

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Urgent action on Royal Commission recommendations needed

18 March 2021

The report of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety leaves no doubt that fundamental reform is needed to address systemic failings in aged care and decades of neglect of older Australians.

Australian Ethical Health Alliance (AEHA) Chair Adrian Cosenza said, “The report highlights assaults on residents in aged care facilities, deaths from preventable illness, overuse of physical and chemical restraints, poor infection control procedures, drastic shortages of trained staff and failure of those in power to address known problems. Of greatest concern, this has been reported previously but is still endemic within the sector.”

The AEHA endorses the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety report and believes that urgent consideration be given to its recommendations including:

1. The establishment of an independent authority to determine a fair funding model for different aged care services,
2. Mechanisms to improve governance and oversight,
3. Critical examination of the historical contracting of responsibility for aged care to charities and for-profit providers,
4. Imposition of a new levy to fund an adequately staffed high-quality aged care system, and;
5. New models of primary healthcare to ensure coordinated and proactive approaches to the complex healthcare needs of older Australians.

For Professor Ian Kerridge, Chair of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians Ethics Committee and a member of the AEHA Steering Committee, “Enacting the recommendations is essential. It will take time, money, and bravery on the part of organisations—both public and private—to acknowledge the need for change. It will also require reversal of policies that have limited access to home care and aged care and stripped away resources.”

“It is the AEHA’s view that the Commission’s report also provides a tremendous opportunity to reconstruct aged care not as an impost on taxpayers, or a business opportunity for health providers, but as a moral obligation to care for and protect older Australians. This should be a fundamental human right,” added Mr Cosenza.

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#### About the Australian Ethical Health Alliance

The Australian Ethical Health Alliance (AEHA) represents 74 member organisations including industry, government, healthcare professionals, hospitals and patient groups, who share a commitment to ethical practice and collaboration.

AEHA assists member organisations to align their policies and processes to the values and ethical principles of the [Australian Consensus Framework for Ethical Collaboration in the Healthcare Sector](#), with the aim of:

- Promoting collaboration and interaction among healthcare sector organisations and those who work within them that benefits patients, consumers, communities, populations, healthcare systems and the healthcare sector;
- Encouraging dialogue, trust and respect between and amongst organisations in the healthcare sector;
- Enhancing the integrity and trustworthiness of organisations in the healthcare sector; and
- Promoting public confidence and trust in healthcare sector organisations by demonstrating a shared commitment to integrity and ethics.

The initiative is sector-lead and participation is voluntary. The support from federal and state and territory jurisdictions is also significant.

More information is available at: [www.ethicalhealth.org.au](http://www.ethicalhealth.org.au)