

MEDIA RELEASE

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COTA congratulates 2022 Senior Australian of the Year, Professor Tom Calma AO

COTA Australia, the peak body for older Australians, congratulates this year's Senior Australian of the Year Professor Tom Calma AO, who has received the honour for his work in championing the rights, responsibilities and welfare of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Patricia Sparrow, Chief Executive of COTA Australia, says Professor Tom Calma AO's tireless commitment to improving the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples makes him a more than worthy recipient of the prestigious annual honour.

"If you're looking for an example of a truly inspirational Australian, you need look no further than Professor Tom Calma AO," Ms Sparrow said.

"Professor Tom Calma AO's work is literally lifechanging and a real testament to the fact that our potential to have an impact only grows with age.

"Professor Tom Calma AO is one of the most respected human rights and social justice campaigners in the country whose commitment to improving the lives of others has only got more impressive with age.

"Professor Tom Calma AO is also a member of the Council of Elders and it's wonderful to have someone with his experience and passion in aged care in that important position."

Patricia Sparrow said all the Senior Australian of the Year finalists should be congratulated and thanked for their incredible work to improve the lives of others. This year's finalists included:

- SA Senior Australian of the Year, Sandra Miller – Aboriginal rights activist, advocate for Indigenous health and welfare
- NT Senior Australian of the Year, Bernard Tipiloura – Suicide prevention campaigner
- VIC Senior Australian of the Year, Professor Frank Oberklaid AM - Paediatrician and founding director, Centre for Community Child Health
- WA Senior Australian of the Year, Theresa Kwok – Community advocate
- NSW Senior Australian of the Year, Teresa Plane – Palliative care pioneer and advocate
- ACT Senior Australian of the Year, Professor Tom Calma AO – Human rights and social justice advocate
- QLD Senior Australian of the Year, Claude Lyle Harvey OAM – Child protection campaigners and Bravehearts fundraiser
- TAS Senior Australian of the Year, Dr Frances Donaldson – Doctor, frontline COVID-19 worker, prisoner advocate

Patricia Sparrow said all of the finalists are shining examples of the fact that our potential doesn't dim with age

"This year's Senior Australian of the Year finalists have all made invaluable contributions to our country and are living proof that wisdom, enthusiasm and courage of age is something we as a country should be harnessing more."

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