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the aged care voluntary industry code of practice

Code

MEDIA STATEMENT

New Code – heading in the right direction

The Aged Care Voluntary Industry Code of Practice is a first for the Industry.

It is a single Code for all aged care organisations, workers and consumers.

Its purpose is to articulate clearly seven principles which providers can follow to demonstrate that the industry is committed, accountable and dedicated to improvement.

It is a Code developed by Industry for an Industry that is committed to taking practical steps so that older Australians can experience a world class aged care system. Consumers will be able to look to the Code as a way of understanding how their provider is improving its aged care services and supports.

With Industry taking the lead in developing this Code, it is fit for purpose for Australian users and the Australian community.

In developing the Code, the aged care sector wanted an outcomes focused approach that recognised the needs and value of older Australians and their families and carers, and supported their workforce to deliver exceptional outcomes.

This approach makes clear the outcomes organisations and workers need to achieve. It provides individual organisations with the flexibility to decide *how* they deliver against these outcomes.

The outcomes range from ensuring older Australians, their families, carers and advocates are involved in all decisions about their care whether this is delivered at their home, in the community or in a residential aged care facility - to ensuring aged care organisations work with older Australians to provide holistic care meeting not only their physical needs but their mental, emotional, cultural, social and spiritual needs as well. They include ensuring aged care workers are enabled, skilled, and valued to meet the needs of older Australians to ensuring the performance of all aged care services are transparent and accessible to workers and consumers.

The Code was published on 30 October 2020. Aged care leaders can pledge their commitment to follow the Code, whilst consumers, workers and their organisations can state their support of the Code.

The Aged Care Workforce Industry Council (the Council) is responsible for overarching administration, governance and monitoring of industry commitment and accountability to the Code. The Council will also advise on transition plans, ongoing planning and self-reporting by organisations on the Code. Each aged care organisation's leadership is responsible for developing and publishing their transition plan on their own website within six (6) months of signing up to the Code. The transition plan is intended to give the Council and the public information about how and when that aged care organisation plans to demonstrate their commitment and accountability to the Code outcomes and the evidence they will provide.

The Council will maintain a current list of all signatories to the Code who have demonstrated commitment and accountability through creating and implementing a plan to meet its principles. If an aged care organisation fails to develop or implement an annual plan or report on their own progress annually against their existing plan, the Council will remove them from this list until they have done so. The public can access this list at any time to see which aged care organisations have signed up and remain committed to the Code.

By 30 June 2021, signatories to the Code will need to be able to show how they plan to commit to and demonstrate progress against all seven principles.

The Code is a living document that will change as the sector evolves and it will continue to be aspirational to encourage all providers to strive for great quality and services for older Australians and to develop an exceptional industry for workers. It complements the Royal Commission's focus on sector leadership, including fostering transparency and accountability.

This is a dynamic policy environment in which the Code is not the only driver of uplift in aged care services and processes. Many aged care organisations - assisted by their dedicated workforces – are continually looking for innovative ways to provide the best possible support and care for older Australians.