The Hon Ken Wyatt AM, MP
Minister for Aged Care
Minister for Indigenous Health
Member for Hasluck

MEDIA RELEASE

11 May 2017

Services for older Australians given a boost in Federal Budget

Older Australians will benefit from the Turnbull Government’s 2017-18 Federal Budget with continued funding of $5.5 billion to extend funding agreements for assistance for people to stay in their own homes.

Federal Minister for Aged Care, Ken Wyatt, said today he was pleased that the Commonwealth Home Support Programme has been continued for two years from 1 July 2018.

“This home support program provides a range of essential services such as the popular meals on wheels, personal care, nursing and allied health and respite services.

“In addition the funding includes help with services like cleaning and shopping, home maintenance and modifications – basic but essential services for older people who choose to stay in their homes as they age.

“This funding will provide continuity of essential support services to around 900,000 older Australians to help them continue living at home and in their communities.

“This measure will also provide funding certainty to more than 1600 CHSP service providers enabling them to plan and make business decisions beyond June 2018.”

Minister Wyatt said with this continued funding aged care investment over the next five years will be $99.3 billion.

Another important Budget measure is the funding to establish an aged care industry-led taskforce to explore short, medium and longer term options to boost supply, address demand and improve productivity for the aged care workforce.

“It is estimated the aged care sector will need to expand the workforce to 980,000 by 2050 to respond to the demand of an ageing population,” Minister Wyatt said.
“A strategic approach to building workforce capacity is needed given the significant structural changes now underway in aged care.

“Improving access to a supply of workers is a major factor in sustaining services in regional, rural, remote and outer suburban locations. Specific and well-targeted workforce strategies will make a significant difference.

“The taskforce will consult widely within the sector and engage with other sectors, including disability, education and employment.

“This proposal is in addition to the Boosting the Local Care Workforce initiative which creates regional and specialist coordinators to assist NDIS and aged care providers to grow their business and employ more workers.”

In addition, the Federal Budget provides additional funding of $3.1 million for ICT support for the My Aged Care platform.

“This measure affects all My Aged Care users including over 33,000 employees of service providers and assessment organisations that use My Aged Care on a daily basis to maintain their service information and client referrals,” Minister Wyatt said.

“The Aged Care components of the Budget are designed to give better services and certainty to consumers of aged care, their families and carers and to the many organisations who provide the services for older Australians.

“These will be supported by an independent review of the Commonwealth’s aged care quality regulatory processes to ensure that older Australians live in the best possible environment in their later years,” Minister Wyatt said.

“As the Australian population ages we owe it to our nation builders to provide access to the very best quality care and safety.”

Media contact: Kay McNiece, 0412 132 585