The Hon Ken Wyatt AM, MP
Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care
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MEDIA RELEASE

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Navigating a New Era in Aged Care Access

A new network of aged care navigator centres, information hubs and specialist advisers aims to streamline aged care access, with a $7.4 million national trial being rolled out from today by the Morrison Government.

Launched under the Aged Care System Navigator initiative, the three new trial programs will offer face-to-face assistance to senior Australians and their families in every state and territory, including selected rural and remote areas.

The trials will also offer some services over the phone or online to maximise the reach of the trials and test the way in which these services can offer meaningful support to people navigating the aged care.

"Navigators will target senior people in need, especially those facing language or other difficulties, to help ensure they receive support and information," said Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Ken Wyatt AM.

“They will make a big difference, in keeping with our Government’s commitment to person-centred care.

“The Navigator system is critical to ensuring senior Australians have more choices for longer and better lives.”

The three trial programs consist of:

- 32 aged care information hubs to provide locally-targeted information and build people’s capacity to engage with the aged care system
- 21 community hubs where members support each other in navigating aged care and healthy ageing
- Nine specialist support workers to offer one-on-one support for vulnerable people.

Additionally, the Australian Government has expanded the scope of the programs to better support seniors living in regional Western Australia with face-to-face services in the Kimberley, Mid-West (Murchison) and Pilbara regions.

The trials will be delivered by 30 delivery partners led by COTA Australia, bringing a breadth of experience and strong ties to local communities and services.

COTA CEO Ian Yates AC said the need for such a system had been identified by the National Aged Care Alliance in its discussion paper ‘Integrated Consumer Supports.'
“COTA Australia congratulates the Government for funding the trials and for recognising the urgent need to invest in 'system navigators' in the aged care system," Mr Yates said.

“The great thing about these trials is that they steer away from a cookie-cutter approach to accessing aged care and recognise the importance of tailoring support to access aged care services to different situations and contexts.

“A 90-year-old in the top end of Australia is going to have very different access support needs to a 70-year-old in inner city Melbourne – both the trial locations and the groups in the consortium who will be delivering the supports, have been selected to reflect the breadth and diversity of Australia’s ageing population.”

The programs build on a trial that started in October 2018, also launched under the Aged Care System Navigator Measure.

This earlier trial offers support to seniors making complex financial decisions when planning for, or entering, aged care by providing access to aged care Financial Information Service Officers (FISO) in the Department of Human Services.

The trials, as well as existing assistance offered by a number of organisations, will be independently evaluated by health and human services consultancy Australian Healthcare Associates (AHA). This evaluation will inform future policy considerations and guide the implementation of long-term models of support.

The information hubs, community hubs and specialist support worker trials will conclude in June 2020, and the FISO trials will conclude in October 2019.

Further information on the information hubs, community hubs and specialist support worker trials, including locations and local delivery partners, is available from www.AgedCareNavigators.org.au

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