



PalliativeCare
AUSTRALIA

Media Release

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Health Care Homes welcomed for people needing palliative care

The introduction of Health Care Homes for people with chronic and complex health conditions is the first step in prioritising care for people who can benefit from access to palliative care, says Palliative Care Australia (PCA) CEO Liz Callaghan.

The Government's Healthier Medicare package released today calls for the introduction of 'Health Care Homes' for people with chronic and complex health conditions (CCHC).

"With four out of five deaths in Australia from chronic disease, the Health Care Home model provides the opportunity for coordinated care and early referral to palliative care.

"Patients with chronic diseases can benefit from palliative care which provides pain and symptom management. Far from being just care at the very end of someone's life, palliative care can work with patients and families over many years to ensure better quality of life.

"Palliative care is truly patient-centred care, where the whole team is working with the patient and their family for the best management of that person's condition," she said.

The development of health care pathways, as outlined in the policy, will need to include identification of triggers for referral to palliative care or end-of-life care services.

"Most Australians want to die at home, so as a community we need to invest in models of home based and inpatient care that deliver palliative care services for people."

Ms Callaghan also welcomed the recommendation to pursue opportunities for joint or pooled funding.

"This picks up PCA's number one budget ask to establish a national cooperative model between states, territories and the commonwealth that allows palliative and end-of-life care to be implemented as a national reform agenda. By allowing sharing of financial risk between governments and Private Health Insurers, achievement of the best service provision within resources available is possible.

"Many Australians want to die at home, but they are still dying in hospitals. Families may not know they can care for a loved one at home, or they may not be aware of the services community based palliative care can offer.

"It is important that Primary Health Networks work with palliative care services in their areas to ensure impeccable care is delivered to their population groups.

"PCA would welcome input to the Health Care Home Implementation Advisory Group to ensure that trials meet the needs of people with life-limiting illness," Ms Callaghan said.

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