



Media Release

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VITAL NEXT STEP: PCA WELCOMES FIVE YEAR PALLIATIVE CARE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Palliative Care Australia (PCA), the national peak body for palliative care, has today welcomed the release of the [Implementation Plan for the National Palliative Care Strategy 2018](#) as a vital next step in progressing the development and delivery of palliative care across Australia. Its release comes at a critical time, with the COVID-19 pandemic and the work of the Aged Care Royal Commission highlighting the increasing need for palliative care.

The Implementation Plan has identified four key action areas to progress the goals and priorities in the Strategy over the next five years.

1. Increasing access to palliative care, particularly for underserved populations
2. Improving collaboration and coordination of palliative care
3. Increased use of advance care plans by people affected by life-limiting illnesses
4. Nationally consistent data collection mechanisms with national public reporting

PCA Chief Executive Officer, Rohan Greenland says the release of the Implementation Plan represents a critical next step in the life of the National Palliative Care Strategy 2018.

“I said at the time of the Strategy’s release that it provided a road map for the future of palliative care services across Australia. With the release of the Implementation Plan, we now have a timetable for action, with clear direction for State and Territory Governments to work together over the next five years of the strategy,” Mr Greenland said.

“PCA looks forward to working with the Palliative Care and End of Life Care Reference Group on the implementation of the strategy.”

Mr Greenland did sound a note of caution, saying there is still one critical factor to be addressed.

“The next step must be adequate funding. Indeed, the National Palliative Care Strategy 2018 makes very clear the necessity to ensure a greater investment in palliative care in Australia,” Mr Greenland said.

There has been additional funding for palliative care in recent times and we are grateful for that. However, all agree that more needs to be done. The [National Palliative Care Strategy 2018](#) acknowledges, “Investment at national, state and territory levels will be required to ensure that the systems and people are available to provide quality palliative care where and when it is needed.”

Mr Greenland says it is also important for Governments to recognise that investment in palliative care will in fact save money in other areas of the health and aged care system.

“This was the key message from a recently published economic study into the value of palliative care. The KPMG report, [Investing to Save: The Economics of Increased Investment in Palliative Care in Australia](#), commissioned by PCA, found that palliative care is one of the few positive health interventions that also provides a positive return on investment,” Mr Greenland said.

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