



the voice of older Australians

MEDIA Release

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Lots of goodies but some big issues still calling out for attention

“Seniors welcome a long list of initiatives in health and aged care,” says Patricia Reeve, Executive Director Policy. “These include improvements in:

- Aged Care
- Indigenous Health services
- Medicare payments,
- Hearing Services
- Prevention of Chronic Disease
- Services for people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Continence Aids
- Improved medical services for aged care residents

Funding for Aged Care reflects the package announced by the Prime Minister in February plus some positive additions to low care payments and to increase GP and allied health services for residents. COTA Over 50s welcomed the package as a significant step towards ensuring a high quality aged care system because it is fair to seniors; supports services for disadvantaged groups including indigenous and homeless people; and puts an emphasis on community care packages and high care accommodation.

“At the same time we feel that the government overlooked the desperate situation of many low income Australians. An increase in single age pensions and access to basic dental services for people on low incomes remain the biggest challenges for many older people.

“The government has extended its range of incentives for people to save for retirement but has not moved to provide basic income security for those who are not able to make such investments. The one-off \$500 sweetener of the Seniors’ Bonus does not meet the need for income security to ensure a basic standard of living for today’s older people.. Many single older women live \$250 per week for periods of 25 – 30 years.”

Access to dental care for all Australians requires commitments by all governments to a comprehensive strategy that guarantees oral health programs, preventive and restorative treatment particularly for disadvantaged groups. The government has gone only part way to responding to this with its extension of Medicare rebates for a limited group of people, those with chronic conditions being managed by a GP.

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