

MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

New Aged Care Voluntary Industry Code of Practice launched by Minister Colbeck

Canberra, 5 February 2021 - Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services launched the new Aged Care Voluntary Industry Code of Practice (VICOP/the Code) in Canberra at 10am (AEST) on Friday 5 February 2021. Leaders and experts from the aged care sector joined Minister Colbeck in a robust demonstration of their support. The Code is a first for the industry – a single Code for all aged care organisations, workers and consumers. It is a compelling example of how industry and government can work together to drive meaningful change within and across the aged care sector.

The Code outlines seven principles for providers to follow that demonstrate they are committed, accountable and dedicated to improvement. “The Code helps ‘good’ providers to become ‘great’ and ‘great’ providers to become ‘world class’” says Louise O’Neill, CEO of the Aged Care Workforce Industry Council, tasked with supporting industry in the monitoring and implementation of the voluntary code. “It is the first step for providers to demonstrate the strong action they are taking to ensure older Australians experience a world class aged care system.”

The Code engages providers to offer the best services and supports, focusing on:

- ensuring older Australians, their families, carers and advocates are involved in all decisions about care;
- allowing choice about where care is delivered - at their home, in the community or in a residential aged care facility;
- providing holistic care that not only meets older Australians’ physical needs but their mental, emotional, cultural, social and spiritual needs as well;
- enabling, skilling, and valuing aged care workers to meet the needs of older Australians, and
- making certain the performance of all aged care services are transparent and accessible to workers and consumers.

While it is clear what needs to be achieved, the Code provides flexibility on how aged care services deliver against these outcomes. This will drive innovation and quality improvement.

Aged care leaders are urged to pledge their commitment to the Code (if they have not already done so), whilst consumers, workers and their organisations can state their support of the Code. To sign up, simply visit www.acwic.com.au. A total of 86 pledges have been made to date.

The Council will consult widely with the sector – including consumer, workforce, provider organisations and their members – to develop the Code’s governance and processes during the first half of 2021.

The Code of Practice was a key recommendation outlined in the Commonwealth’s aged care workforce strategy [A Matter of Care](#) in 2018. The Code’s launch marks an important milestone in the strategy’s implementation.

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For further media information contact:

Louise O’Neill
CEO
Aged Care Workforce Industry Council
+61 (0)478 439 265
Louise.ONeill@acwic.com.au

About the Voluntary Industry Code of Practice

The Code of Practice was developed by the [Aged Care Workforce Strategy Taskforce](#) headed by [Professor John Pollaers](#) and published in [A Matter of Care](#) in 2018.

The Aged Care Workforce Industry Council (the Council) was tasked with implementing the [Voluntary Industry Code of Practice](#) for aged care providers and workers.

In 2019, the Council sought [Leading Aged Services Australia’s](#) (LASA) assistance in socialising and re-drafting the Code with consumers, workforce, and providers.

Following these consultations, LASA and the Council modified the 2018 Code to better reflect current sentiments.

About the Aged Care Workforce Industry Council

The [Aged Care Workforce Industry Council](#) (the Council) is the first leadership group of its kind in Australia’s aged care industry. The Council is committed to creating a better, more sustainable aged care system across Australia with a clear focus on the consumer. It is working with industry, Government, employees and consumers to ensure the workforce is suitably skilled and able to deliver safe, consistent and high quality care services to older Australians, irrespective of setting.