

Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care Consultative Committee

Meeting 8 – 29 October 2024

At its 29 October 2024 meeting, the Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care Consultative Committee received an update on the Government's appointment of Ms Natalie Siegel-Brown as Inspector-General of Aged Care. The Chair advised members that Ms Siegel-Brown would commence in the role on 14 January 2025, with her term ending on 15 October 2029. The Committee noted that in the interim, the Minister has appointed Mr Ian Yates AM for a further period in the Acting Inspector-General role. This arrangement will ensure continuity for the Office and facilitate a smooth leadership transition in the new year.

The Chair provided members with an update on corporate developments since the last meeting. Members noted the recent publication of several key documents, including the Office's 2024-25 Corporate Plan, 2024-25 Annual Work Plan, and 2023-24 Annual Report.

The Committee discussed the New Aged Care Bill, which the Government introduced into Parliament on 12 September 2024. The Chair updated the Committee on key elements of the Office's submission to the Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee inquiry and its appearance before the Committee. Discussion focussed particularly on the parts of the Bill concerning workforce training, governance, provision of aged care to First Nations Australians, complaints processes, and the status of the new Complaints Commissioner. Members explored related issues including matters relating to the Rules, the importance of adopting a rights-based approach and potential timing of the Bill's passage.

The Office provided an overview of the process to develop the 2024-25 Annual Work Plan and the key themes emerging from the consultation process undertaken in July 2024. These fell into the broad categories of quality and safety, workforce, governance, and services and sustainability. The Chair detailed the next steps in the assessment and prioritisation process, which would inform consideration of matters for future work plans.

The Chair sought the Committee's views on the 2025 Progress Report on the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety and outlined preparatory work underway by the Office to ensure that it is completed and provided to the Minister by 1 June 2025.

The Chair advised members that the new Inspector-General would determine the future consultative structure for the Office, with a review of meeting cadence, format, and membership composition likely in the first quarter of 2025. The Chair thanked members for their time and commitment, highlighting the Committee's value in providing the Office with a forum to discuss various concerns and issues in the aged care system.