

11/10/18

## Terms of Reference for the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety

### KEY SPEAKING/MEDIA MESSAGES

#### RC Announcement

- We all want a safe, high quality and high performing aged care system. Older Australians need it, and older Australians deserve nothing less.
- RC TOR announced by the PM yesterday reflects this view - that the Royal Commission's focus be on making Australia's aged care system better.
- Specifically, the outcome that our nation wants is to ensure that Australia has a high performing, respected and sustainable aged care system, that delivers accessible, affordable, quality care and services for all older Australians.
- The RC TOR provides the necessary scope to achieve this outcome.

#### Terms of Reference Specifics

- The TOR focus on making the system better has two clear lines of enquiry that will cover residential aged care and in-home aged care:
  1. Examine issues and examples of what is not working - where the aged care system has failed, and;
  2. Explore what needs to change in order to meet the changing needs and expectations of the growing numbers of older Australians.
- The TOR rightfully includes consideration of specific service types (eg: dementia care, mental health, palliative care); unique needs of specific groups (eg: young people with disabilities in RACFs, ATSI, CALD, etc); and, needs of communities in specific locations (eg: regional, rural and remote).
- The TOR also considers the interface with other services accessed by people receiving aged care services, including GPs, hospitals, allied health, social services, etc. This is very pleasing, as this interface has also been shown to be crucial to realising better care outcomes.
- The TOR also provides scope to consider the many positive examples of high quality care delivered by thousands of dedicated people, volunteers and families every day. So we can learn from good practice and seek to embed this at scale.

#### Culture of Ageing

- LASA welcomes the PM acknowledging the importance of a 'national culture of respect for ageing and older people'.
- With 2,000 Australians turning 65 each week and 1,000 Australians turning 85 each week, Australia has reached a 'new normal' with regards to the older people in our communities.

- This is a good thing. It is a sign of success of our society. It compels us to consider how we as a nation support the growing numbers of older Australians to age well. To continue to live well and contribute to their families and communities.
- This requires a national conversation to address key community issues such as: ageism, elder abuse, age friendly communities, intergenerational equity, retirement ages, retirement incomes, etc.
- This is a conversation that is long overdue.

### **Timing**

- Indicative timeline for interim report is Oct 2019 and final report is April 2020. In reality this is up to the Commissioners to determine and the process should take as long as it needs, in order to realise the desired outcome of making Australia's aged care system better.
- So, while the Royal Commission is underway we must press on with addressing key workforce and funding issues, and not lose sight of making Australia's aged care system better right now.
  - Access to services – Home Care Package wait list
  - Quality of services – new Quality and Safety commission, new standards, etc
  - Delivery of services – translate workforce strategy intent into action and outcomes
  - Funding of services – urgent need to address increasing financial pressure on RACFs

### **Commissioners**

- We offer our full support to The Honourable Justice Joseph McGrath and Ms Lynelle Briggs AO who have been appointed Commissioners. They are eminent Australians and bring a strong breadth of experience to this process.

### **Closing Statement**

- PM stated “the vast majority of Australia's aged care services and their dedicated staff deliver outstanding care, and our responsibility is to ensure there are no exceptions”.
- With this in mind it is beholden on everyone in aged care to work together to make the aged care system better. This is an issue of national importance. It is too important not to get right.