

12 April 2023

Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority
PO Box 483
Darlinghurst NSW 1300
submissions.ihacpa@ihacpa.gov.au

Carers NSW would like to thank the Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority (IHACPA) for the opportunity to respond to the draft *IHACPA Work Program and Corporate Plan*. Carers NSW welcomes the introduction of mechanisms that aim to improve aged care funding models and subsequently, the quality and safety of aged care. However, Carers NSW has concerns that the proposed approach may not adequately address long-standing financial disincentives for providing residential respite, and may instead increase barriers to residential respite for people who are ageing and their carers.

Carers NSW is the peak non-government organisation for carers in New South Wales (NSW). A carer is any individual who provides care and support to a family member or friend who has a disability, mental illness, drug and/or alcohol dependency, chronic condition, terminal illness or who is frail. Carers NSW is part of the National Carer Network and a member of Carers Australia. Our vision is an Australia that values and supports all carers, and our goals are to:

- Be a leading carer organisation in which carers have confidence
- Actively promote carer recognition and support
- Actively support carers to navigate a changing service landscape that will be characterised by ongoing policy reform
- Promote connected community experiences and opportunities for carers that are inclusive of diverse carer groups
- Lead and advocate for carer-specific and carer-inclusive policy making, research and service delivery
- Continue to be a quality-driven, responsive and carer-focused organisation.

Carers NSW recent submission to IHACPA in response to the new Aged Care Pricing Framework (the Framework) highlighted our significant concerns about the costing of residential respite under this Framework given residential respite was not included in the development and piloting of the AN-ACC model. As highlighted in this submission, well established financial disincentives for residential aged care providers to facilitate residential respite have resulted in significant barriers to residential respite for carers, jeopardising the sustainability of informal caring arrangements in the community. Carers NSW therefore has concerns that the exclusion of residential respite in the AN-ACC pilot, that has resulted in the new residential aged care cost model, will see financial barriers to residential respite persist.

While IHACPA has indicated that a residential respite costing study would be conducted to ensure that residential respite is appropriately costed within the new broader funding model, Carers NSW has concerns that this has not been reflected within the IHACPA Work Program and Corporate Plan. Carers NSW acknowledges that the IHACPA has committed to providing pricing advice to inform Commonwealth Government decisions on residential aged care and respite care funding for 2024–25, however there are concerns that without a clear, individual focus on residential respite funding within

the Work Program and Corporate Plan, this will again be overlooked in the development of pricing advice in lieu of an ongoing, principal focus on residential aged care pricing.

Carers NSW recommends that IHACPA clearly include the residential respite costing study within the Work Program and Corporate Plan to ensure that this remains a priority. Carers NSW believes that improving the cost model for residential respite will support increased availability and enable greater access for carers and the people they care for.

Thank you for accepting our submission. For further information, please contact Melissa Docker, Senior Policy Officer and Development Officer at melissad@carersnsw.org.au or on (02) 9280 4744.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Elena Katrakis'.

Elena Katrakis
CEO
Carers NSW