



Media Release

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Three Ministers with a focus on health welcomed

Palliative Care Australia (PCA) welcomes the Turnbull Government's focus on healthcare, with two Ministers and an Assistant Minister with a focus on health appointed to the portfolio and congratulates all Government ministers.

PCA CEO Liz Callaghan said she looked forward to working with the new expanded Ministry and continuing the dialogue about the importance of Australians talking about death, dying and bereavement.

"Sussan Ley remaining as Health Minister provides continuity to the sector. Ms Ley has begun the crucial work of reforming the primary health care system, and for the first time there is hope that for people receiving palliative care there will be a seamless transition between services and settings, regardless of who is funding the services. It is vital this work continues," Ms Callaghan said.

"The health needs of rural Australians will be in good hands with Fiona Nash as Minister for Rural Health. Minister Nash has worked closely with Palliative Care Australia where she has provided strong leadership in the area of palliative and end of life care. She will no doubt be the sector's greatest advocate for access to palliative care services in the bush.

"The appointment of an additional Assistant Minister, Ken Wyatt is also welcomed. The health sector is large and diverse and the extra attention of another Minister will give health a much needed focus and result in better health outcomes for Australians.

"I look forward to working closely with Minister Wyatt, particularly in developing better access and more culturally responsive palliative care models for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders," she said.

"Palliative Care Australia has been encouraging Australians to talk more about death, dying and their end of life wishes. After all, talking about dying won't kill you. But unless we have those conversations we could unnecessarily and unwittingly put our families under considerable strain when they have to make choices for us, without really knowing what we want.

"Life is bookended by two main events, being born and dying. We spend a lot of time preparing for and talking about a birth, but we ignore dying, despite acknowledging its inevitability. It is time we incorporated this growing acknowledgement of the importance of end of life wishes into the planning for health services," Ms Callaghan said.

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