



National Aged Care Advisory Council

Terms of Reference – January 2027

1. Purpose

The National Aged Care Advisory Council (NACAC) provides expert advice to support the implementation of aged care reforms. NACAC provides advice on key matters relating to planning, implementation, outcomes and evaluation of the reforms in the aged care sector to:

- the Minister for Health and Ageing
- the Minister for Aged Care and Seniors
- the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing
- other government agencies responding to recommendations of the Royal Commission.

NACAC will ensure the advice reflects the needs and expectations of a diverse range of older people in Australia, their families and carers, as well as that of aged care providers and the aged care workforce. NACAC will note the need to protect the interests of vulnerable and disadvantaged people, regardless of where they live, with a focus on cultural safety.

2. Functions

NACAC will consider and provide advice on key issues affecting Australia's aged care system. This encompasses matters arising from implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety as well as implementation of the *Aged Care Act 2024*. Areas of focus for NACAC advice include but are not limited to:

- supporting a rights-based, older person-focused Act, including monitoring implementation, reporting consequences and examining evaluations;
- supporting older people to navigate and access aged care services, including considering this from the perspective of the older person and their carers;
- continuity of care and sustainable services across health, community, home and residential based services;
- strengthening in-home based aged care, recognising a strong preference from older Australians to age in place and community for as long as possible. This includes future arrangements for the Commonwealth Home Support Program and implementation of the Support at Home program;
- Improving and simplifying residential aged care services and access, including funding models for residential aged care and developing a strong, competitive and sustainable market;
- improving aged care quality and safety, including strengthened clinical care and nutritional standards, consumer protection measures, and Star Rating System. This advice should recognise the regulatory role and capability of the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission and Aged Care Complaints Commissioner;
- supporting a growing and better-skilled care workforce, including issues affecting demand, supply and productivity of the aged care workforce; and how industry, government, employees and older people can work collectively to ensure the care workforce is suitably skilled; and
- helping build a culture of positive and active ageing in Australia.

Responding to parliamentary and related inquiries is outside of NACAC's scope.

In providing advice, NACAC members will ensure that the issues addressed are informed by their networks to the fullest degree possible (where appropriate, as directed by the Chair).

To support these functions, members of NACAC will act in a collegiate and collaborative manner and respect the confidentiality of NACAC proceedings.

Ministers have a standing invitation to attend meetings at their discretion. Where the Minister is unavailable to attend, a Ministerial Advisor/s may attend as an observer. NACAC will provide written advice to the Minister for Aged Care and Seniors. Draft advice will be prepared during NACAC meetings and agreed by all NACAC members (who were present at the meeting) prior to submission. A communique will be published on the Department's website as soon as possible after each meeting.

3. Membership

NACAC will consist of up to appointed 17 members, comprising:

- an independent Chair
- Chair of the Council of Elders
- up to 15 other general members.

General members will be appointed by the Minister for Health and Ageing, on recommendations from the Minister for Aged Care and Seniors. General members will be either senior representatives of aged care peak bodies or experts in relevant aspects of the aged care system, including representatives of:

- people receiving aged care
- aged care workforce
- approved providers
- health and allied health professionals
- training and education experts
- other independent experts.

When a member no longer fulfills the criteria under which they were appointed, their membership on NACAC may be terminated by the Minister. Membership can also be terminated by the Minister without cause at any time.

Senior executive officer(s) from the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing will attend meetings as observers to ensure NACAC's work is considered in aged care reform implementation. With the Chair's prior approval, other individuals and organisations may be invited attend discussions as observers where they have relevant knowledge, expertise or experience.

4. Meetings and Work Program

NACAC will meet approximately six times each year, unless agreed otherwise. Meetings will generally be face-to-face, but may be held virtually if necessary, as agreed by NACAC and the Department. Meetings will be planned annually.

NACAC members will establish an annual work program agreed in consultation with the Minister for Aged Care and Seniors. Additional items can be referred to NACAC by Ministers for advice outside of a formal work planning process. The Council of Elders may also refer items to NACAC.

NACAC may be supported through the commissioning of external services to assist it to effectively provide advice on implementation of aged care reforms, if required. Engagement of external support and associated expenditure will be subject to Australian Government procurement and expenditure rules.