

**MEDIA RELEASE**

15<sup>th</sup> September 2017

## **Tune Review a necessary step to achieve broader aged care reform**

A coalition of consumer groups, aged care providers, unions and health professionals today welcomed the release of the 5-year review of aged care reforms, and is urging the government to maintain the momentum and continue on the reform path.

The National Aged Care Alliance (NACA), a representative body of 50 peak national organisations in aged care, said the report of the Aged Care Legislated Review led by David Tune AM PSM, detailed a number of important recommendations and delivered a number of the outcomes outlined in NACA's Blueprint for Aged Care Reform.

"This review is an opportunity for Government to check in at the half way mark of the 10-year reform agenda, to celebrate the progress that has already been made, and to identify areas for improvement," said Pat Sparrow, Chief Executive Officer, Aged and Community Services Australia.

"The sector, led by the Alliance, is united in this push for continued reform and looks forward to our industry working together to ensure we have the right systems and structures in place now to support the needs of our rapidly ageing population."

"We are only part way through a significant reform process in aged care which is introducing more control for older Australians and their families and helping us be better prepared for the future," said Ian Yates AM, Chief Executive of COTA Australia.

"The government must keep up the momentum of reform – our current and future older Australians are counting on us to get the systems in place now that are sustainable, of high quality and provide the choice and control older people deserve."

### **Future of Home Care Packages**

The review recommends the Australian Government rebalance the distribution of home care packages to increase the proportion of high care packages, and consider whether a change in the mix of places should occur as part of a new ratio to be determined and introduced from 2021-22.

Patricia Sparrow, Chief Executive of Aged and Community Services Australia said

"As outlined in the NACA Blueprint, the Alliance supports a single care service system that is consumer-led and demand-driven, with access based on assessed need not on arbitrary ratios. Today's recommendation from Tune reenergises this conversation and provides some good suggestions about how it can be taken forward in the medium to longer term," Ms Sparrow said.

### **Improving Supports for Consumers**

The review recommends the introduction of a government funded aged care system navigator and outreach services.

Chief Executive, COTA Australia Ian Yates welcomed the focus on mechanisms that would improve support and information for older people and their families in choosing their aged care provider.

“System Navigators and Outreach Services are a critical component missing from today’s system. These are two of a number of support types that will help older people navigate the complex aged care system,” Mr Yates said.

“Of particular importance is ensuring that people with special needs have equity of access and outcomes and we look forward to working with Government to co-design these important services.”

### **Workforce**

The review recommends the aged care sector, in collaboration with the VET and tertiary sectors, acts to ensure education and training directly responds to the sector’s needs.

National Assistant Secretary of the Health Services Union (HSU), Tim Jacobson, welcomed the development of a workforce strategy and the announcement of the Aged Care Workforce Taskforce to ensure the long-term success and sustainability of the aged care sector.

“Recruitment, training and retention of a quality aged care workforce are some of the biggest challenges facing the sector now and in the future.

“A national approach to workforce development and planning now is essential to meeting the needs of our ageing population,” said Tim Jacobson.

### **Integrated Assessment Workforce**

The review proposes the government integrate the Regional Assessment Service (RAS) and Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) program.

CEO of Occupational Therapy Australia, Rachel Norris, said a single integrated workforce would deliver better quality services for older Australians.

“Combining multiple systems into a single, professional, appropriately qualified and resourced assessment workforce will improve the outcomes for older people and their families,” Ms Norris said.

The Alliance noted the Government’s announcements around funding to improve My Aged Care functionality, and the Chair of the Aged Care Workforce Taskforce. These items will be considered by the Alliance, along with the detailed recommendations of the Tune report in due course.

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### **About the Tune Review**

Legislation passed with multi-partisan support in 2012 to reform the aged care system including an Aged Care Legislated Review in 2017 to monitor the 5-year progress of the reforms completed and identify any further recommendations for achieving improvements on reforms. In September 2016, Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care, Ken Wyatt AM, MP announced Mr David Tune AO PSM to lead the Aged Care Legislated Review. The review was presented to Government by 1 August and has today been tabled in parliament.

A copy of the review can be found here: <https://agedcare.health.gov.au/legislated-review-of-aged-care-2017-report>.