



NEWS RELEASE

HOW THE BUDGET IMPACTS ON OLDER AUSTRALIANS

Australia's peak body for older Australians, COTA Australia (Council on the Ageing), has given the 2011 Federal Budget a low pass mark, and says the Government needs to do much better in 2012.

COTA Australia Chief Executive, Ian Yates, says the Budget contains some good news for seniors, but many of the big issues for an ageing Australia are still to be faced.

"We welcome:

- Implementation of the election commitment to significantly improve the work bonus for pensioners as promised in the last election by increasing the amount people can earn without loss of pension and annualising this.
- New and expanded initiatives in employment creation that provides more incentives for employers to recruit older workers and for long term unemployed people to undertake training
- The very substantial mental health reform package that will benefit older Australians with mental illness in the community along with all other Australians"

"However there is nothing in this Budget that deals with the increasingly fragile aged care system that will face major challenges over the coming year".

"That makes implementation of the Productivity Commission's Caring for Older Australians" report an absolute imperative for the 2012 Budget".

"The Government will be judged in 2012 by older Australians and their families on its delivery of fundamental aged care reform as already foreshadowed by the Commission's draft report.

"Also outstanding is reform of dental health – the most overdue of all. That must be another priority in 2012."

Further Information:

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