



# Council of Elders

## Meeting Communique: 15-16 April 2026

The Council met with the Minister for Aged Care and Seniors, the Hon Sam Rae MP, at Australian Parliament House to discuss progress on aged care reform. The discussion focused on what is working, where people are still experiencing difficulties, and what practical steps can improve confidence and outcomes for older people and their families.

Members highlighted early progress, including improvements to My Aged Care, evidence of improvements through emerging data and providers transitioning to new arrangements. The Council emphasised the need for clear, consistent information on costs, contributions, wait times and care options, particularly for people with complex needs.

The Council raised access and system performance concerns, including assessment consistency, wait-time transparency and feedback on the Integrated Assessment Tool. Members also highlighted the need for clearer dementia pathways and better coordination on elder abuse and palliative care.

Members supported earlier engagement with aged care through early intervention and prevention, healthy ageing and planning ahead.

Members discussed the transition from the Commonwealth Home Support Programme to Support at Home, emphasising that older people want reliable support regardless of the program. The Council welcomed efforts to simplify the system, while highlighting risks such as long wait lists and the loss of important block-funded local services, including transport, social connection and specialist supports.

Members agreed measuring quality in Support at Home remains challenging and should focus on lived experiences of older people, not just compliance. Areas discussed included service reliability and timeliness, continuity of staff, clear communication, and involvement of care partners where appropriate. Members raised the need to consider the impact of workforce shortages, the role of unpaid care, and whether provider information is easy to find and understand. The Council supports further work on client-centred quality measures, including clear feedback channels and transparent reporting.

The Council emphasised the importance of monitoring and evaluating reforms over time to ensure changes are delivering improvements. Members highlighted the need for ongoing data, transparent reporting, and a clear understanding of impacts across different groups of older people, including those in regional and remote areas and people with complex needs. The Council raised the value of identifying unintended consequences early and adjusting where needed.

The Council welcomed the opportunity to meet and will continue to engage with government, older people, families, providers and other stakeholders as reforms progress. Ongoing input from the Council will support a focus on clarity, fairness and better outcomes for older people.