

Media Release

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More Action Needed to Deliver Transformational Aged Care Reform

The Inspector-General of Aged Care, Natalie Siegel-Brown, has called for stronger action to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, warning that Australia is not yet on track to deliver the transformation required.

‘There has been furious activity to make progress, but reforms have largely addressed isolated issues rather than driving the systemic change required.

There is no doubt that the new aged care law largely promises the Royal Commission’s vision. But the community is still waiting on the actions needed to make this more than just a vision.

Some of the reforms that have been implemented, may create unintended consequences that could undermine the government’s policy and legislative intent’ Ms Siegel-Brown said.

The Inspector-General emphasised that she shares the government’s vision: a future where older Australians do not merely exist in aged care, but live – connected, valued, and supported.

‘I want to make sure the legacy promised will be made real, and I know the government does too. The new *Aged Care Act 2024* represents an unprecedented commitment. Never before has legislation entitled older people to care that is kind, compassionate, centres respect for their life experiences, dignity, quality of life, mental health and wellbeing. But the reform actions the Royal Commission said were needed to bring this to life, are not yet there.

Chiefly, questions still remain about how the human rights and high-quality care described by the Act, will truly be enforced.

And while reform action lacks in some areas, there are others where the action taken may bring about unintended harm; the way in which co-payments under the Support at Home program have been implemented risks leading those most in need to delaying or declining essential supports, or even being pushed into residential care,’ said the Inspector-General.

The move to ‘mainstream’ Aboriginal Community Controlled sector services could worsen existing inequities.

‘Mainstreaming Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aged care services, against the Royal Commission’s recommendations, risks undermining culturally responsive care and losing Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), who are critical as sector providers. ACCOs co-designing aged care for and with their own people can teach government about how we can care for the whole of a person’s spiritual and emotional identity, no matter who or where they are in Australia.’

The Inspector-General’s report also raises concerns about the gap between services available under the NDIS and those offered through aged care.

‘The loss of essential NDIS services must not leave older people with disability without critical supports for their disability merely because the funding streams don’t align,’ Ms Siegel-Brown said.

With the implementation of the new Aged Care Act postponed to 1 November 2025, Ms Siegel-Brown said this was a perfect time to reassess and realign reforms with the Royal Commission’s recommendations.



‘We now have legislated, unprecedented rights and person-centred care. This is a major achievement by any government. But it is too valuable to be just words on a page. This is our opportunity to work together and bring the Royal Commission’s vision to life.’

For any questions, or to interview the Inspector-General, Natalie Siegel-Brown, please contact Media@igac.gov.au or contact Simon Kinsmore on 0455 949 554.

The 2025 Progress Report on the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety is available here: <https://www.igac.gov.au/collections/2025-progress-report-inspector-general-aged-care>