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Aged care funding boost a welcome start

The Federal Government's funding announcement of \$537 million for the aged care sector is a welcome start to addressing the issues raised by the royal commission, says Catholic Health Australia (CHA).

The additional funding will increase the number of home care packages by 10,000 places, get younger people out of residential care more quickly and reduce the use of chemical restraints in aged care homes.

But, with almost 120,000 on the waiting lists for home care packages it's a modest first step, according to the CHA.

It's very encouraging to see the Federal Government make a start to addressing the very real concerns raised by the Royal Commission. While half a billion dollars is a significant amount of money, it's been estimated we need \$5.5 billion alone just to address the full home care package waiting list and the remuneration gap for the underpaid aged care workforce," Catholic Health Australia CEO Pat Garcia said.

"This announcement, whilst welcome and needed, will still leave 110,000 Australians waiting for a home care package. These people need specialist care and support and their loved ones need relief. Just imagine having to look after your husband or wife with dementia on your own week after week."

CONTACT: Pat Garcia, CEO - 0409 225 214

CHA represents the largest single grouping of non-government health, aged and community care services in Australia.



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Almost \$500 million will be spent on the additional home care packages, with a further \$10 million on dementia training, \$25.5 million on improving medication management programs to reduce the use of chemical restraints and nearly \$5 million on reducing the number of younger people in aged care facilities.

Mr Garcia said: “We fully support the objective that no younger person should be entering residential aged care and by 2025 no younger person should be living in residential aged care, except for those that choose to stay on. Aged care is just not an appropriate place for any young person to live.

“The announcement today focused on three priority areas identified in the Royal Commission’s recently released interim report, but there is still much more that needs to be done. We look forward to working with the Government over the coming months and years to ensure that older Australians, no matter where they live, get the aged care service they truly deserve.”

The Aged Care Royal Commission’s final report is due in November 2020.

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