

MEDIA RELEASE

FEBRUARY 10, 2019

Additional home care packages will help address demand

The Morrison Government's announcement of an additional 10,000 home care packages is another welcome step towards reducing the queue of older Australians looking to access home care services, Catholic Health Australia CEO Suzanne Greenwood has said.

"The community and government have a much better understanding of the demand for home care packages following the creation of the national prioritisation queue for home care packages in 2017," she said.

"An extra 10,000 packages, being delivered earlier than expected, will help to shorten that queue and better meet the needs of older Australians."

The additional home care packages are a welcome addition to the 24,000 additional higher-level packages announced in the 2018-19 Budget and the December 2018 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook.

As well as the extra 10,000 packages, the Government today committed an additional \$320 million in 2018-19 for personal and nursing care provided in aged care homes, which Mrs Greenwood said will ease some of the funding pressures providers are experiencing following an indexation freeze and changes to the Aged Care Funding Instrument.

"We highlighted in our pre-Budget submission to the Government that the deteriorating financial performance of residential aged care providers was worrying," she said.

"This one-off funding injection in 2018-19 will help ease immediate pressures pending the development of a new, more adequate funding model."

To that end, Catholic Health Australia welcomes today's Government announcement that \$4.6 million has been allocated for a trial of a new funding model, based on extensive research and analysis by the University of Wollongong.

Mrs Greenwood said it is essential that the new funding model is not prone to the funding volatility experienced under the Aged Care Funding Instrument and includes indexation that validly reflects cost movements in comparable sectors.

She said Catholic providers are pleased that today's announcement shows the Government recognises the need for ongoing development of aged care policy while the important work of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety continues.

CONTACT: Gavin Abraham | 0408 825 788

CHA represents the largest single grouping of non-government health, aged and community care services in Australia.