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## **Health and Ageing Report a basis for genuine reform says seniors body**

The peak consumer organization for Australian seniors, Council on the Ageing, has welcomed the Final Report of the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission.

COTA Chief Executive Ian Yates commended the Government for giving reform of the health and aged care sectors such high priority, with the report being launched personally by the Prime Minister, who is also involving himself directly in consultation on the Report's 123 recommendations.

After speaking with the Health and Ageing Ministers at the launch in Canberra on Monday Ian Yates said "COTA will consider in detail the NHHRC recommendations on the health system, but immediately welcomes the Report's focus on greater health system integration; more and dedicated resources for planned surgery (previously and erroneously called "elective"); higher priority for health promotion, illness prevention and early intervention at all ages, and proposals for a national dental care scheme."

"COTA particularly welcomes the NHHRC's recommendations on the future of aged care," Mr Yates said. "The current system is not meeting the needs of many older Australians who have been forced to accept less than they wanted and deserved. Major reform is critical if we are to have the ability to provide quality care and support for older Australians when and where they need it."

Ian Yates said the report's emphasis on providing care choices for older Australians was essential. "People want to be able to choose the care and support they need delivered in the place they want to be, and for many people that will be about an increase in community care in their own home and neighbourhood"

"Older Australians want an aged care system that helps them continue to contribute to their families and communities by providing timely, well resourced and appropriate support systems on an equitable basis anywhere in Australia."

"The proposed reforms provide a real basis for moving forward in getting the system right. There is now a real opportunity for consumers, providers and Government to get around the same table and fine tune the NHHRC recommendations and agree on how to implement them over the next few years."

"We look forward to working with the Government and other stakeholders over the coming months to ensure optimum quality and sustainable services are available for all older Australians."

### **Further Information:**

**Ian Yates AM**  
**Chief Executive**  
**COTA National**

**0418 835 439**  
**iyates@seniorsvoice.org.au**