

MEDIA RELEASE

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24/7 nursing critical for delivering quality care aged care residents deserve

The Council on the Ageing (COTA) Australia – the leading advocacy organisation for older Australians – welcomes news today that registered nurses are now onsite in aged care homes across the country 98 per cent of the time.

COTA Australia Chief Executive Officer, Patricia Sparrow, said it is great to see the Federal Government delivering on its commitment to deliver 24/7 nursing - a key recommendation of the Royal Commission into Aged Care.

Statistics released today show that in the past month, registered nurses were on-site in aged care homes 98 per cent of time, which equates to an average of 23.5 hours of nursing care across the day. 86% of providers are already meeting the full 24/7, with the remaining very close to achieving it.

“Having registered nurses in our aged care homes isn’t a nice to have, it’s crucial if we’re going to provide our older Australians with the quality care they need and deserve,” Ms Sparrow said.

“Every Australian deserves to know that everything possible is being done to ensure our loved ones living in aged care facilities are being treated with dignity and respect, and core to that is making sure the professional care they need is available when they need it.

“COTA Australia called on the Federal Government to set ambitious targets when it came to improving access to registered nurses in our aged care homes, and to its credit it did. Today’s statistics show that was the right decision.

“These statistics show that the vast majority of aged care facilities now have nurses on-site 24/7 and the rest either have an exemption or are working with the Quality & Safety Commission and the department to get there. We’ll continue to monitor the sector’s ongoing success towards always achieving this target.

“As Australians live longer and healthier, we need to recognise that supporting and respecting people in their older age isn’t just the right thing to do, it’s beneficial for us all.

“We applaud the Federal Government for setting ambitious targets and working with the sector to meet them. Aged care reforms must continue. Older Australians and the community have been waiting for a long time for improvements to be realised.

“There is more to be done, including the development of a new rights based Aged Care Act and a new single Support at Home Program, but we need all reforms to continue to ensure older people have the services and support they need no matter where they live.”

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