

## Immediately increase the number of Home Care Packages to quickly reduce wait times to three months.

### Overview

- The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety recommended the Home Care Package (HCP) wait list be cleared by immediately increasing the number of packages available and keeping it clear by allocating packages within one month of assessment.
- After making significant progress, the situation has gone backwards as people wait months for help – wait times for Level 4 medium priority packages are now up 12-15 months.
- Only 2,272 packages a quarter have been released on average since June 2023, compared to 10,171 a quarter between July 2022 and June 2023. This has contributed to a significant increase in HCP wait list. 76,000 people were on the wait list at the end of September 2024 – up from only 28,665 in June 2023.
- Government shouldn't wait for funding reform to release more packages.

### WHAT ARE WE CALLING FOR?

- An immediate increase in the number of home care packages to reduce the number of people on the wait list to approx. 25,000 people by 1 January 2026 (at current levels this will require approx. 50,000 additional packages to be released).
- We acknowledge that even with these additional packages, wait times for home care services will be impacted by staffing issues. However, it is important to first address the wait list as a first step as this will send a signal to providers to increase capacity.

### Budget Impact

- The cost of providing additional packages will be large. Based on the cost of providing 24,100 packages in the 2024 budget (\$531.4 million) the cost of 50,000 additional packages will be above \$1 billion. However, this will be a temporary budget outlay until changes to user pay from 1 July 2025 reduce overall spending.

