

National Aged Care Advisory Council (NACAC)

Communiqué – 16 May 2024

2024-25 Federal Budget:

Council was joined by members of the Council of Elders to discuss the 2024-25 Budget outcomes relating to ageing and aged care. Members acknowledged the level of investment, including the release of additional Home Care Packages, workforce reform initiatives, dementia initiatives and work on IT enhancements to support the reforms in the new Aged Care Act. Concerns with Commonwealth Support at Home and Home Care Packages funding were discussed.

Both Councils reflected on the immense value of coming together to discuss the Budget outcomes. The Chairs will look for further opportunities for collaboration.

Interim First Nations Aged Care Commissioner:

Council welcomed the Interim First Nations Aged Care Commissioner, Ms Andrea Kelly. Ms Kelly is more than halfway through national consultations with older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their families and communities. Consultations have found that on the ground, real progress to address the barriers faced by older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in aged care identified in the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety is slow. Notwithstanding the substantial work done to date to address urgent issues, much more needs to be done.

Members discussed issues emerging from Ms Kelly's consultations to date. Members see the potential for a permanent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged Care Commissioner to drive improvements in aged care for Indigenous people that can also benefit all older people. Council provided advice on the barriers they see to the provision of trauma-aware, healing informed, culturally safe aged care services to older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Council noted the connections with other initiatives to lift rates of Indigenous people working in the health and allied health sectors. Key issues relating to workforce and training were also discussed, including attracting First Nations people into the aged care workforce and retaining First Nations staff. Members will continue to support the work of the Interim Commissioner wherever possible and look forward to opportunities for further collaboration.

Reform priorities:

Council recognises the complexity of the process to finalise the response to the Taskforce and clarification of parameters for the new Support at Home Program. Members look forward to decisions being announced as soon as possible.

Members reiterated their willingness to provide any support they can to facilitate early introduction of the New Aged Care Act.

The next Council meeting is scheduled for 21 June 2024.