

24 January 2024

Dear Assistant Minister McBride,

The exposure draft Aged Care Bill 2023 was presented on the 14 December 2023 with consultation to the closing date of 16 February 2024. There is approximately a 2- to 3-week period that is a Christmas/New Year shut down. This period of consultation is not sufficient for representative organisations, lobby groups or elected members of parliament to carefully consider what is being proposed.

The government's plan is for the new system to be in place from July 2024 is too rushed. This Aged Care Bill should only be considered by Parliament after they can be assured that full and meaningful consultation has taken place. There is still a lot of work to be done in making sure the new Act responds in a meaningful way to the issues raised in the Royal Commission on Aged Care Quality and Safety.

Parkinson's Australia represents one of the most vulnerable groups in Aged Care – those with a neurodegenerative, incurable condition that has debilitating motor and non-motor symptoms. In the current form the Support at Home is not a program that will support our most vulnerable elders to have input into the supports to be received or over how those supports will be delivered.

Consumer Directed Care was a 2016 amendment to the current 1997 Aged Care Act; it is missing from the proposed bill. Parkinson's Australia fears for our community who will be unable to maintain their independence and dignity in their own home and be forced into RACFs.

We have people living with Parkinson's, suffering from the same condition. Due to one year difference in age, those aged 64 will receive many supports and services under NDIS that assist them maximise wellbeing while those over the age of 65 are waiting for packages, can't find the supports they need on CHSP or don't qualify for other assistance such as short-term restorative care. At the moment, with our current aged care services it's a case of the haves and the have-nots.

Parkinson's Australia believes a one-size fits all model of assessment does not address people living with Parkinson's which is a complex condition with many motor and non-motor symptoms that are chronically progressive and degenerative. There has been an over emphasis on only supporting services where it can be demonstrated that they are needed due to age-related decline, not disability, injury or chronic conditions.

On behalf of people affected by Parkinson's in Australia we request:

- The public release of the findings and recommendations of the Aged Care Task Force and that the inclusion of Aged Care Task Force recommendations that are to be adopted into exposure Draft of Aged Care Act.



Postal Address  
PO Box 270, Browns Plains  
BC, QLD 4118

Registered Office  
Suite 6, 32 Thesiger Ct,  
Deakin, ACT 2600



Parkinson's Australia Ltd  
Email [info@parkinsons.org.au](mailto:info@parkinsons.org.au)  
Phone 0407 703 328  
ACN 671 516 822  
ABN 46 011 714 078  
[parkinsons.org.au](http://parkinsons.org.au)

- An immediate extension to the timeline of no less than 30 days for closer analysis and an extension of a further 30 days, if required, to incorporate the Aged Care Task Force recommendations if they are not included by Feb 1, 2024.
- Consideration of a pause to the program of a further 12 months. To date there has been two extensions, essentially due to inherent design flaws with the program. This program should be designed as an improvement of what is in place and for the needs of older Australians to be supported in their homes.

Postal Address  
PO Box 270, Browns Plains  
BC, QLD 4118

Registered Office  
Suite 6, 32 Thesiger Ct,  
Deakin, ACT 2600

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Olivia Nassaris'.

Olivia Nassaris  
National Advocate and Changemaker (CEO)  
Parkinson's Australia