



# Media Release

6 December 2016

## PCA releases its 2017 Pre-Budget Submission

**In releasing Palliative Care Australia's (PCA) Pre-Budget Submission today, National Policy Manager Philippa Kirkpatrick, underscored the importance of ongoing government funding in maximising quality of life right until the end of life.**

Ms Kirkpatrick said that the submission calls on the Australian Government to allocate funding in the 2017-18 Budget to support PCA in delivering four priority initiatives - community awareness and engagement, access to care, quality and evidence and national leadership.

"Current data indicates that while 82% of Australians think it is important to talk to their family about their end-of-life care preferences, only 28% have done so," Ms Kirkpatrick said.

"The community awareness and engagement initiative would be informed by the principles of Compassionate Communities and funding would include supporting the building of this movement in Australia. A key focus for PCA would be on groups who are disadvantaged and under-represented in palliative care services.

"There are less than 200 palliative medicine specialists across Australia, equating to one for every 828 deaths. Under the access to care initiative we propose that funding be allocated to support additional palliative medicine specialist trainee positions, as well developing and implementing strategies to ensure these graduates have specialist positions to move into.

"We are also proposing a scheme to improve access to equipment by funding the loan or purchase of equipment, where such costs are not covered under existing schemes," Ms Kirkpatrick said.

Under Quality and Evidence, PCA has identified a gap in resources and support available in Australia for children with life-limiting conditions, their families and healthcare team. Funding would enable PCA to work with the Paediatric Palliative Care Reference Group in Australia to develop resources and provide support.

"Continued funding for PCA is needed to provide funding certainty for us, which is critical for short and longer term strategic planning and program implementation," Ms Kirkpatrick said.

"PCA's aim is to maximise quality of life, right until the end of life. We need to get people talking, provide high quality care, resources such as equipment, respite care and timely and affordable access to specialist medications and we need an integrated information system that addresses the needs of patients, carers, health workforce and policy makers.

"Investment in good palliative and end-of-life care has the dual advantage of improving the lives of people with a life-limiting illness, while also realising savings to the health budget and we call on the Australian Government to fund these important initiatives," Ms Kirkpatrick said.

A full copy of Palliative Care Australia's Pre-Budget Submission is available [here](#).

**Media contact:** Grace Keyworth – 0422 040 576

[palliativecare.org.au](http://palliativecare.org.au)

