

MEDIA RELEASE

18 March 2025

SUPPORT FOR COOK GOVERNMENT'S CREATION OF NEW AGED CARE AND SENIORS PORTFOLIO AND APPOINTMENT OF MINISTER MCGURK

Council on the Ageing (COTA) WA warmly welcomes the creation of the new combined Aged Care and Seniors portfolio and the appointment of the Hon. Simone McGurk MLA as the inaugural Minister.

This significant change by the Cook Government highlights the critical need to address the complex and interconnected needs of the state's rapidly growing population of more than 450,000 seniors.

COTA WA Board Chair, Dr Carmen Lawrence AO, congratulated Minister McGurk on her historic appointment and underscored the importance of integrating policy and services across aged care and broader seniors' needs.

“The creation of a dedicated Aged Care and Seniors portfolio is a progressive step forward in ensuring comprehensive, coordinated policy-making that effectively addresses the wide range of challenges older Western Australians face. Issues such as affordable housing, elder abuse prevention, cost-of-living pressures, digital exclusion, and combating age discrimination require cohesive and integrated strategies,” Dr Lawrence said.

“This new portfolio allows for focused leadership and innovative policy responses, ensuring older people can age with dignity, security, and independence. It also presents an important opportunity for government, community, and industry to collaborate more effectively in building an inclusive and supportive society for our seniors.”

Dr Lawrence highlighted that COTA WA's 2025 Election Statement identifies key areas of priority including enhancing aged care services, increasing affordable housing options, and delivering targeted cost-of-living support to older people.

“We look forward to partnering closely with Minister McGurk to drive impactful initiatives and advocate strongly on behalf of seniors across WA,” Dr Lawrence added.

COTA WA also acknowledges the substantial contributions of outgoing Minister Don Punch MLA, whose efforts led to the publication of the 10-year State Seniors Strategy (2023-2033) and the accompanying five-year Action Plan (2023-2027), greatly enhancing support for seniors and aged care services across the state.

COTA WA remains dedicated to championing seniors' rights and welfare, working alongside the new Minister and government to ensure ageing is a positive and fulfilling experience for all older Western Australians.

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