

Disappointing Budgets

Despite their massive surpluses, both State and Federal Governments delivered disappointing budgets this year.

Patricia Reeve, COTA Over 50's Executive Director, Policy said, "Lots of goodies but some big issues still calling out for attention."

While Ms Reeve listed a range of positive initiatives that the Federal Government has taken, she went on to say;

"At the same time we feel that the government overlooked the desperate situation of many low income Australians. An increase in single age pensions and access to basic dental services for people on low incomes remain the biggest challenges for many older people.

"The government has extended its range of incentives for people to save for retirement but has not moved to provide basic income security for those who are not able to make such investments. The one-off \$500 sweetener of the Seniors' Bonus does not meet the need for income security to ensure a basic standard of living for today's older people. Many single older women live \$250 per week for periods of 25 – 30 years."

"Access to dental care for all Australians requires commitments by all governments to a comprehensive strategy that guarantees oral health programs, preventive and restorative treatment particularly for disadvantaged groups. The government has gone only part way to responding to this with its extension of Medicare rebates for a limited group of people, those with chronic conditions being managed by a GP."

While continuing its commitment to Active Ageing funding, the Western Australian Government announced no new initiatives for seniors and increased water charges will impact hardest on those seniors least able to pay.