



Rebekha Sharkie MP

Federal Member for Mayo



MEDIA RELEASE

Welcome move on Aged Care but more to be done

Federal Member for Mayo Rebekha Sharkie MP has welcomed the Government's decision to extend the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) for older Australians.

"This program is the backbone of aged care. About 830,000 older Australians rely on CHSP and it makes a real difference to their lives," Ms Sharkie said.

"We know that CHSP results in positive health outcomes for older Australians, helping people maintain their independence and really improving quality of life."

Ms Sharkie said that CHSP supports include basic services such as cleaning, gardening, minor home maintenance and transport.

"These types of services make an enormous difference to people wanting to stay at home with a level of independence and safety."

The Government had originally planned to cut the program in July next year, transitioning it into Support at Home. However, CHSP will now be extended as a stand-alone program and there will be consultation about its long-term future.

"I have been advocating for CSHP to remain because it provides critical support to so many older people. But if this program is to continue and work effectively, it needs significantly more funding.

"CHSP has been brought to its knees by successive governments. The waiting lists are outrageous for some services. If we invest more money in the program, helping older Australians when they first need it, there will be less reliance on residential aged care as time goes on."

While Ms Sharkie said the CHSP announcement was a step in the right direction, she stressed that the aged care system was a debacle.

"The Support at Home program is nothing short of a failure. It was supposed to make life better for older Australians, but instead it's done the absolute opposite.

"Since it started 10 months ago, we've seen blowouts in waiting lists, higher co-contributions, uncapped fees and automated assessments. Overwhelmingly my constituents tell me they are simply worse off."

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