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MEDIA RELEASE

COTA WA Welcomes WA Liberal Silver Sport Trial

The Council on the Ageing Western Australia (COTA WA) congratulates the WA Liberal Party on its election commitment to reinstate the SilverSport program, providing much-needed financial assistance to older Western Australians to participate in sport, fitness, and recreational activities.

COTA WA is particularly delighted that this funding will include the *Strength for Life* program. This evidence-based strength and balances program has been proven to reduce age-related illnesses such as osteoporosis and cardiovascular disease, while also fostering social connection to reduce the risk of loneliness, depression, and dementia. Furthermore, *Strength for Life* plays a crucial role in preventing falls and improving overall health and wellbeing for older adults.

Under the WA Liberals' plan, eligible seniors holding a health care or pensioner concession card will have access to up to \$250 in financial assistance to participate in approved fitness activities.

COTA WA Chair, Dr Carmen Lawrence AO, commended the announcement and called on WA Labor to also commit to funding *Fit for Life*, a key initiative in COTA WA's 2025 Election Statement.

“This is a critical investment in the health and wellbeing of older Western Australians, ensuring they have access to programs that improve physical strength, mobility, falls prevention and social connection.”

“Every week over 5,500 older Western Australians participate in a Strength for Life class. While we do our best to cap the fees of this program, we often hear from older people that they would like to participate in this program, but can't afford to. This announcement will see these older Australians receive the benefit of individual strength and balance based exercise”.

“We now urge WA Labor to match this commitment and support the *Fit for Life* initiative, which expands access to evidence-based programs that keep seniors active and engaged in their communities,” Dr Lawrence said.

COTA WA looks forward to working with all parties to ensure that every older Western Australian has access to affordable and effective programs that enhance their health and quality of life.

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