

## **Aged Care Act passes Parliament and lays foundations for aged care future**

**The long-awaited Aged Care Act has passed through the Senate enshrining the basic rights of older Australians to aged care and laying the foundations required to stop the neglect of older people in aged care.**

The new Act aims to improve the ways aged care services are delivered to people in their homes, community settings and approved residential aged care homes. The Act that passed through the Senate contains many crucial elements that should protect the rights of older people, including a robust, independent complaints mechanism, enforceable rights for older people, the right to visitors at all times and hardship protections. There will be a single-entry point to government-funded aged care, clear eligibility requirements and a fair, culturally safe single assessment framework.

COTA Northern Territory's Sue Shearer welcomed the new Aged Care Act and said, "We will be supporting our Members understand what the new aged care act might mean for them when they enter the aged care system. Many of our Members are in the Baby Boomer generation and consequently we have a keen interest in helping ensure that the Aged Care Act is as fair, equitable and transparent as possible and one that is truly delivering for older Territorians.

"We look forward to working with our parent body, COTA Australia, regarding advocacy for the rights and well-being of Territory seniors and contributing a voice on their behalf when reviews and opportunities for input on the Aged Care Act and its delivery are made available. We have been active in this regard since August 2022 when we hosted two aged care reform forums, again in September 2023 when we hosted a community consultation forum on the foundations of the new Aged Care Act and the Aged Care Taskforce's funding principles. Most recently in a Round Table, we discussed the reality of access to aged care services for Territorians with Kate Thwaites, Assistant Minister for Social Security, Ageing and Women."

"We note that a legislated Review is due in 2027 around the impacts and any unintended consequences of the new Act. COTA NT will also be looking for opportunities to have input on the next stage of the Support at Home program design and supporting the need for an accommodation pricing review to ensure supported residents are guaranteed a bed and that all residents are protected from inappropriately high accommodation payments.

"There is much to be done, but the new Aged Care Act has given us foundations on which to build and develop a robust, fair and consumer-based aged care system."

**#### Media contact: Sue Shearer, CEO COTA NT 08 8941 1004**

## **MORE INFORMATION**

- Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care [www.health.gov.au/our-work/aged-care-act](http://www.health.gov.au/our-work/aged-care-act)
- About the Aged Care Bill 2024 Easy Read [www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/about-the-aged-care-bill-2024-fact-sheet-easy-read](http://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/about-the-aged-care-bill-2024-fact-sheet-easy-read)
- Aged Care rights [www.health.gov.au/our-work/aged-care-act/rights](http://www.health.gov.au/our-work/aged-care-act/rights)
- COTA Australia Media Release 22 November 2024 [cota.org.au/news-items/aged-care-act-passes-parliament/](http://cota.org.au/news-items/aged-care-act-passes-parliament/)