



Submission to the  
Department of Health and Aged Care  
**A New Aged Care Act: Exposure Draft  
Consultation Paper No. 2**

February 2024

Australian Music Therapy Association (AMTA) welcomes the opportunity to provide this response to the Exposure Draft of the New Aged Care Act Consultation Paper No. 2.

### **Australian Music Therapy Association**

Australian Music Therapy Association (AMTA) is Australia's peak body for music therapy. AMTA represents nearly 800 Registered Music Therapists (RMTs) and music therapy students, and advocates for access to music therapy on behalf of the community. Our mission is to enable, advance and advocate for excellence in music therapy. A member organisation of Allied Health Professions Australia (AHPA) and National Alliance for Self Regulating Health Professions (NASRHP), AMTA supports Registered Music Therapists (RMTs) to use evidenced-based practices that actively promote the health, wellbeing and functioning of Australians.

### **Music therapy is a core service in aged care**

The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety Final Report (Recommendation 38) listed music therapy as a core service for residential aged care. Research demonstrates the efficacy of music therapy to reduce anxiety, depression and dementia symptoms (reducing the use of restrictive practices), enhance physical and motor skills, slow functional decline and improve quality of life. Music therapy is a necessary inclusion in aged care as an evidence-based allied health profession currently available through existing community-based funding streams, including the Commonwealth Home Support Program and Home Care Packages.

### **Response to the New Aged Care Act Exposure Draft**

As an active member of Allied Health Professions Australia, AMTA **strongly supports/endorse** **AHPA's written submission to the Consultation on a New Aged Care Act Exposure Draft** (Consultation Paper No. 2), with particular emphasis on the following point:

*A single service list could increase clarity of the services that the Commonwealth aged care system provides to older people (consultation question 4 p. 12 Consultation Paper No. 2).*

However, for this to occur, the **list of funded services must be complete and correct to ensure consumers' continued rights to appropriate and effective care**. Music therapy is included as an allied health therapy in current residential aged care programs and is also available in Commonwealth Home Support Packages and Home Care Packages. **A complete aged care service list must therefore specifically include music therapy as an allied health therapy.**

### Further discussion

AMTA welcomes the opportunity to provide further information.

Bridgit Hogan, Chief Executive Officer  
Australian Music Therapy Association

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