

## **RESPONSE TO ROYAL COMMISSION COVID-19 REPORT**

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National Seniors Australia has welcomed the COVID-19 report into aged care by the Royal Commission and its recommendations.

National Seniors Chief Advocate, Ian Henschke says we strongly supports all the recommendations including:

- funding extra staff to adequately deal with external visitors at residential aged care facilities
- more co-ordination between state and federal governments on aged care; and
- the rapid deployment of accredited infection control experts to infected facilities.

“We have said all along the unnecessary lockdown of facilities where residents have had no physical contact with their loved ones was inhumane”, Mr Henschke said.

“This report strongly supports what we have been saying.”

The recommendation for more rapid deployment of infection control experts is also something National Seniors has urged since the initial phase of the lockdown back in March.

“National Seniors strongly supports quick action during an outbreak at a facility as we saw at the Dorothy Henderson home in Sydney, where the outbreak was contained relatively quickly compared to the later outbreak at the Newmarch facility in the city’s west,” said Mr Henschke.

The suggestion of protocols between state and federal governments, Mr Henschke says is long overdue.

“We agree with the report’s assertion that now is not the time for blame and that’s exactly what we have seen during this pandemic.

“Federal and state governments need to work together much better, so we don’t see a repeat of what happened in Victoria for example,” Mr Henschke said.

“We welcome the announcement that the federal government accepts all recommendations and hope in the upcoming Budget there will be money to help people stay in their homes and out of aged care homes.”

**ENDS**

**Ian Henschke is available for comment, call 0488 047 380**