



## CHA welcomes start of Aged Care Act

### Catholic Health Australia

Catholic Health Australia (CHA) has welcomed the commencement of the new Aged Care Act this Saturday, describing it as a historic reform that will help deliver quality care to older Australians.

"These are the most significant reforms to the aged care sector in three decades," said Alex Lynch, Director of Aged and Community Care at Catholic Health Australia.

"The Aged Care Act strengthens the rights of older Australians, gives them more of a say in the care they receive and increases the expectations of providers in delivering high quality aged care services."

While increasing the accountability of aged care providers, the reforms offer providers the opportunity of a more sustainable footing under a funding framework that better reflects the true cost of delivering care and supports providers to meet higher standards.

CHA will monitor trends for any unintended consequences of changes arising from the Act, particularly changes to consumer co-contributions.

"We will closely monitor whether the new consumer co-contribution framework causes older people to go without needed services," said Mr Lynch. "For example, our members would quickly identify if people receiving care at home started declining personal care such as showering because it attracts a consumer contribution."

Similarly, CHA will monitor the impact of changes to the funding of providers to ensure that needed resources are available to enable older Australians to age in place at home.

"We thank the Government and the Opposition for working together and delivering these changes in the national interest," said Mr Lynch. "CHA is supportive of these changes and optimistic that the positive transformation of aged care promised by the reforms can be realised."

Catholic Health Australia has been working closely with the Government and other sector stakeholders for many months to support its member providers to meet the requirements of the new Act. That work will continue as these reforms are implemented over the coming years.

**Notes to editors:** *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