



KINGSGROVE COMMUNITY
AID CENTRE INC.
ABN 77 897 124 722

30 Morgan St, Kingsgrove, NSW 2208
PO Box 492 Kingsgrove 1490
ph: 9150 7823
email: admin@kcac.org.au
web: www.kcac.org.au

Submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs Inquiry into the Transition from the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) to the Support at Home Program.

Care of the Committee Secretary.

Kingsgrove Community Aid Centre Inc. (KCAC) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs regarding the transition from the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) to the Support at Home Program.

KCAC is a not-for-profit community organisation that has delivered Commonwealth-funded aged care services to thousands of seniors over the age of 65 for over 25 years, (and previous to that under the Home and Community Care Program under the NSW State Department of Ageing and Home Care ADAHC) including social support (group-based), transport, and allied health services. Our experience places us in a strong position to comment on the potential impacts of this transition on older Australians and on service providers.

Need for clarity on transition timelines

A key concern for our organisation and for the older people we support is the lack of clear and detailed information regarding the timeline for transition from CHSP to the Support at Home Program. While broad implementation dates have been indicated, there remains uncertainty around:

- When and how existing CHSP clients will transition
- Whether current services will be grandfathered during the transition period
- How providers are expected to manage dual systems during implementation

This lack of clarity creates anxiety for older people, many of whom are already vulnerable due to age, declining health, social isolation, and cognitive impairment. Uncertainty also places significant pressure on providers who must continue to deliver consistent services while attempting to plan workforce, systems, and funding arrangements in an unclear policy environment.

KCAC strongly recommends that the Government provide a clearly staged, transparent, and well-communicated transition plan that prioritises continuity of care for older people aged 65 years and over.

Impact on older people requiring low-level, preventative support

Neighbourhood Centre Programs (Playgroups) • Family & Childrens Services Programs • Out of School Hours Care Programs

- Seniors Social Support Groups Program • Podiatry Services for Seniors & Services for People with Disability • Registered NDIS Provider
- Multicultural Social Support Groups for Seniors (Italian, Arabic & Chinese) • Information & Referral Services • Tax Help

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The CHSP has been highly effective in supporting older Australians with low-level and preventative services that enable them to remain independent, socially connected, and living safely in the community. Many CHSP clients do not require and would not cope well with complex individualised funding models.

A sudden or poorly managed transition risks disengaging older people from services altogether, particularly those with limited digital literacy, language barriers, or minimal informal support networks. This would undermine the preventative intent of the aged care system and likely lead to increased demand on higher-cost services in the future.

Importance of group-based social support programs

KCAC wishes to strongly emphasise the critical role of **group-based social support programs** in maintaining the wellbeing of older Australians. These programs:

- Reduce loneliness and social isolation
- Support mental health and cognitive wellbeing
- Promote physical activity and community participation
- Provide culturally safe and inclusive environments, particularly for CALD communities

Group social support is fundamentally different from individualised care. It is efficient, preventative, and community-building in nature. Incorporating group social support into individualised funding packages risks:

- Reducing access for socially isolated seniors
- Creating administrative barriers to participation
- Undermining the viability of group programs due to fragmented funding

KCAC strongly submits that **group-based social support must remain separately funded**, outside individualised packages, with dedicated funding streams that recognise its preventative and community-wide benefits.

Recommendations

KCAC respectfully recommends that the Committee consider the following:

1. That the Government provide clear, detailed, and staged timelines for the transition from CHSP to the Support at Home Program.
2. That continuity of service for existing CHSP clients aged 65+ be guaranteed during the transition period.
3. That group-based social support programs remain a **separately funded component** of the aged care system and not be absorbed into individualised funding models.



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4. That providers and older people be meaningfully consulted throughout the transition to minimise disruption and unintended consequences.

Conclusion

KCAC supports reform that strengthens aged care and improves outcomes for older Australians. However, reform must be implemented carefully, transparently, and with a strong focus on the lived experience of older people. Social support services delivered through CHSP have proven their value over many years and must not be diminished through unclear transition processes or inappropriate funding structures.

We thank the Committee for the opportunity to provide this submission and would welcome the opportunity to contribute further to this inquiry.

Yours sincerely

Anne Farah-Hill, OAM
Chief Executive Officer
Kingsgrove Community Aid Centre Inc.

21/01/26.