

# National Aged Care Advisory Council (NACAC)

## Communiqué – 22 February 2024

This was the first meeting since the refreshed membership of the National Aged Care Advisory Council.

Members collectively bring wide-ranging sector expertise including, people representing older people who use aged care services, people representing aged care workers, aged care providers, health and allied health professionals, specialists in training and education, and independent experts.

### Reform Priorities:

Council reflected on the reform agenda over the coming 12 months. Members discussed the significance of the sector to participate in current consultation on the government's major reforms:

- **The new aged care Act:** The department is currently consulting on the exposure draft of the Bill for the new Act, which was released on 14 December 2023. Throughout the consultations, the department heard people wanted more time to consider the draft and make submissions. In response, the consultation period was extended until 8 March 2024.
- **Design and implementation of the new Support at Home program care:** Council members had an opportunity to talk about the early policy initiatives for the new Support at Home program. Council will work closely with the department on developing this program.
- **Considering funding arrangements for aged care to ensure the system is fair and equitable for all:** Members look forward to the government releasing its response to the Aged Care Taskforce report.

Members reiterated the importance of regular and ongoing communication with the sector on implementation phasing, progress and timelines. Likewise, Council is committed to providing independent, whole-of-sector advice on implementation readiness. Members will play an active role in conveying real-time, on-the-ground feedback from the sector about emerging challenges and opportunities. This includes possible unintended consequences that may emerge as reforms are rolled out.

### Quality Indicators:

Noting that high quality clinical services is a necessary foundation, Council discussed the importance of implementing Quality Indicators that measure older people's clinical and lifestyle support needs. To improve quality of life of older people, Council expressed a need to shift the dial towards early health intervention and better lifestyle support.

**Other matters discussed:** Council also met with the Acting Inspector-General of Aged Care to discuss his work program.

The next Council meeting is scheduled for 25 March 2024.