

MEDIA RELEASE

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COTA congratulates new Ministers and urges them to take an all of government approach to an Ageing Australia.

Australia's leading senior's advocacy body, representing the interests of all older Australians, today congratulated incoming Ministers announced today by Prime Minister Scott Morrison and urged them to make planning for an ageing population a national priority.

COTA Australia Chief Executive Ian Yates said the new Morrison Government must implement and build on the achievements of its 'More Choices for a Longer Life Package' announced last year to ensure better outcomes for older Australians in aged care, health, employment, income security and housing through good portfolio policies and better co-ordination across government.

COTA has written to the Prime Minister outlining whole of government priorities for older Australians, including the need for a comprehensive Retirement Incomes Review and the urgent reform of aged care to deliver more and more effective home care so we don't have over 100,000 people waiting for approved care, many for 18 months or more, and great inequity in aged care service delivery.

"The numbers of older Australians grow every year and will do so for decades, which must be seen as an opportunity to harness the skills, wisdom and experience of older Australians through better employment strategies, a real attack on age discrimination, and health policies that support active ageing," Mr Yates said.

"Our ageing population also presents challenges for our aged care, health care and retirement incomes systems that can and must be planned for in a coordinated manner across all portfolios. COTA looks forward to working with the new Ministerial team to take up those challenges, seize the opportunities and plan properly for this term and the decades ahead.

"This weekend's announcement by the Treasurer that he will proceed with a Retirement Incomes Review looking at the interaction of superannuation, pensions and taxation is excellent and a very encouraging beginning," Mr Yates said, noting that: "COTA has long called for this Review, supported more recently by the Productivity Commission and the Grattan Institute.

Mr Yates said COTA particularly looked forward to working collaboratively with:

- The Hon. Josh Frydenberg - Treasurer
- Senator the Hon. Richard Colbeck - Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians
- Senator Jane Hume - Assistant Minister for Superannuation and Financial Services
- Senator the Hon. Anne Ruston - Family and Social Services Minister
- Senator the Hon. Michaelia Cash - Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business
- The Hon. Michael Sukkar - Minister for Housing
- The Hon. Stuart Robert - Minister for Government Services and the NDIS

Mr Yates extended heartfelt thanks to the Hon. Ken Wyatt as the outgoing Minister for Aged Care and the inaugural Minister for Senior Australians and wished him all the best in his portfolio of Indigenous Affairs.

"Ken Wyatt has worked tirelessly for the welfare of people using aged care services and put in place many new reforms to ensure older Australians receive higher quality aged care that meets their needs, leaving a great legacy for his successor to continue," Mr Yates said.

"I urge Minister Colbeck to continue that work, implementing the many reforms in process now, and not wait for the Royal Commission to be completed to make a number of additional changes we urgently need, including making sure people get the home care they need and have been approved for within three months, and that our aged care workforce is developed, supported and well remunerated.

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COTA Australia is the peak policy development, advocacy and representation organisation for older Australians, representing COTAs in every State and Territory and through them over 500,000 older Australians.