



NATSIAACC

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Ageing and Aged Care Council

NATIONAL PEAK BODY FOR FIRST NATIONS AGEING AND AGED CARE WELCOMES DECISION TO RETAIN COMMONWEALTH HOME SUPPORT PROGRAM

NATSIAACC, as the national peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ageing and Aged Care, welcomes the Government's decision to retain the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) as a standalone program until 30 June 2029.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and Older People, CHSP provides critical entry-level supports that help people remain independent, age well at home and stay connected to family, community, culture, Country and Island Home.

Its value is not only in the services it provides, but in how those services can be delivered; through flexible, block-funded arrangements that support trusted providers to respond to the needs and circumstances of Elders, Older People and their communities.

NATSIAACC CEO, Kim Whiteley, said the decision provides important certainty while creating the opportunity to properly design the future of entry-level Aged Care.

"CHSP provides the everyday supports that can make the difference between an Elder or Older Person remaining independent at home or their needs escalating to the point where more intensive care is required. These are not peripheral services; they are an essential part of the Aged Care system," Ms Whiteley said.

"NATSIAACC's position is not about whether these supports ultimately sit within a standalone CHSP or are integrated into Support at Home. What matters is that we do not lose the block-funded, flexible and culturally safe entry-level supports that work for our Elders and Older People."

The extension to 2029 provides an important opportunity for Government to work in genuine co-design with First Nations Elders, Older People, communities and the sector to ensure the strengths of flexible and block-funded models are protected and carried forward into the future design of entry-level Aged Care.

This decision reflects the strength of collective advocacy across the sector, including through the Commonwealth Home Support Program Alliance, of which NATSIAACC is a foundational member. For many First Nations communities, particularly in regional and remote areas and thin markets, individualised funding alone does not ensure that services are actually available. Block-funded models can help maintain local service capacity while providing the flexibility needed to respond to culture, community, family relationships and local circumstances.

This is already demonstrated through the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program (NATSIFACP), where flexible, block-funded arrangements enable providers to respond to local circumstances and deliver care in ways that reflect the needs of Elders, Older People and their communities. These are important strengths that should be protected in the future design of entry-level Aged Care.

NATSIAACC strongly encourages Government to use the period to 2029 for genuine co-design with First Nations Elders, communities and the sector. Whether entry-level supports ultimately remain within a strengthened CHSP or transition into Support at Home, the flexible and block-funded approaches that we know work for our Elders and Older People must be protected in whatever comes next.

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