



Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck
Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians
Minister for Youth and Sport

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Aged care activities pause due to COVID-19

With considerable resources from the Aged Care sector and Government now required in the campaign to keep Senior Australians safe during the COVID-19 outbreak – several long term measures will be put on hold for at least six months.

The Australian National Aged Care Classification (AN-ACC) assessment trial, the 2020 Aged Care Approval Round and the implementation of the home care payment alignment project will all be postponed as the Morrison Government deals with an unprecedented health emergency.

But Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians, Richard Colbeck, said the support for our loved ones would remain a priority.

Additional funding of \$444.6 million is expected to strengthen the industry, with specific mechanisms to reinforce the aged care workforce and training.

An online infection prevention and control training module is among measures and has been completed by over 25,000 staff so far.

“Making sure aged care providers can continue to provide safe, quality care for residents is our combined goal,” Minister Colbeck said.

“The risk of serious illness from COVID-19 increases with age so we want to make sure Senior Australians are not at increased risk by exposure to non-essential visitors, including assessors.”

Minister Colbeck said the Government committed \$4.6 million to the AN-ACC trial with more than 7,000 assessments completed across 120 facilities – but it would not be rolled out at any new sites until further notice.

“So far, the trial has provided valuable information and insights into the AN-ACC assessment process and I know many facilities are still eager to participate when it recommences at a later date,” Minister Colbeck said.

He said the 2020 Aged Care Approval Round (ACAR) was initially due to open in March, but would now be set back for at least six months.

“The Government will work with aged care peak bodies and other key stakeholders to determine the precise timing of the next round,” Minister Colbeck said.

“By delaying the 2020 ACAR, providers can concentrate their efforts on helping to slow the spread of COVID-19 instead of filling in application forms.”

Application forms, guidance materials and other resources will be published on the [2020 ACAR page](#) when the round opens.

The implementation of improvements to payment administration arrangements for home care packages to align with other Government programs, such as the National Disability Insurance Scheme, will also be placed on hold.

Minister Colbeck said consultations with the home care sector would help determine when this would recommence.

“In the meantime, the current advance and claim payment cycle with Services Australia will continue,” he said.

“The health and wellbeing of older people receiving aged care services is the overwhelming priority for the Government.

“I thank aged care providers for their commitment to ensure continued quality of care for our senior Australians throughout this very difficult time.”

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