

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, 19 May 2026

STRENGTHENED SUPPORT AT HOME PROTECTIONS WELCOMED BUT DELAY ON AGED CARE PRICING CAPS LEAVES OLDER PEOPLE EXPOSED

The Older Person's Advocacy Network (OPAN) welcomes additional protections for older people announced by Government today for the Support at Home program, but warns that delaying promised pricing caps will continue to leave older people exposed to rising costs.

While these new safeguards are a step in the right direction, they do not fully address the underlying issue of affordability and pricing certainty for older people.

OPAN Director Policy, Education and Systemic Advocacy Samantha Edmonds said delaying pricing caps risks leaving older people exposed to ongoing cost pressures and uncertainty around care affordability.

"We welcome stronger oversight and transparency measures, but the decision to delay pricing caps means older people will continue to face uncertainty about what they will pay for essential services," Ms Edmonds said.

"Older people are already enduring a cost-of-living crisis and having access to reasonable and affordable care is essential for their wellbeing."

Ms Edmonds said key elements of the Government's package are welcomed, including powers for the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission to order refunds, increased public reporting, and the introduction of quarterly national price summaries.

"Additional funding for advocacy and education will also be critical to ensuring older people understand their rights and can challenge unfair fees," Ms Edmonds said.

However, Ms Edmonds said further improvements are needed to ensure these measures deliver meaningful protection, including local pricing transparency, and we look forward to working with Government to achieve this.

"Publishing national price summaries is positive, but older people need to be able to compare prices in their local area to ensure they can make informed choices about providers," Ms Edmonds said.

Ms Edmonds also reiterated OPAN's call for Support at Home places to be indexed appropriately.

"Without indexation aligned to cost pressures such as CPI, there is a real risk that package values will not keep pace with rising service costs, forcing older people to go without care," Ms Edmonds said.

OPAN looks forward to engaging constructively through the Government's newly announced working group, alongside Council on the Ageing (COTA), Ageing Australia and the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission.



“We welcome the opportunity to help define what ‘reasonable pricing’ looks like and to ensure older people’s voices are central to that work,” Ms Edmonds said.

“It is critical that this process leads to clear, enforceable protections – including the timely introduction of well-designed price caps.”

Ms Edmonds said pricing is one of the several challenges that the much-anticipated Support at Home program has faced since its inception, with advocates being inundated with concerns from older people.

“It is essential that the reforms deliver on their promise – ensuring older people can access affordable, high-quality care at home,” Ms Edmonds said.

“The Government must prioritise getting pricing right and provide a clear pathway to implementing caps that restore integrity and trust within the aged care system.”

MEDIA CONTACT

William Sparling – 0416 628 276 – media@opan.org.au

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