



National Aged Care Advisory Council

Communique – 10 May 2023

2023-24 Budget - Council welcomed the substantial investment in the 2023-24 Budget in initiatives to benefit older people, and in the aged care sector specifically. Council noted that many older people would benefit from measures to address cost of living pressure such as reduced costs of some prescriptions, energy subsidies, and rent relief. Council anticipates that funding for the Fair Work Commission wages decision will have a significant impact on the sector's ability to attract and retain suitably qualified staff and remain viable.

Council also welcomed the investment in First Nations Aged Care broadly and particularly in remote communities.

Digital and Data Strategies - Council gave in-depth consideration to the draft data strategy and digital strategy. Council considers this work offers substantial potential benefits, such as:

- improved outcomes for older people at the clinical and service levels, including improving the monitoring of outcomes
- providing the foundations for aged care innovation, driving improved decision making and planning in the aged care sector
- supporting increased data and digital literacy amongst the aged care workforce
- opportunities to use artificial intelligence for improved identification of opportunities for early intervention, and
- supporting interoperability, minimising reporting, and strengthening data sharing across the aged care and health sectors, including allied health.

Council emphasised the benefits of clear, simple, and easily implementable strategies.

National Registration Scheme - Council considered the proposed approach to the National Worker Registration Scheme. Members emphasised the importance of timely assessments, consistency across states and territories, and reasonable application costs

New Aged Care Act - Council welcomed clarification that the new Aged Care Act is still planned to be in place by July 2024. Council welcomed the chance to have early input and stress test the information management framework for the new Aged Care Act. Specifically, the drafting stage for information confidentiality, records management, reporting and information, data use and sharing.

Voting arrangements in residential aged care for the Voice referendum - Council met with the Australian Electoral Commission to talk about how older people living in residential aged care will be engaged in the Voice referendum. Council is committed to promoting the rights and dignity of older people to participate in the referendum, including supporting those with dementia or cognitive decline. Council reiterated the importance of privacy, non-coercion and confidentiality to preserve electoral integrity. Council noted the referendum offers an important opportunity to promote voting to First Nations Elders living in residential aged care.

Council members will keep working with the Australian Electoral Commission to promote older people's informed participation in the referendum.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 28 June 2023.