

# THE ADVOCATE

The Royal Commission into Aged Care Special Edition, 4 March 2021 Contact us: 1800 700 600

## The Report is in

Welcome to our special edition of The Advocate where we look at the long-awaited final report from the Royal Commission into Aged Care. <https://agedcare.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/final-report>

As aged care advocates, we have been closely following the Royal Commission and strongly lobbying along the way to influence reform to deliver on what we know older Australians want and deserve from an aged care system.

The final report is in, and government have given an initial response with more to come when the budget is delivered in May 2021. Government, and the sector now need to take time to consider how to best implement the 148 recommendations.

We know that Australians have invested a lot in this Royal Commission both in terms of taxpayer dollars and an emotional toll in telling and listening to the stories of abuse and neglect of older Australians. Rest assured, we will be working with government to make sure this effort translates into action and that we see real transformation of the aged care system.

In this edition we look at what we as aged care advocates think are some of the key wins in the 148 recommendations that will make a real difference to the experience of older Australians in aged care.

It is the good news we were hoping for. It has put the rights of older people at the core of reform and has made person-centred care, choice and dignity the top priority.

Geoff Rowe  
Chief Executive Officer



## Key Wins

### A new Aged Care Act which embeds human rights into aged care

A rights-based approach is what aged care advocates have been asking for. This is the fundamental building block for an aged care system which protects human rights and focuses on the human experience of older people in aged care including their rights, preferences and needs.

### A Council of Elders

An older people's advisory body to provide input to the Minister and Department on the quality and safety of care and the rights and dignity of older people. Failure to include the voices of older people in the design and delivery of a new aged care system would perpetuate our society's failure to engage older Australians in the things that are about them.

### Better safeguards

Greater regulation of the use of restrictive practices including chemical restraint, making sure that their use is a last resort, for the shortest time possible and is supported by planning and consent.

Expansion and increased funding of the Community Visitor Scheme to an Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme will increase the number of external people entering into residential care and the homes of isolated older people living in the community, who can also be alert to issues.

### Care managers and minimum staff time standards

Care Managers to be assigned to each person and standards set for the minimum time staff and nursing staff should spend per day with residents. These measures should give providers greater capacity to base service delivery around individual client needs and preferences. Currently the system relies heavily on family and friends to bridge this gap.

## INITIAL GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

\$18m

enhance oversight of Home Care Packages Program

Enhance capacity of ACQSC & greater regulation around use of restraints

\$32m

\$189.9m

for residential care providers to build stability & maintain services

Viability fund for facilities facing financial challenges

\$90m

\$92m

create over 18,000 places for workers between now & mid-2023

strengthen governance of aged care providers & legislative governance obligations

\$30.1m

**\$452 MILLION**

**Access to aged care facility performance data**

### Ageing at home

Clearing the 100,000 person waiting list by December 2021 is a great start, along with access to support to help people get a home care provider and plan in place. Then keeping the waiting list clear by allocating a Home Care Package at the approved level within one month to new entrants will make a significant difference in ensuring people get the care they need to stay at home.

Government to develop and publish a system of star ratings based on facility performance that would allow older people and their families to make meaningful comparisons between the quality and safety performance of providers. Measures would include clinical and quality indicators and staffing levels. If aged care is to continue operating under a competitive market model, then older people must have access to information about the potential quality of a service, as a consumer of any service or product would expect.

## Advocacy services

While we think the Report includes some sound recommendations, we also know that making the recommendations a reality will take time.

That's why we particularly welcome recommendation 106 Enhanced advocacy, which proposes additional advocacy services from 1 July 2021, to help meet unmet demand for individual advocacy, and to provide additional education and systemic advocacy.

It lends extra safeguards and support for older people and their families while the reform is taking place.

## Advocacy Education

Just a reminder for providers that our advocacy education sessions for aged care residents and aged care clients in the community are now available online.

<https://adaaustralia.com.au/education/advocacy-education/>



**Advocacy Services**  
Information for people receiving  
residential aged care services



If you would like a printable copy, please visit our [website](https://adaaustralia.com.au/) or email [info@adaaustralia.com.au](mailto:info@adaaustralia.com.au)

ADA Australia  
121 Copperfield St, Geebung QLD 4034  
Telephone: (07) 3637 6000 or 1800 818 338  
Website: <https://adaaustralia.com.au/>