



# National Aged and Community Care April 2025

## National Aged and Community Care Forum Meeting

The National Aged and Community Care Forum (NACCF) met on Tuesday, 1 April 2025.

## Department of Health and Aged Care Update

An update was provided by Mark Shen, A/g Assistant Secretary, Residential Risk and Funding Operations Branch, Department of Health and Aged Care, and a consultation paper on the National registration to support personal care workers employed in aged care was circulated to NACCF members for their information.

## DVA Critical Initiatives

### Veteran Hearing Services Framework

Members were provided with an update on the implementation of the Veteran Hearing Services Framework, including activity underway to embed the framework and communicate with stakeholders.

### Simplification of the Booked Car with Driver Service

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) is pleased to announce an update to the access criteria for clients aged 79 years or younger who use the Booked Car with Driver (BCWD) service. The 'Treatment Location' criterion has been removed, which means younger clients with access to BCWD can use the service to travel to a broader range of health appointments, including general practice and allied health clinics. This was a criterion that applied only to clients aged 79 years or younger; there is no change in access for clients who are aged

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80 years or older, living with dementia (any age) or legally blind (any age). An updated infographic outlining the improved criteria is available on the DVA Website.

### **Model of Care Implementation for Open Arms**

Open Arms - Veterans & Families Counselling (Open Arms) provides mental health, counselling and wellbeing support services to anyone who has served at least one day of continuous fulltime service in the ADF and their immediate families and Reservists who have rendered border protection or disaster relief service or been involved in or witnessed a serious training accident, and their immediate families.

The Open Arms Model of Care is an overarching framework for the provision of mental health services to the Australian veteran community, shaped by clinical best practice and trauma-informed care, incorporating new and emerging evidence-based approaches. The Model of Care defines the remit of Open Arms as a national accredited mental health and counselling specialist service, focusing on delivery of military aware and trauma informed care rather than replicating more generalist services.

The Open Arms Model of Care is accessible from [Open Arms Model of Care - September 2024.pdf](#).

Open Arms can be contacted on 1800 011 046, to discuss individual and/or family needs additionally, further information is available at [www.openarms.gov.au](http://www.openarms.gov.au).

### **Women Veterans' Strategy**

Chantelle Stratford PSM, First Assistant Secretary and Principal Gender Specialist of the Women Veterans' Strategy Division, provided a verbal update on the development of the Women Veterans' Strategy and requested those interested in engaging further in this policy space reach out to [Women@dva.gov.au](mailto:Women@dva.gov.au).

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## **The below items were provided to members for information**

### **Legislative Reform Update**

NACCF members noted the update on veterans' legislation reform and that the Australian Parliament had passed the *Veterans' Entitlements, Treatment and Support (Simplification and Harmonisation) Act 2025*.

### **Veterans' Acute Housing Program Update**

The Forum noted the outcomes of the recent Veterans' Acute Housing Program grant opportunity.

### **Claims Processing Update**

The most recent claims reporting data can be accessed through the DVA Claims Processing Webpage: <https://www.dva.gov.au/claim-processing>, which encompasses all key metrics relating to the claims process. Should you encounter any difficulties in viewing or downloading the data, please do not hesitate to reach out to us for assistance.

### **Aged Care Update**

Members were briefed on progress of a range of initiatives to improve the experience of DVA clients accessing residential aged care, including new resources specifically for clients living in residential aged care, and their care teams. NACCF members were also encouraged to share details of the aged care experience survey amongst their membership.

### **Other Business**

The following items were discussed under Other Business:

- Home Care and Occupational Therapists
- Care Finder service to engaged nursing homes for placement