

FECCA gives cautious welcome to aged care funding boost

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) tonight gave a cautious welcome to the boost to aged care funding announced in the Federal Budget.

The Government has committed to an additional \$5 billion increase in funding for aged care through the *More Choices for a Longer Life* package. This includes:

- An additional 14,000 high-level home care packages, 13,500 new residential aged care places, and 775 short-term restorative places;
- Investment to support aged care providers in regional, rural and remote Australia;
- The establishment of an Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission and additional resources to help providers to implement the new standards;
- \$61.7 million to make *MyAgedCare* easier to use, and \$7.4 million for trial navigators to assist people to choose the aged care services that suits their needs; and
- Increased funding for palliative care, innovations in managing dementia and mental health programs for older Australians.

FECCA Chairperson Mary Patetsos said: "FECCA welcomes this boost to aged care in the Federal Budget.

"However, FECCA is disappointed that there was no funding specifically earmarked for ensuring culturally-competent care for older Australians of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds," Ms Patetsos said.

"Nevertheless, the extra funding provides an opportunity for improved care for all older Australians and we urge the Government to ensure that the needs of CALD Australians are given appropriate emphasis in these aged care initiatives.

"In particular, CALD organisations should be funded as part of the further development of *MyAgedCare* and the trial navigators so that the system can support CALD Australians in accessing culturally and linguistically competent service providers.

"Australians of all backgrounds deserve aged care that meets their needs and expectations. We will continue to work to ensure that the voices of older Australians of culturally and linguistically diverse background are heard."

FECCA is the national peak body representing Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. Our role is to advocate and promote issues on behalf of our constituency to government, business and the broader community.

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