

Monday 30 May 2022

## **RE: Media Statement - COTA (WA) Call for 'Commissioner for Seniors'**

### **Commissioner for Seniors**

With its proposal to appoint a 'Commissioner for Seniors', COTA (WA) has called on the McGowan government to show its commitment to supporting older people in WA. The proposal is the central focus in the COTA (WA) submission to the Department of Communities' consultation on the development of the WA Seniors Strategy 2022-2032.

The role of the Commissioner would be to provide an independent, prominent and influential voice to government on all matters relating to seniors. It would also be charged with establishing a presence in all forms of media to ensure that the needs, challenges and opportunities for this growing cohort are heard and acknowledged. If implemented, the role of 'Commissioner for Seniors' would go a long way in breaking down current endemic ageism and discrimination and promote awareness of the rights of older people.

### **Seniors Information Service**

The COTA (WA) submission is also calling for the establishment of a 'Seniors information Service' to support older people, their family, carers or advocates to source information or seek a referral on all matters relating to seniors. This service would be delivered in multiple formats including telephone, email, virtual or face-to-face.

### **Seniors Hub**

COTA (WA) is calling for a one-stop-shop 'Seniors Hub', which would house a range of seniors sector organisations and/or their shop fronts in one location. The Hub would hold educational classes such as computer and technology support as well as being a meeting place for social activities. The 'Seniors Hub' would also provide advocacy and support on a whole range of services commonly required by seniors.

### **Key Focus Areas**

In addition to the above suggestions, the submission urges the State Government to prioritise the key focus areas which have been identified by COTA (WA) as being of importance to WA seniors. These areas include:

- Overcoming the digital divide
- Supporting vulnerable cohorts
- Maximising social connectedness
- More support for seniors in rural and remote areas
- Overcoming ageism and discrimination
- Dealing with elder abuse
- Provision of more readily available information on housing alternatives available to seniors

The full submission can be found on the COTA (WA) website: [www.cotawa.org.au](http://www.cotawa.org.au)

### For More Information

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### About Council on the Ageing Western Australia (COTA (WA))

The Council on the Ageing Western Australia (COTA (WA)) was established in 1959 and is the peak body for older Western Australians.

COTA (WA) is a federation member of the National COTA network.

COTA (WA) focuses on policy issues affecting seniors and seeks to promote, improve and protect the circumstances and wellbeing of older people in Western Australia.

### COTA (WA)

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