

The Budget Doesn't do Enough to Create a Fairer Victoria for our Seniors

The 2009/10 State Budget is a missed opportunity for the Victorian Government to more specifically address the disadvantage and social exclusion our seniors face.

COTA understands the wisdom of formulating a Budget to address the difficult times we face, and we welcome those initiatives and measures that will flow on to our seniors.

In particular we welcome:

- Concessions
- dental

Other developments that will have positive outcomes for older people include:

- HACC increase
- Transition programs
- Hospital waiting lists

But in the absence of the long awaited Ageing in Victoria Framework, these measures do not do enough to enable our seniors to fare well in a Fairer Victoria.

“COTA welcomed the announcement by the Minister of Ageing last year, of the development of a Positive Ageing Framework to guide a whole of government approach to addressing the needs and issues that impact on seniors in this State,” said Sue Hendy, CEO of COTA Victoria. ‘Such a framework is urgently needed, as seniors are missing out in reforms and initiatives that aim to enable people to live well in Victoria. There has been little outcome to date on the Ageing in Victoria initiative, and we were hopeful that the Budget would mark a greater responsiveness to ageing issues in this State.’

Growing Victoria Together 2000-2010 is the Government's vision for making Victoria a stronger more caring and innovative state. It identifies important issues and priority actions for this decade. However ageing is almost entirely absent from the most recent Growing Victoria Together progress report.

‘We have very little data to tell us how well people are ageing in Victoria,’ said Ms Hendy, ‘or how they are faring under current social, economic, and environmental pressures.

‘We know that secure and appropriate housing, age friendly and inclusive communities, and care and support that promotes independence and enables people to maintain control in their lives, all contribute to a healthier and more active ageing experience, but there is little evidence to show that the diverse population of older people are a high priority for the Government.’

‘We also know that ageism undermines the rights, dignity, participation and independence of older people; without commitment to combat ageist attitudes at all levels of the community, ageism is perpetuated and there will be no real change for older people now, and into the future.’

Contact: Sue Hendy on Mobile: 0413 802 054