

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 22 April 2026

CHANGES TO SUPPORT AT HOME PROGRAM WELCOMED, BUT FURTHER REFORMS ARE URGENTLY NEEDED TO PROTECT OLDER PEOPLE

The Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) welcomes the announcement by the Albanese Government that older people on the Support at Home aged care program will no longer pay out-of-pocket costs for help with showering, dressing and support with continence management.

The change means these essential personal care services will move into the program's clinical care category, fully removing co-contributions.

The changes take effect from 1 October 2026.

OPAN Director Policy, Education and Systemic Advocacy Samantha Edmonds welcomed the move by the Government

"This is good news for older people who have consistently raised concerns with us about the impact on their dignity and wellbeing by having to pay out-of-pocket expenses for essential personal care services," Ms Edmonds said.

"OPAN has long and consistently called for these services to be covered by clinical care under Support at Home. We welcome this reform and the significant difference it will make to the lives of older people.

"It is clear, from what we've been hearing from older people and advocates, that many older people feel worse off under the Support at Home program, which contradicts the intent of the new Aged Care Act.

"No older person should have to jeopardise personal hygiene due to cost, which is why these changes are so important.

"This is a welcome step, but it does not address other significant issues older people are facing under Support at Home including long wait times for assessment. We will be looking closely at upcoming announcements, including the Minister's National Press Club address and the May budget, to understand how protections for older people – such as price caps – will operate in practice.

"OPAN will continue to champion and advocate the rights of older people to ensure they receive the care they need."

MEDIA CONTACT

William Sparling – 0416 628 276 – William.Sparling@h-advisors.global

When reporting about older people please refer to the [media reporting guidelines](#) and for more information or media enquiries visit our [Media Centre](#).



IMPORTANT NOTICE TO MEDIA FOR STORIES RELATING TO OLDER PEOPLE

It is critical to provide older people with an avenue to get support when covering stories about aged care. We strongly encourage you to include the following message in your story to enable older people to seek support:

For information or support regarding aged care, please call the Aged Care Advocacy Line on 1800 700 600 or visit opan.org.au