

NSW State Election: Request for response on COTA NSW Policy Platform 2019

COTA NSW is the peak body representing people over the age of 50 in NSW. We're an independent, non-partisan, consumer-based non-government organisation. We work with community leaders, policy makers, service and product providers as well as media representatives to make sure our constituents' views are heard and their needs met.

For older Australians to flourish, we need to ensure that supports and systems are in place. As the 2019 state election approaches, COTA NSW is highlighting the strategic investments that can make it happen.

COTA NSW has a vision that ageing in Australia is a time of possibility, opportunity and influence - of a community that values older people and the contributions they make, that supports them to stay engaged and actively participating.

We believe the next state election is a prime opportunity to start realising this vision.

COTA NSW is requesting a formal response from all major parties standing in the NSW state election to our published 2019 Policy Platform. Responses received will be publicly shared with COTA NSW members and supporters the week commencing 11 March.

Does your party **support** the following policy priorities for older people in NSW?

	COTA NSW Election Priorities	Yes / No	Further comments
Health & Wellbeing	Allocate funds for the development and implementation of diverse, scalable free or low-cost programs that offer a range of exercise options for older people as they age.	Yes / No	Seniors United supports any program to keep older people healthy for as long as possible for all sorts of reasons e.g. if they are fit they are less likely to have to see the Dr; a healthy person is generally happier; exercises can keep joints flexible and muscles working, etc.
	Fund the expansion of NSW Health's Hospital in the Home (HITH) program and Clinical Nurse Specialist positions, with a focus on regional and rural areas with ageing populations	Yes / No	It is better for older people to be in familiar surroundings like their own home. It has been shown that they recover quicker and are less likely to get depressed.
Housing choices	Decrease the eligibility age from 80 to 67 for inclusion on the NSW Housing priority waiting list for public housing.	Yes / No	Definitely – people at 67 – the future retirement age – some people through circumstance are just in the same need for housing as an 80yo.
	Set standards to include an annual target of 75% of new social and affordable housing dwellings designed to a minimum Gold Livable Housing standard.	Yes / No	This is a strong Seniors United policy – more social housing particularly for single older women.
	Fund the establishment of a state-wide older people's housing information and support service to bring together fragmented resources and reduce the risk of homelessness.	Yes / No	Agree – the more information the better and the more centralised the information the better but it has to be in simple understandable words and in multiple languages.

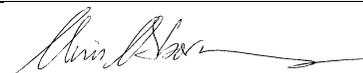
	COTA NSW Election Priorities	Yes / No	Further comments
Housing choices	Reduction in stamp duty for people 70+ purchasing owner occupier properties that have been built to Livable Housing standard.	Yes / No	Any reduction in the cost of housing is to be welcome and this is a great way to encourage older people to move into a dwelling of a Livable Housing standard.
	Create a legislative and regulatory environment that supports innovative housing models which allow older people to choose where they live.	Yes / No	The more choice of housing the better for older people so changing legislation to encourage innovative models is to be applauded.
Getting around	Double annual funding to the Accessible Transport Program to \$266 million to expedite the completion of train station accessibility upgrades.	Yes / No	Transport is costly and for older people who no longer have the ability to drive this is extremely important especially fast tracking the construction of accessible train stations which we know is a big issue.
	Create an Active Transport Infrastructure Commissioner responsible for ensuring that planning for all new and existing community residential developments pay attention to active transport infrastructure, particularly footpaths.	Yes / No	A great idea of planning ahead instead of retrofitting changes down the track which always cost more and create disruption.
	Provide funding to local councils to improve access to transport and shopping precincts by upgrading unsafe footpaths and streets and other impediments to safe access.	Yes / No	Local government requires encouragement in areas that they do not see as their core responsible like this. There is too much blame shifting to other levels of government.

	COTA NSW Election Priorities	Yes	Further comments
Inclusive communities	Provide and promote information in a range of accessible formats and languages to older people in NSW.	Yes / No	This is a must for people from NESB and those who have accessible issues such as people with low vision.
	Reinstate funding for Sector Support Officers to support the implementation of the NSW Ageing Strategy through community development initiatives, realisation of local ageing strategies and capacity building of service providers.	Yes / No	This can only be of benefit and when these Support Officers were working previously it was clearly shown that the program was of tremendous benefit. The population is aging and Governments of all levels are lagging behind the proper planning for this. This type of short-sighted approach will cost more in the long run and create heartache to older people.
	Provide recurrent funding (3-5 year funding period) for community-based social support programs that target isolated and vulnerable older people experiencing loneliness.	Yes / No	It is well known in the age care support sector that this is a huge issue 0- isolation and loneliness. It can cause depression that leads to illness and hospital stays, etc.

Party Name: Seniors United Party of Australia

Name of authorised representative: Chris Osborne

Signature:



Date: 13th March 2019