



BUDGET MEETS KEY ELECTION COMMITMENTS WHILE SIGNALLING SOCIAL SERVICES NETWORKS WON'T BE LEFT BEHIND

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Last night's Federal Budget highlighted the Government's values by making it clear that low-income and disadvantaged people will not be left behind as the community faces enormous economic and structural budget challenges.

Chair of Catholic Social Services Australia, Francis Sullivan, said today that the Budget was more of a scene setter than a road map.

"Parental support and childcare were up front last night while, at the same time, the Treasurer made it clear that support for the social services networks will keep pace with the pressures that are being put on them," Mr Sullivan said.

"The additional \$560 million in funding for housing, domestic violence and Indigenous services is an indicator of the Government's commitment to the sector.

"While we can't afford to be blind to the extraordinary economic pressures and challenges we face, both the Treasurer and the Prime Minister have indicated that the disadvantaged won't be left behind.

"Before the next Budget in May next year, the country needs to have a conversation about how we can finance the essential services all Australians rely on and, importantly, how we ensure we don't leave those on low incomes to face the brunt of inflation and cost of living pressures without assistance.

"That's the message that has come across in this Budget, it's a reflection of the Government's values and we are heartened by it.

"Importantly, the Government has gone to lengths to highlight the need for structural reform and has refused to rule out changes to the proposed stage three tax cuts," Mr Sullivan said.

Other key components of the Budget include:

- **Less expensive medicines:** the maximum price of prescriptions will be cut by 30% to \$30 per item.
- **More Affordable Housing:** The National Housing Accord will build 1 million new homes in 5 years.
- **A Plan to Increase Wages:** Including wage increases for Aged Care workers, more funding for vocational education and new enterprise bargaining arrangements.

Media Contact: Michael Salmon | 0417 495 018

The national network of Catholic social services