



## Media Release

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### Palliative care must be considered 'core business' in aged care

Palliative Care Australia (PCA) Board Chair, Dr Jane Fischer has appeared as a witness at the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety [person-centred care hearing in Perth](#) late yesterday, highlighting the urgent need for palliative care to be considered as 'core business' in aged care.

Dr Fischer appeared alongside palliative care sector experts, including Professor Jennifer Tieman and Professor Liz Reymond, as they examined access and quality of palliative care in aged care.

As part of Dr Fischer's testimony she highlighted PCA's eight point plan to improve palliative care in aged care.

1. Aged care policy should align with the World Health Organisation definition of palliative care and not be restricted to 'end of life' or last days/weeks.
2. Palliative care must be included and clearly articulated in the Aged Care Quality Standards, which all Commonwealth funded aged care services are required to meet.
3. All undergraduate nursing, allied health, medical courses and Certificate courses for care workers must include mandatory units on palliative care.
4. Establish National Minimum Data Sets for palliative care which includes both health and aged care.
5. Funding is needed to fully implement the [National Palliative Care Strategy](#) ensuring aged care is included.
6. Investment and the development of innovative models of care are required to ensure older people have equitable access to specialist palliative care.
7. Greater focus on community awareness on death and dying, palliative care and advance care planning.
8. Palliative care should be a COAG priority supported by the appointment of a National Palliative Care Commissioner to help address the aged care and health interface issues.

PCA CEO Rohan Greenland says the organisation is greatly encouraged by the inclusion of palliative care as a topic for inquiry at the Royal Commission.

"As highlighted by the World Health Organisation, palliative care is care that is provided by all health and aged care professionals involved in supporting people living with a life-limiting illness, their families and carers."

"PCA has long been raising issues about how palliative care is provided in aged care, both in residential and home settings. Aged care and palliative care must not be seen to operate in isolation. As the Australian population rapidly ages, it is crucial that aged care be included in considerations of palliative care and that palliative care be considered core business in aged care."

PCA is currently working with state and territory members and key stakeholders to prepare a full submission to the Royal Commission.

Hearing transcripts and recordings from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety are available [here](#). Dr Fischer's full witness statement can be accessed [here](#)

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