



Seniors welcome CHSP certainty and opportunity to rethink home support

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National Seniors Australia (NSA) has welcomed the Federal Government's decision to extend the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) until 30 June 2029, providing much-needed certainty for older Australians, their families, and service providers.

NSA Director of Policy and Research Dr Brendon Radford said the decision recognised the important and distinct role CHSP plays to help older Australians remain independent and connected to their communities. And the extension provides an opportunity to consider how a better, more sustainable home care system may look, rather than simply transition existing services into a new structure.

"Older Australians need assurance the practical supports they rely on, for example cleaning, transport, meals, social support, or other early interventions will continue to be available," Dr Radford said.

"We are pleased to see the government has listened to older Australians and the sector and allowed time to consider the future of these services. Importantly, this should also be an opportunity to think bigger about how Australia's home care system could work better.

"Rather than beginning with the assumption that existing programs simply need to be brought together, we should ask what combination of services will best help older Australians remain healthy, independent and living at home for longer – and how those services can be delivered as efficiently and affordably as possible."

NSA believes the extension also creates an opportunity to explore models that better recognise the different purposes of clinical care services and the practical supports people need to remain independent. This could examine whether there is a clearer distinction between more intensive clinical and personal care delivered through Support at Home and accessible community-based supports such as home maintenance, gardening, transport, meals and social participation.

"The government has created a window in which we can ask what an ideal system would look like if we designed it around older Australians from the outset. NSA looks forward to working with government and the sector to explore innovative options that bring the experiences and ideas of older Australians directly into that redesign process," Dr Radford said.

"We shouldn't constrain ourselves to choosing between the systems we already have.

"The test should be simple: make the best use of public funding, prevent or delay the need for more intensive care, and provide people with the right support at the right time."

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