On Friday 20th April the Gillard Government released its long awaited response to the Productivity Commission’s report *Caring for Older Australians* and the chorus of calls from COTA, and many other stakeholders, to reform aged care. While not a perfect package the response provides an excellent beginning to creating an aged care system which focuses properly on the needs of older people.

**KEY POSITIVE ELEMENTS OF THE REFORM PACKAGE**

- The Gateway – a national call centre
- Linking service for vulnerable older people
- My Aged Care website – information on residential and community services
- One assessment framework for all people
- More packaged care to support you at home
- More say in what your package is and how its delivered to you
- Additional funding for packages supporting people living with dementia
- New fee structure which focuses on equity and fairness
- Buy accommodation using a fully refundable lump sum or a periodic payment or a combination of both.
- A cooling off period while you decide how best to pay for your accommodation
- Buy optional extras if you want to
- Greater consumer direction of residential care services
- New funding supplement to support residents with dementia
- More funding for advocacy services to help you have your say
- More funding for respite and counselling services for carers as well as a network of support centres

**WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE REFORM PACKAGE**

- Services are still rationed
- You don’t have an entitlement to care
- The Gateway is not a physical service with real people in your local area
- No Government support to unlock the equity in your home to pay for care if that is what suits you best
- No Government support to downsize or move to accommodation that better meets your needs without affecting your pension status
- It will take longer than we would have wanted

For further information you can go to [www.cotaustralia.org.au](http://www.cotaustralia.org.au) and read COTA’s Policy Alert which provides a comprehensive summary of all of the measures OR [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au) for all of the Government documents.

We would love to hear what you think about the reforms and are happy to answer questions if we can with the information we have available to us. Please email reform@cota.org.au or send a note to: COTA Australia, Reply Paid 87435 98 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne VIC, 3000.

The reform package is an excellent beginning to getting a really great aged care service system for you, which is what COTA is dedicated to doing. We will continue to advocate for what we think is missing in the package.