

MEDIA RELEASE



**Palliative
Care
Australia**

Palliative Care Australia

Suite 4, 37 Geils Court, Deakin ACT 2600 | PO Box 24, Deakin West, ACT 2600
t: 02 6232 4433 | f: 02 6232 4434 | w: www.palliativecare.org.au | e: pcainc@palliativecare.org.au

A commitment or a token?

Palliative Care Australia Chief Executive Donna Daniell today said “this second Rudd Government budget hints at a future funding commitment to better integrate palliative and end-of-life care with the rest of the health sector – as a key component of health care investments. However, time will tell”.

“This budget includes one direct funding contribution (\$14.4m) to the sustainability of parts of the current National Palliative Care Program and at least 20 potential opportunities to strengthen links with key areas of workforce, aged care, rural health, quality, and cancer care,” said Ms Daniell.

“We are curious about the detail on how the Government actually plans to evaluate to ensure the sustainability of the investments under the current National Palliative Care Program. We must determine if these plans will in fact ensure very cost efficient and well coordinated investments.”

“The budget has confirmed the intent to revise the National Palliative Care Strategy, in partnership with state and territory governments – however there is a significant risk because program investments are being made with little consultation – and ahead of the urgent need to define the overall framework for quality care at the end of life.”

“Palliative Care Australia would like to see much more investment into integrating palliative and end-of-life care. Nevertheless, in a year of deficit it is pleasing to see that the commitment to developing palliative care remains a priority – albeit a small one,” Ms Daniell said.

“There is much to be gained through strong leadership on this front. Without the Government, the Department of Health and Ageing, and all stakeholders committing to strong integration, in line with PCA’s national needs-based service provision model, we risk developing systems that are just as ad hoc and uncoordinated as the ones we already have, with patients and families continuing to experience more pain than is necessary.”

“Palliative Care Australia anticipates the plans for world class centres of excellence for cancer care will deliver upon the fully integrated picture for cancer care – both for cure, and when cure is not possible. PCA will be seeking confirmation that this has not been an oversight.”

“Early this year, the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission recognised end-of-life care as one of its key reform priorities. This is a first for Australian health policy.”

“Palliative Care Australia joins all health stakeholders in looking forward to how the Commission’s final recommendations will establish a robust vision for integrated health care - realising quality care at the end of life for all Australians – and how well it is funded in the next budget.”

CONTACT: Fiona Allen PCA Communications Manager 02 6232 4433 / 0420 555 945

PCA is the peak national organisation representing the interests and aspirations of all who share the ideal of quality care at the end of life.