



## NEWS RELEASE

EMBARGOED UNTIL 1.00AM MONDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2011

### **AGED CARE A REAL TEST OF OUR NATION'S VALUES - TIME FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS TO GET BEHIND REFORM**

The Council on the Ageing (COTA) has called on all Australians to get behind aged care reform by letting their Federal MPs know they want more of their taxes spent on aged care.

Mr Ian Yates, Chief Executive of COTA Australia says "The highest quality aged care must be a priority for any Australian government, and reforming aged care to achieve this must be a key objective for this government this term."

"All stakeholders agree we need more funding for better care. Better care requires reform to make aged care more consumer driven and adequately resourced, with more staff and much higher wages."

"Government action is key to these reforms", Mr Yates said, "and government action is easier when government knows there is broad public and bi-partisan support"

"COTA has strongly welcomed the Draft Report of the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Caring for Older Australians, commissioned by this government", Mr Yates said.

"If these draft recommendations are implemented:

- older Australians will get more and better care where they want it – in their own homes;
- they will have better choices of appropriate support and care services both at home and in nursing homes;
- all aged care workers will get fair and competitive wages and conditions".

Mr Yates said the federal government must move promptly to implement the Productivity Commission's Final Report after it receives it in June this year.

"We call on all political parties and interest groups to support the government in reform of the care we provide older Australians" Mr Yates said – "This is a real test of our values as a nation!"

COTA Australia is the peak body for older Australians, representing more than 500,000 older people. Mr Yates will attend Monday morning's launch in Melbourne of the Australian Nursing Federation's national day of action, which he hopes will be the first of many initiatives by a wide range of organisations to get all Australians behind aged care reform as the Productivity Commission prepares its final report.

Ian Yates is available for interview on 0418 835 439 (*in the air 6.30 – 8.00am EST*).

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#### Further Information:

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