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OLDER AUSTRALIANS DYING ON WAITING LISTS

National Seniors Australia is demanding the Federal Government do more to provide older Australians with the home care they need.

Almost 130,000 Australians are waiting for a home care package that meets their needs and more than 13,000 were forced into nursing homes, waiting for a package.

It follows figures from the Aged Care Royal Commission revealing 16,000 older Australians died on the waiting list in a year.

The figures coincide with this week's National Elder Abuse Conference in Brisbane.

Speaking at the conference, National Seniors Australia Chief Advocate, Ian Henschke says the figures are appalling and show a disrespectful lack of urgency to address the chronic shortage of home care packages across Australia.

"Neglect is a form of abuse and what we are seeing here is a form of institutionalised neglect." Mr Henschke said

"At the end of 2017 the waiting list figure was 104,000. When the royal commission opened in January this year, it was a 128,000 and described as "cruel, unfair, disrespectful and discriminatory" by Dr Tim McEvoy QC, Counsel Assisting the Commission.

"Six months on and it has blown out by more than another 1,000 older Australians. It's a national emergency and what is the government doing about it?" Mr Henschke said.

"They know that a thousand Australians turn 80 each week."

National Seniors Australia's call for the Federal Government to fix the problem was ignored in the last budget and neither major party promised to fix it during the election.

Waiting times on average for the highest level of home care is currently 22 months.

"The people who are waiting and dying are someone's loved one.

"They are in a fragile stage of their life and want to stay in their own home and the people caring for them also need help.

"This neglect and this issue need to be addressed." Mr Henschke said.

-ENDS-

Ian Henschke is available for comment. Media enquiries call Craig Sullivan on 0488 047 380