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## **Aged Care Industry Association Calls for Temporary Halt on Government Reforms**

The Aged Care Industry Association (ACIA) commends the government's decision to delay changes to the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) until at least 1 July 2027. This decision, aimed at ensuring uninterrupted care for the elderly, is acknowledged as a practical and necessary approach.

ACIA is urging the government to apply similar consideration to other upcoming reforms, including the proposed introduction of a new aged care act and enhanced quality standards, which ACIA believes should also be postponed until at least 2025.

While recognising the government's ambitious plans for aged care, ACIA wishes to highlight the significant challenges providers face in adapting to comprehensive regulatory and reporting changes while maintaining normal operations. The rapid implementation of reforms often results in poor staff morale and the diversion of resources away from frontline services and those who the reforms are intended to benefit most.

A pause at this time is critical to fully evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the reforms already introduced over the past 18 months, ensuring they have truly contributed to an enhanced quality of care. These reforms include a new residential aged care funding model, an average of 200 care minutes daily (including forty minutes by a registered nurse), the requirement for a 24/7 onsite registered nurse, expanded quality indicators, capped home care package fees, an expanded Serious Incident Response Scheme, a new code of conduct, a star ratings system, new board requirements, and consumer advisory boards.

As the year concludes, ACIA emphasises the sector's need for time to effectively integrate and consolidate these reforms and for them to be properly evaluated. The Minister has responded to the concerns of CHSP providers by allowing more time for adjustment, thus avoiding unintended consequences, and ensuring a smoother transition in care for the people they assist.

ACIA is hopeful that the same level of understanding will be extended to providers already heavily impacted by the pace of reform allowing them to focus their time and energy during the upcoming holiday season on the people in their care, rather than preparing for another round of upheaval before the previous reforms have even had time to settle.

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