



**Allied Health
Professions
Australia**

**FAIR ACCESS
TO ALLIED
HEALTH
FOR ALL**
Help stop the suffering and
make your vote count

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MEDIA RELEASE

Federal Budget Response: Aged Care misses out, again.

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People in residential aged care have been ignored in the Federal Budget yet again, despite the Royal Commission's shocking revelations and calls for funding commitments to allied health.

While there were miniscule allocations for allied health in last night's budget, including small provisions to digital health and interpreter services, which are welcome, most people in need of allied health services have once again been ignored - particularly those in residential aged care.

Access to a broad range of allied health services that help diagnose and manage a range of conditions and support wellness and reablement is especially important for people with chronic, multiple and progressive conditions and end of life needs. Many of these people are older Australians. The Aged Care Royal Commission found that an important cause of poor quality residential aged care is inadequate access to allied health services. The Commissioners said there is 'a wealth of evidence on the importance of various allied health interventions in maintaining or enhancing people's mobility, dexterity, and cognitive function.'

The Royal Commission therefore recommended that both care at home and residential care should include a level of allied health care appropriate to each older person's needs. This requires clinical assessment of each person, and then managing their care so that they can obtain the allied health services that meet those needs. That in turn requires targeted aged care funding.

The Federal Government accepted the Royal Commission recommendations but provided no clear commitments to funding allied health in residential care, including in last year's Budget. Older people, their advocates and allied health practitioners were therefore looking to this year's Budget for those commitments, but this desperate need has been ignored.

AHPA CEO Claire Hewat says 'We had a Royal Commission reveal the shocking state of aged care for many older people, and there was much public hand wringing about it. We all know now that older people are often in distress, at risk of falls and have difficulties swallowing. The current average of three minutes per day of allied health care in aged care facilities is simply not good enough. But the Government's attitude in this Budget prioritises many things over addressing suffering and quality of life in aged care.'

'The constant Government reference to the new funding model, AN-ACC, as somehow magically providing better access to allied health is flawed. The AN-ACC funding at best maintains the status quo of approximately 4% of the budget which will not achieve the outcomes required. It's time to make allied health services accessible for all, and this requires urgent government funding and action.'

Our 'Fair Access to Allied Health for All' campaign is pushing for change and calling on the public to make their vote count at the upcoming election to help stop the suffering caused by lack of access to allied health services across Australia.

AHPA have developed a range of resources at their website ahpa.com.au/electioncampaign, including information to inform voting choices, a digital kit for sharing on social media and an opportunity for those impacted by lack of access to allied health to tell their story.

CEO Claire Hewat is available for comment.

Please direct media inquiries to Suzie Medhurst – Communications Manager 0448958682

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About Allied Health Professions Australia

Allied Health Professions Australia (AHPA) is a collegiate body consisting of 24 national allied health association members and a further 13 affiliate members with close links to the allied health sector. AHPA's members collectively represent over 150,000+ allied health professionals who work across the primary, acute and tertiary sectors in Australia.

AHPA believes it is vital that allied health professionals are recognised for their work alongside the medical and nursing communities and for their potential to help shape and implement the healthcare system of the future. Supporting allied health professionals and making allied health services accessible will ensure that Australia has an integrated, comprehensive healthcare system that delivers world class care. Please visit www.ahpa.com.au for further information about us.