



MEDIA RELEASE

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Royal Commission's interim report shows change is needed and possible

Catholic Health Australia, Australia's largest non-government grouping of health, community, and aged care services, welcomes the Interim Report of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

CHA chief executive Pat Garcia said the Royal Commission is a vital piece of work that has already begun to drive much needed reform.

"The Royal Commission's interim report has been unequivocal in the need for a better system of care for older Australians," Mr Garcia said.

"It's distressing to hear how the current system has failed to deliver older Australians the care, dignity and respect they deserve. All of us in the sector must listen carefully and be ready to make significant changes to how people are looked after.

"Although formal recommendations are not due until November 2020, it is clear that there are actions that industry, government, and community can take right now. While not wanting to pre-empt the Royal Commission's work, we believe the financial pressures residential providers are facing need to be urgently addressed.

"In the short term, the introduction of more high-level home care packages and an immediate injection of funds, pending the completion of work on a new funding model for residential aged care, would be beneficial.

"We also believe there should be an increase to the viability supplement for rural and remote services, a large proportion of whom are operating at a loss and do not have the reserves of bigger operators. This could be delivered as part of a drought relief package and would be a hugely significant help for aged care services in the bush.

"We respectfully suggest these constructive ways forward are readily implementable, and will still allow for more systemic, evidence-based reform to be developed."

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Catholic Health Australia (CHA) is Australia's largest non-government grouping of health, community, and aged care services accounting for approximately 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.

