



CHA welcomes Aged Care Act delay

Catholic Health Australia

Catholic Health Australia has welcomed the government's decision to delay the implementation of the Aged Care Act until November 1 to ensure providers and over 280,000 clients have enough time to transition to the new Support at Home program.

"We strongly support the reforms enacted in the Aged Care Act but this delay is needed to ensure a smooth transition that avoids unintended negative consequences," said CEO Jason Kara.

"Reform of this magnitude and importance should not be rushed. We welcome this announcement today and thank the government, Health and Ageing Minister Mark Butler MP, and the new Aged Care Minister Sam Rae MP and for their constructive engagement."

CHA, which represents more than 350 aged care facilities and 20 per cent of home care, has been calling for a delay to the implementation of the Act to support providers, clients and their families with the transition to the new Support at Home program.

"Partly due to the later-than-expected passage of the Aged Care Act, much of the detail around how the new program will work is incomplete or in draft," said Mr Kara.

"Requiring providers and residents to sign agreements without key information such as co-contribution amounts and transitional rules would have risked the discontinuation of care, or care being provided without a legal service agreement, posing legal, financial and regulatory risks.

"Delaying the transition will allow older Australians to seek advice and make informed decisions before signing a new agreement and support providers to continue delivering high quality care throughout this process."

Notes to editors: *Under the Aged Care Act, the Support at Home program will ultimately replace the current Home Care Packages (HCP) and Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) with a single, unified in-home aged care system.*

Catholic Health Australia (CHA) is Australia's largest non-government, not-for-profit group of health, community, and aged care providers. Our members operate 80 hospitals in each Australian state and the ACT, providing around 30 per cent of private hospital care and 5 per cent of public hospital care, in addition to extensive community and residential aged care. There are 63 private hospitals operated by CHA members, including St Vincent's, Calvary, Mater, St John of God and Cabrini. CHA members also provide approximately 12 per cent of all aged care facilities across Australia, in addition to around 20 per cent of home care services. 25 per cent of our members' service provision is regional, rural and remote.

Media contacts:

Charlie Moore: 0452 606 171