

Barton Deakin Brief: Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety

1 March 2021

Overview

The Federal Government has released the eight volume final report from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. There are 148 recommendations which the Government will formally respond to by 31 May 2021. The Government is expected to announce elements of the response in the Federal Budget on 11 May 2021. Central to the Government's approach will be ensuring that senior Australians are treated with respect, care, and dignity.

This final report follows the interim report that was released in November 2019 and resulted in \$537 million in funding. The cost of the Government's response has not yet been determined.

Five Pillars – Initial Response

The Government's response will focus on five broad pillars. Today, the Government outlined the immediate measures that will be taken until a comprehensive response has been released. The measures total \$452.2 million in funding. The five pillars are:

1. Home Care	\$18.4 million
2. Residential aged care quality and safety	\$32 million
3. Residential aged care services and sustainability	\$279.9 million
4. Workforce	\$91.8 million
5. Governance	\$30.1 million

1. Home Care

- Funding of more than \$18 million to increase oversight of the Home Care Packages Program. This is intended to put downward pressure on unnecessary administrative costs.
- Approximately 500 aged care providers will be audited per year.

2. Residential aged care quality and safety

- The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner will receive \$32 million in immediate funding to ensure compliance in the use of restraints in care.
- An additional 1,572 field audits in residential and in-home aged care will be conducted.
- Appointment of a Senior Restraint Practitioner to the Commission to lead an education campaign for the sector to minimise the use of restraints.
- Extension of funding for the 'pharmacist program' until 2025.

3. Residential aged care services and sustainability

- An additional \$189.9 million is being provided to residential aged care providers to provide stability and maintain services.



- Includes a continuation of the 30 per cent increase to the homeless and viability supplements until the end of June 2021 (\$760 per resident in metropolitan residential aged care and \$1,145 per resident for rural, regional, and remote residential aged care facilities).
- Extension of the Viability Fund at a cost of \$90 million to assist facilities facing financial stress.

4. Workforce

- Funding of \$91.8 million over four years to create more than 18,000 places for workers to access support and training between now and mid-2023.

5. Governance

- Funding of \$30.1 million to enhance governance of aged care providers and legislative governance obligations in the sector.
- Appointment of an Assistant Commissioner for Sector Capability with a view to increasing oversight of the home care system at a cost of \$14.2 million.
- Provision of aged care specific governance training programs for boards at a cost of \$15.9 million.
- Creation of a new Act to replace the *Aged Care Act 1997*.

Key recommendations in the report

- Enshrine rights and universal entitlement to high quality and safe care in a new Aged Care Act.
- Establish a System Governor to oversee the shape of the system.
- Establish an Inspector-General of Aged Care to identify and investigate systemic issues and report on its findings.
- Independent standard setting, a general duty on aged care providers to ensure quality and safety, and a comprehensive approach to quality measurement including by star rating system.
- Accessible information on care options and services.
- Greater access to care at home.
- Increased development of 'small household' models.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aged care pathway.
- Changes to education, training, wages, labour conditions, and career progression for the workforce.
- Registration of personal care workers.
- Minimum quality and safety standard for staff time.
- Strengthened provider governance arrangements and regulators.
- Independent pricing authority.
- Simpler and fairer approach to personal contributions and means testing.
- Aged care levy to finance new arrangements.



For more information

- See the full report and recommendations from the Royal Commission [here](#).
- See the Prime Minister's joint media release [here](#).
- View the Royal Commission media release [here](#).

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