



Media Release

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Palliative Care on World Health Assembly Agenda

Palliative Care Australia (PCA) CEO Liz Callaghan looks forward to the review of the palliative care resolution at the sixty-ninth World Health Assembly which starts today in Geneva, Switzerland.

“Two years ago a palliative care resolution was passed unanimously at the World Health Assembly to ask governments around the world to make palliative care a priority for their health systems.”

“This week is Australia’s 20th National Palliative Care Week, and in the lead up to the Federal election we are calling on political parties to make palliative care a National Health Priority,” Ms Callaghan said.

The key recommendations from the resolution were to integrate palliative care into healthcare systems, ensuring palliative care is embedded in the education and training for all health workers, and to make sure that relevant medicines, including strong pain medicines, are available to patients.

“Australia has made some good improvements such as legalising the cultivation of medicinal cannabis, funding national palliative care projects and improving access to training and palliative care information for health professionals.

“However there is often difficulty accessing palliative care for people in rural and remote areas, and there is not universal understanding about how to provide culturally respectful palliative care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

“Training and support for medical professionals is also an area where Australia can continue to improve. PCA would like to see set mandatory hours in the undergraduate curriculums focussing on palliative and end-of-life care for all medical students.

“PCA’s Election Statement calls for increased support for paediatric palliative care, recognising the burden associated with caring for a child with a life-shortening illness. It also calls for a study to better understand the quality of death in aged care services.

“It is time to shine a light on end-of-life care. We need to make sure that everyone in Australia has access to high quality care, right to the end of their lives. Only then can Australians make a real choice about how they want to live until they die,” Ms Callaghan said.

Read PCA’s full election statement [here](#)

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