



NATSIAACC

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Ageing and Aged Care Council

FOUR CORNERS CONFIRMS AGED CARE REFORM IS NOT LANDING AS INTENDED FOR FIRST NATIONS ELDERS AND OLDER PEOPLE

The ABC's *Four Corners investigation: The Waiting Game*, has exposed significant delays in accessing care and a system failing to respond when support is needed most. For NATSIAACC, it provides further confirmation that important aspects of Aged Care reform are not landing as intended.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and Older People, this is not a new concern. NATSIAACC's Joint Statement has already identified where implementation is falling short and called for existing First Nations Aged Care recommendations and commitments to translate into meaningful change.

Across our membership and communities, we continue to hear about lengthy waits for assessments and services, difficulty navigating the system, and processes that do not adequately recognise culture, family, community, Country or Island Home. Without transparent First Nations-specific data, the full extent of these inequities cannot be properly seen or measured. For First Nations Elders and Older People, these pressures can be compounded by existing inequities, geographic and thin-market challenges. When the system is under pressure, those impacts are not necessarily experienced equally.

NATSIAACC's national Roundtable reinforced the value of First Nations voices in shaping Aged Care implementation. That recognition must now translate into genuine partnership and co-design with Elders and Older People and the First Nations sector, particularly in those areas where the sector has consistently identified that reform is not landing as intended.

"Four Corners has brought national attention to what our Elders, Older People, families and communities have already been telling us; parts of Aged Care reform are not landing as intended," said Kim Whiteley, Chief Executive Officer of NATSIAACC.

"The purpose of Aged Care reform was to put Elders and Older People at the centre and deliver dignity, choice, safety and quality Care. Our Elders and Older People do not enter the Aged Care system from the same starting point, and we cannot apply the same processes to everyone and expect equitable outcomes. Implementation must recognise these realities and be brought back to the original intentions of reform."

NATSIAACC is calling on the Australian Government to reorient implementation towards the original intent of Aged Care reform through genuine co-design with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and Older People and the First Nations sector, and to translate existing First Nations recommendations and commitments into action.

This must include transparent, disaggregated First Nations data across Support at Home, the Commonwealth Home Support Program and Residential Aged Care so inequities can be identified, progress measured and Government held accountable for outcomes.

NATSIAACC recognises the significant work and goodwill that has gone into Aged Care reform and stands ready to work in genuine partnership and co-design with Government. Where reform is not landing as intended for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and Older People, we have an opportunity to work together to get it right.

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