



Victorian State Budget 2025-26: Progress for older Victorians, but gaps remain

Melbourne, 20 May – Council on the Ageing (COTA) Victoria and Seniors Rights Victoria (SRV) welcome the Victorian State Budget 2025-26, which offers real progress for older Victorians. However, systemic challenges vital to the health and wellbeing of older Victorians remain largely unaddressed.

The state budget introduces several commendable initiatives aimed at supporting older Victorians, including key programs to support healthcare access.

“Allowing older Victorians to consult with a pharmacist directly removes financial and logistical barriers, especially for those with mobility challenges or living in regional areas,” said CEO of COTA Victoria and Seniors Rights Victoria, Ben Rogers.

“Alongside yesterday’s announcement of free public transport for older Victorians on weekends, changes to the services provided by pharmacists will increase older peoples’ connectedness to community and services.

“We’re pleased to see new energy concessions and rebates following our advocacy over the last year,” Mr Rogers continued. “A new power saving bonus will help ease pressure on wallets, and homeowners will benefit from measures to support the installation of electric heat pumps, solar hot water systems, and upgrades of insulation.”

Investment in aged care will also support older Victorians to age in place, through the provision of essential home-based equipment, supports, and programs to maintain independence and wellbeing.

Older people experiencing or at risk of family violence – a critically under-recognised group of victim-survivors – stand to benefit from funding in the justice sector, including funding to make courts

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safer, for case management and victim support services, and for specialist family violence legal services.

“It is crucial that we acknowledge that family violence affects people of all ages and backgrounds. We hope that investment in family violence broadly, will also apply to the many Victorians living with, or recovering from elder abuse,” said Mr Rogers.

Despite positive action in several areas, the budget does not go far enough in tackling systemic challenges that continue to disproportionately affect older Victorians, including:

- **Housing security:** There is no targeted strategy or new investment aimed at increasing affordable and age-friendly housing options for older people – particularly women at risk of homelessness.
- **Elder abuse prevention and support:** While there is significant investment in family violence, the budget lacks clear, dedicated funding for elder abuse prevention, awareness, and tailored response services, including those offered by Seniors Rights Victoria.
- **Healthcare equity for ageing populations:** Although the pharmacy expansion is positive, broader healthcare accessibility issues – including access to specialists and geriatric services – remain largely unaddressed.

“We welcome the tangible supports included in this budget and are hopeful these measures will help to ease cost-of-living pressures, improved access to healthcare, and strengthened aged care and justice responses across the state,” said CEO of COTA Victoria and SRV, Ben Rogers.

“This is a please-all budget that runs the risk of blunting its impact,” said Mr Rogers. “While older people will benefit from today’s announcements, this budget is unlikely to change the experience of ageing in Victoria.

“We’re keen to continue to work with government and others in the sector so all older Victorians can age with dignity, security, and equal opportunity.”

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Further information

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About us

Council on the Ageing (COTA) Victoria is the leading not-for-profit member organisation representing the interests and rights of people aged over 50 in Victoria. For over 70 years, we have led government, corporate and community thinking about the positive aspects of ageing in the state.

Today, our focus is on promoting opportunities for and protecting the legal rights of people 50+. We value ageing and embrace its opportunities for personal growth, contribution, and self-expression. This belief drives benefits to the nation and its states alongside communities, families, and individuals. <https://cotavic.org.au> | <https://assistivetechforall.org.au/>

Seniors Rights Victoria (SRV) is the key state-wide service dedicated to advancing the rights of older people and the early intervention into, or prevention of, elder abuse in our community. It is the only Community Legal Centre dedicated to preventing and responding to elder abuse within Victoria.

SRV has a team of experienced advocates, lawyers, and social workers who provide free information, advice, referral, legal advice, legal casework, and support to older people who are either at risk of or are experiencing elder abuse. SRV supports and empowers older people through the provision of legal advice directly to the older person.

<https://seniorsrights.org.au> | <https://elderabuseawarenessday.org.au>