

Council of Elders

Meeting Communique – 5 & 6 August 2026

The Council met on 5 and 6 August 2026 with a focus on issues of ageing well. Council members recognised that ageing well matters to everyone. It is about helping people stay healthy, connected and active at all stages of life. It is also about support from families, communities, services and government, not just the aged care system.

Members noted the benefits of supporting older people to stay healthy, connected and active, and to continue contributing to their families and communities. Members highlighted the need for better links between health and care services, including at the community level. Members also supported an increased focus on prevention and early intervention for good health and more person-centred care. The Council also noted the value of better personal health records so older people and care providers can make informed decisions, including as they move between health and care providers.

Preventing problems before they become serious should be a shared goal. This includes supporting older people to plan for the future, stay socially connected, access safe and suitable housing, avoid scams, use digital services and get the health care they need. The Council noted that ageing well needs action from government, services, communities and individuals.

In addition, Council considered progress on aged care reforms, including wait lists and access to services. Members welcomed improvements in some areas, while noting that people are still waiting too long for reassessments and care packages. They also discussed the need to maintain services in rural, regional and remote areas so older people can access care close to where they live.

Members welcomed progress on price transparency and noted that information about costs should be easy to find and understand. The Council also discussed the need to support people experiencing financial hardship, including simpler processes for older people on the pension or receiving rent assistance.

The Council recognised that early advice on the future of the Commonwealth Home Support Program is crucial. Members highlighted the need for clear and simple information so older people, families, providers and workers can understand any changes, plan ahead and stay confident in the aged care system.

Members welcomed the independent evaluation of Support at Home and the Single Assessment System. They noted that these are important parts of aged care and should be reviewed regularly so issues can be found and improved. The Council said the evaluation should include local communities and services that often support older people, such as councils, libraries, pharmacies, health services and hospitals.

The Council welcomed the opportunity to meet the Interim First Nations Aged Care Commissioner, Jodi Cassar PSM. Members noted the importance of First Nations voices helping to shape aged care reforms, including access, assessment, service delivery and quality. The Council supported ongoing engagement with the Commissioner.

The next Council of Elders meeting will be held on 30 September and 1 October 2026.