



Media Release

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Palliative Care Australia welcomes new Aged Care Safety and Quality Commission

Palliative Care Australia (PCA) welcomes the establishment of a new national independent Aged Care Safety and Quality Commission, announced today by Minister for Aged Care, Ken Wyatt MP, to ensure safe and quality care for older Australians.

PCA Chief Executive Officer, Liz Callaghan, said the aged care sector will strengthen and benefit from a new commission to improve the quality of care for consumers and their families.

“With more than 350,000 Australians cared for by aged care services, it is vital that we ensure we are doing all we can to maximise their quality of life, but it is also important to ensure that the end of their lives is included in this focus.

“PCA wants to see the community recognising that death is a normal part of life and palliative and end-of-life care is integrated as core business throughout the aged care system. We will be asking the new Commission to ensure the quality of deaths of aged care service recipients is tracked and measured.

The need to ensure the availability of high quality palliative care and end-of-life care services in residential aged care is the basis of the [Principles for Palliative and End-of-Life Care in Residential Aged Care](#).

“It is important that everyone is aware that palliative care can be provided to people receiving aged care services, and encourage community members to ask their aged care providers about what end-of-life care is available within their services.

“Also an integral element of holistic standards based palliative care is support for families, carers and in many instances, health professionals and support staff during the dying and bereavement processes,” Ms Callaghan said.

The [PCA submission to the Aged Care Quality Regulatory Review](#) last year highlighted the need to ensure the availability of high quality palliative care and end-of-life care services in residential aged care and recognising the diverse needs of residential aged care consumers, families, carers and staff.

“All staff need to be trained and equipped to recognise the need for appropriate palliative care or end-of-life care, including appropriate pain and other symptom management and the signs of approaching death,” Ms Callaghan said.

The quality of end-of-life care in residential aged care was also a concern in the recent [Introducing Competition and Informed User Choice into Human Services: Reforms to Human Services Inquiry Report](#) released by the Productivity Commission.

“PCA looks forward to working with the new Commission, and encourages consideration of the recommendations in the Reforms to Human Services Inquiry report, which explicitly states that an improvement to the standard of end-of-life care in residential aged care needs to occur,” Ms Callaghan said.

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