

MEDIA RELEASE



**Palliative
Care
Australia**

Palliative Care Australia

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Australia ranks second in the world in *Quality of Death Index*

The *Quality of Death Index* released today sees Australia come in second to the United Kingdom in world rankings. Prepared by the Economic Intelligence Unit of *The Economist*, the index rates countries according to how well they provide end-of-life care.

Professor Margaret O'Connor AM, President of Palliative Care Australia congratulated the Australian Government and all those involved in the palliative care sector on Australia's success.

'Australia's excellent position in the *Quality of Death Index* can be directly attributed to the willingness of the Australian Government to take the need for high quality end-of-life care seriously, combined with the dedication of the growing number of health professionals and carers working in palliative care. The strong policy support of the government, and the inclusion of palliative care in the Australian Health Care and COAG agreements has been vital.'

Professor O'Connor warns, 'Australia mustn't rest on its laurels. We still have a long way to go to ensure that all Australians can access high quality end of life care, delivered in the location of their choice in a culturally appropriate manner. We need to improve funding and delivery of community based palliative care, and to rapidly increase training in the field to better meet our health care needs.'

'Raising awareness of what is possible with high quality palliative care is an important goal. Palliative Care Australia has identified that this need applies both to the broad community and to health professionals generally', argued Professor O'Connor.

'As a society we need to relax the taboos and have open conversations about what our needs might be when we reach the end of our lives. Let's chat openly and make sure that our loved ones know what we want', encouraged Professor O'Connor.

Full details of the *Quality of Death Index* can be found at www.eiu.com.

Palliative Care Australia is the peak national organisation representing the interests and aspirations of all who share the ideal of quality care at the end of life for all.

Palliative Care Australia is an incorporated body whose members are the eight state and territory palliative care associations and the Australian and New Zealand Society of Palliative Medicine. The membership of these associations includes palliative care service providers, clinicians, allied health professionals, academics, consumers and members of the general community.

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Patron: Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia