



National Aged Care Advisory Council

Communiqué – 28 June 2023

The National Aged Care Advisory Council's (Council) priority focus was on dementia and its impact, including on aged care reform.

Council participated in a dementia virtual reality demonstration organised by Dementia Australia where Members were able to experience some of the challenges that a person living with dementia might experience through a virtual simulation of dementia.

In addition to input on the impact of dementia on aged care reforms, Council gave input on rights, enforcement, and high-quality care in the new Aged Care Act; provider obligations in the new aged care regulatory model; and the Department of Health and Aged Care's stewardship across the states and territories. Council also expect that the national aged care design principles and guidelines will be well received and adopted by the sector. Other areas of discussion included:

Dementia

- Public education campaigns in schools could work to create a generation that does not stigmatise dementia and works to normalise the experience of dementia. Other priorities included consideration of a standardised human-rights based model of care; improving the safety of people living with dementia; developing more culturally safe dementia services for First Nations people and culturally and linguistically diverse people living with dementia; and improving the coordination and linkages within the health system.
- Council was pleased to hear about the consultation process for the National Dementia Action Plan and that a specific application to First Nations people is being developed.

New Aged Care Act

- An understanding of the approach to upholding rights and defining high-quality care in the new Aged Care Act and the importance of trusted relationships, noting that to receive high-quality care, every part of the system will need to work together and be accountable. The Council discussed alignment of resources and authority within the Aged Care Act with the assignment of accountability for all elements of the system.

Aged care regulatory model

- Extensive engagement for the new regulation model will assist to deliver a holistic model of care. Council discussed complex cultural change, noting a proposed consultation process.

Stewardship across states and territories

- Working on the ground and building up local knowledge, expertise and presence across the states and territories to understand the community. Council was pleased with the acknowledgement that every community is different when working with local governments.

National aged care design principles and guidelines

- Promotion of cost-effective designs in the national aged care design principles and guidelines which will be released soon for further consultation.

Council congratulated the two Council members, Mary Patetsos AM and Mike Baird AO, for their inclusion on the Aged Care Taskforce and look forward to more focused discussions on topics the taskforce identifies. Noting that the development of educational resources and communications regarding aged care funding could build consumer awareness.

Council members were enthused by the increased visibility of the aged care reform process in the release of the aged care reform roadmap and welcomed the government's initiative to establish a provider forum to work constructively through issues arising related to the Fair Work Commission wages decision.

Considering the importance of work to develop a national strategy for the care and support economy, Council will discuss this in detail, focusing on identifying opportunities for early wins.

Council also noted that increased detail, including timelines, for introducing technology-related innovations across the care and support economy will assist the sector to plan for these changes and encourage cross-sector efficiencies.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 14 August 2023.