition Government

20 May 2019

Catholic Health Australia congratulates Prime Minister Scott Morrison and all members of his Coalition Government on their Federal Election victory.

Chief Executive Suzanne Greenwood said that Catholic Health Australia looks forward to continuing to work with the Government for improved health outcomes for all Australians.

"The Coalition has implemented important reforms in key areas such as private health, access to medicines, Medicare and new models of aged care delivery and we look forward to continuing to work constructively with them to deliver their policies in the best interests of Australians, our members and the health budget.

"Catholic Health Australia will continue to advocate strongly and fairly on behalf of our members to secure Government support on issues that affect everyday Australians, such as affordable healthcare, access to aged care and improved end-of-life care.

"It is fitting that this is National Palliative Care Week (19 – 25 May), as Australians need strong leadership and action on improving end-of-life care as an urgent national priority, and CHA will continue to spotlight this issue to ensure  palliative care remains on the agenda this term.

"Some 250,000+ Australians will lose their lives to cancer and other life-limiting diseases over the next four years, yet too many are not being cared for in the setting of their choice.  Up to 70 per cent of Australians would prefer to die at home, but currently only 14 per cent do.

"Catholic Health Australia members provide 13 per cent of all palliative care related hospitalisations in Australia. In the private sector, CHA members make up the majority of palliative care inpatient provision and have more than 52 per cent of private inpatient beds. Yet, we also provide community-based palliative care in both the public and private sectors and are among the first organisations to provide private health insurance funded palliative care in the community setting.

"This experience gives Catholic palliative care providers insight to develop innovative palliative care programs aimed at meeting local population needs, improving equity of access, enabling at home death and improving the knowledge-base of palliative care service delivery.

"This also enables Catholic Health Australia to work with the Government to address systemic barriers to continued improvement in palliative care including funding models, fragmentation, workforce shortages and the lack of awareness of and access to palliative care in general.

Other priorities CHA will continue to advocate for this term include:
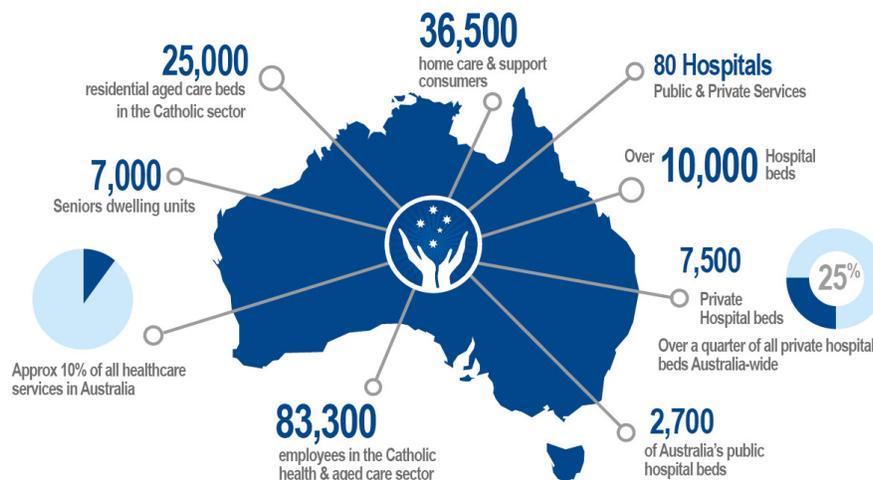
- *Our regional and remote hospitals by ensuring their funding is viable and respects the important community services they deliver - and workforce challenges they face.*

- *Better funding models and choice in aged care, including reducing the waiting list for the 120,000+ Australians in need of a Federal Government-funded home care package.*

- *Reducing out-of-pocket healthcare costs in both the public and private sectors, as well increasing transparency around pricing.*

- *The balance in the proportion of private patients in public hospitals and the ongoing erosion of the private health insurance rebate to ensure Australians continue to have treatment choice.*

"As not-for-profit providers of both public and private health, community and aged care services, CHA members offer Government a unique and balanced insight into how the different sections of the health sector interact together at the coal face of patient treatment.

"We therefore welcome and encourage any and every opportunity for the Morrison Government to actively consult and engage with our members about policy decisions over the next three years."

**-ENDS-**

*Catholic Health Australia (CHA) is Australia's largest non-government grouping of health, community, and aged care services accounting for around 10 percent of hospital-based healthcare in Australia. Our members also provide around 25 percent of private hospital care, 5 percent of public hospital care, 12 percent of aged care facilities, and 20 percent of home care and support for the elderly.*