



**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **CATHOLIC SECTOR THANKS VICTORIAN AGED CARE WORKERS**

The largest non-government grouping of aged care services in Australia, Catholic Health Australia, thanks its workers as they continue to provide compassionate care in the face of a surging pandemic.

CHA, whose Victorian members include Mercy, St Vincent's and Villa Maria, among others, said its aged care workers are doing an amazing job as they battle a second surge of COVID cases in Victoria.

The workforce in Victoria's aged care homes are doing everything they can to protect the older residents in their care and deserve our respect and support.

CHA Chief Executive Pat Garcia said: "Our workers are there on the frontline - they are quite literally the bulwark between the pandemic and the most vulnerable in our community.

"Staff are working long hours filling in the gaps in rosters for their colleagues who have been forced to self-isolate. They continue to provide care to the best of their ability while maintaining the strictest measures to keep facilities free of infection. I commend them for their dedication to duty and the compassion and care they continue to show their residents.

"Even before the crisis this is a workforce that is crying out for more training and greater government support to do their jobs. I welcome the support shown for them by Health Minister Hunt and by Aged Care Minister Colbeck - I know it will be appreciated by our staff."

Mr Garcia welcomed the practical support on the ground by both the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments, namely the creation of the Victorian Aged Care Response Centre to coordinate additional support for the sector, including the deployment of teams of public health experts and experienced nursing staff from Victorian hospitals to residential aged care facilities, and the release of more personal protective equipment from government stockpiles.

"I want to thank government for its practical help. CHA will continue to work closely with government to identify other areas where we can support our workers," Mr Garcia said.

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