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MEDIA RELEASE

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Carer's payments should be retained

Suggestions that a \$1600 carer's payment might be slashed by the government's razor gang are causing enormous anxiety to the many thousands of older Australians who are caring for elderly spouses or adult children with disabilities.

"It would be a great disappointment if the Rudd government chose to eliminate carer's payments," said Dr Geoffrey Bird, Executive Director of the peak seniors organization COTA Over 50s. "It would also be economically unsound. If carers don't have the resources they need to care for loved ones in their homes, formal health and aged care services will have to step in, and the cost of that to government will far outweigh any support given to carers.

"Unfortunately there is confusion about exactly what cuts are being considered. While we appreciate that the government has to make some tough economic decisions, any cuts should not fall on those who are already under severe pressure and who are also, through their own efforts, helping to minimize the burden on taxpayers."

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