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AMA CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION IN AGED CARE

AMA Medical Care for Older Persons Position Statement and Palliative Care in the Aged Care Setting Position Statement

AMA President, Dr Omar Khorshid, today said that standards of care for our elderly should not be compromised through chronic underfunding and under-resourcing of aged care.

On International Day of Older Persons, and the anniversary of the launch of the AMA and Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation’s ‘Care Can’t Wait’ aged care campaign, we are repeating our call for immediate action.

Today the AMA is launching two new Position Statements focused on adequate care provision for our older people, to help guide and inform Government policy.

“Older Australians cannot wait for another budget,” Dr Khorshid said.

“Government must take immediate action and ensure that there are measures in the upcoming budget to drastically improve the situation in aged care.

“Our parents and grandparents, who have given so much to their families and their communities, deserve dignity and quality care.”

The AMA is calling for the Government to immediately address inadequacies in our aged care system by ensuring funding in the next week’s budget for:

- mandatory minimum staff-to-resident ratios in nursing homes;
- availability of registered nurses 24/7 in all nursing homes, with numbers based on the clinical needs of residents; and
- funding to ensure availability of home care packages for everyone who needs them.

“When COVID-19 reached Australia, we knew our aged care sector was woefully underprepared,” Dr Khorshid said.

“We also knew that older Australians were vulnerable to the virus, yet not enough was done by the Government, the aged care providers or the aged care regulator to ensure the sector was protected.

“Sadly, the Senate Select Committee on COVID-19 hearing on Tuesday confirmed what we long suspected. Deaths in aged care could have been prevented had the Government acted sooner,” Dr Khorshid said.

The *AMA Medical Care for Older People Position Statement* outlines what high quality medical care for all older Australians should involve, including access to GPs and other medical professionals, medical training required for medical professionals working with older people, hospital care and hospital transfers, medical care funding, clinical governance in aged care, communication protocols and telehealth.

AMA’s *Palliative Care in the Aged Care Setting Position Statement* outlines how to help our Older Australians live as fully and comfortably as possible with a life limiting illness. It outlines the AMA’s view on the palliative care service provision in both older person’s home and after they enter nursing homes. It summarises the role of medical practitioners in palliative

care, the role of aged care providers, and palliative care planning and training required to implement palliative care in the aged care setting.

Medical Care for Older People Position Statement is available here -

<https://ama.com.au/position-statement/medical-care-older-people-position-statement-2020>

Palliative Care in the Aged Care Setting Position Statement is available here -

<https://ama.com.au/position-statement/palliative-care-aged-care-setting-position-statement-2020>

Background:

AMA has made a number of submissions to the Aged Care Royal Commission with recommendations for improvement. They can be viewed [here](#).

AMA Position Statements on aged care can be viewed [here](#).

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