

MEDIA RELEASE

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Aged care pay boost a win for workers and older Australians: COTA

The Federal Government's announcement today that it will provide a boost to aged care workers' pay to the tune of \$11.3 billion over four years will go a long way to ensuring Australia gets the quality aged care system we all deserve, COTA Australia – the peak advocacy organisation for older Australians – says.

The Federal Government has today confirmed it will pay the 15% pay increase for aged care workers, as recommended by the Fair Work Commission, from 1 July 2023.

COTA Australia Chief Executive Officer, Patricia Sparrow, said we have long heard from older people and other experts, including the Aged Care Royal Commissioners, that raising wages in aged care is essential to achieving better outcomes in the system.

"You can't have a great aged care system if you're not paying the people working in the system what they deserve," Ms Sparrow said.

"The aged care workforce is essential to ensuring the health, wellbeing and dignity of tens of thousands of older Australians. Older people know that paying workers fairly for the job they do is crucial.

"There's no doubt the aged care workforce has been undervalued for far too long. This is a fantastic announcement and one which will make a marked difference to the sectors' ability to attract and retain quality aged care workers in Australia.

"This funding boost will, among many things, help ease the workforce pressures and ensure we have nurses available 24/7, which was a key recommendation of the Royal Commission into Aged Care and something older Australians have long advocated for."

Ms Sparrow said it's also critical that there is transparency in the system to ensure the money is going directly to the workers and isn't just going to the providers' bottom line.

"This isn't just about paying workers what they deserve, this is also about ensuring older Australians get the quality care they need, so we need to make sure it's implemented properly."

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