



Media Release

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Welcome Royal Commission recommendations to supporting older Australians with vision loss

Vision 2020 Australia has welcomed the findings of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety and is strongly supportive of recommendations that would address some of the major issues the sector has raised around current arrangements for older Australians living with blindness and vision loss.

Key recommendations contained in the final report which relate to blindness or low vision include:

- Improved access to assistive technology, which will mean that older Australians can get the support that allows them to remain independent, healthy and well.
- Establishing levels of support through aged care that are equivalent to those available via the NDIS, addressing the current inequity between the systems.
- Streamlining and enhancing assessment processes, which should enable older Australians who develop vision loss to get the support they need sooner.
- Improving access to specialist health care and other health services, including in rural and regional areas which could help tackle the long-standing problem of older Australians, particularly in residential aged care, not getting the eye care they need.
- Enhancing aged care workforce skills and capability, an area where Vision 2020 Australia is seeking funds through the next federal budget to implement an innovative model to enhance the knowledge and skills of aged care workers who work with people who have vision concerns.
- Establishing tailored pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who need aged care support, an important part of the broader work done to ensure that all Australians can access culturally safe care and support.

[Vision 2020 Australia's recent submission to the 2020/21 Federal Budget](#) is already looking to address these areas of concern, calling for \$37.38 million over 4 years for enhancements to the current aged care system to make it simpler, quicker and more affordable for older Australians who develop or live with permanent vision loss to get the technology and supports they need.

Quotes attributable to Vision 2020 Australia CEO Judith Abbott:

"It is important that older Australians who develop vision loss can get the support they need quickly and easily.

"We estimate that there are currently 588,000 older Australians living with blindness or vision loss and this is forecast to grow significantly over the coming decade, so we welcome changes to the aged care system that can improve their lives.



“Good vision is the key to maintaining independence and helps people to live safely in the community and keep doing the things they love while maintaining their wellbeing and social connections.

“As the peak body for the eye health and vision care sector, Vision 2020 Australia looks forward to continuing to work with Ministers Hunt and Colbeck and the broader Morrison Government to implement these recommendations so that all older Australians, including those who experience vision loss, are fully supported within the aged care system.”

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