



NEWS RELEASE

AGED CARE FACES A TOUGH YEAR WAITING FOR REFORM

Australia's peak body for older Australians, COTA Australia (Council on the Ageing), has expressed concern that aged support and care services in both community and residential sectors will increasingly struggle during 2011/12 while waiting for government implementation.

COTA Australia Chief Executive, Ian Yates, says "our current aged care system is unsustainable and is starting to significantly fail the needs of older Australians, who deserve better".

"This is the result of both sides of politics ignoring the need for fundamental reform, instead applying band-aid after band-aid over the last decade".

The Productivity Commission has already flagged the new directions in which aged care needs to be reformed and will provide its final report on Caring for Older Australians to government by 30 June.

"We expect the government to honour its major election commitment that aged care reform is a second term priority, and make the 2012 Budget the Aged Care Budget" Mr Yates said.

"This budget contains only one minor initiative in aged care and no bridging finance for the many providers now struggling to maintain access by all to high quality care, operating in system that everyone agrees is about to fall over.

"The government will have to keep a close eye on viability within the sector this year at the same time as it works with us and providers to fundamentally reform the system.

"We welcome major mental health reform in 2011 honouring that election commitment; so 2012 will have to be the Aged Care Budget to honour that parallel commitment and give older Australians the support and security they deserve over the decades to come."

Further Information:

Ian Yates
Chief Executive
COTA Australia

Ph: 0418 835 439