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ACSA welcomes MYEFO focus on home care, rural and remote aged care and homelessness in aged services

Aged & Community Services Australia (ACSA) is pleased to see the Government's Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO) address areas of urgent need in home and residential care through the funding of new home care packages and a boost in support to aged care services in rural and remote areas, as well as those caring for homeless older Australians.

"The commitments announced today are welcome recognition by the Government of the difficult realities for many older Australians without the care services they need, particularly those at home waiting to receive care at the level they need. It also acknowledges the financial realities of rural providers, and those caring for homeless older people, struggling to maintain vital aged care services in the face of worsening financial conditions," said Ms. Sparrow.

"The Government's home care measures recognise there are too many older Australians whose needs are not being adequately met by the current aged care system and today's commitment to fund 10,000 more home care packages will be an immediate and much-needed boost.

Other positive measures include:

- A 30 per cent, or \$101.9 million, increase in funding of the Viability Supplement for eligible residential aged care providers in regional areas.
- A 30 per cent, or \$9.3 million injection for providers receiving the Homeless Supplement, assisting older, homeless Australians to access vital aged care services.
- \$98 million to fund increased payments to GPs to attend residential aged care homes to treat patients, recognising the critical role GP's have in supporting patient health in residential aged care.

"ACSA has consistently made politicians aware of the stark financial realities of many residential aged care providers, and the urgency of a funding uplift targeted to support those doing it tough delivering services in RRR areas, those who care for the homeless, and providers with a high number of supported residents," said ACSA CEO Pat Sparrow. "Those messages appear to have hit home with the Government in today's funding commitments."

The peak body said the Government's commitment to fund an additional 10,000 home care packages comprised of 5,000 Level Three and 5,000 Level Four packages will help to alleviate pressure on the system in the short-term, but home care remains an area of acute need still with over 120,000 Older Australians waiting to receive care at their level or without care at all.

ACSA is the peak body for Australia's not-for-profit, church, charitable and community-based aged care providers.

“Sustainability of aged care services is important for older Australians and their families who rely on the care provided, but also for the economy and the communities that are supported by those services,” said Ms. Sparrow.

“Today’s announcement won’t address all of the issues but it is a much needed start.

We will continue to point out those needs so that older Australians are able to get the services they need when and where they need them.”

~ENDS~

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