



COTA QUEENSLAND

GPO Box 614
Brisbane QLD 4001
ABN 13 465 280 311

Level 6, 10 Market St
Brisbane QLD 4000
www.cotaqld.org.au

P: (07) 3316 2999
P: (07) 1300 738 348
E: info@cotaqld.org.au

MEDIA RELEASE

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JOBS FOR ALL AGES

Queensland workers, no matter their age, need support during COVID recovery and beyond, says the state's peak organisation for seniors.

Council on the Ageing (COTA) Queensland's Chief Executive, Mark Tucker-Evans, said that while employment among younger Queenslanders had taken a huge hit during COVID, older people were also affected.

"Moreover, even before the pandemic, we knew that many older people were forced to stop work before they were financially prepared." Mr Tucker-Evans said.

"Not everyone has savings or assets they can fall back on. Older women especially can find themselves facing serious financial difficulties in their later life if forced to retire."

"Mature workers bring skills, professional and life experience, industry and organisational knowledge, and mentorship and support for less experienced co-workers. They are incredible resources for businesses and for their colleagues. When they are excluded, everyone loses."

Mr Tucker-Evans said that age discrimination in the workplace was a serious problem even before the job losses of the pandemic hit.

"Mature workers can face discrimination not only in hiring, but in training and advancement opportunities. People who lose their jobs later in life can find it extremely difficult to find a new one, and many simply give up."

COTA Queensland's proposal is for the Queensland Government to work with employers, training and education providers, and mature workers to educate business, human resources, and management professionals about age-inclusive employment.

"We are asking the Government to lead by example and through practical assistance to directly address age discrimination in employment. This includes the education and business sectors alongside older people in codesigning solutions."

Mr Tucker-Evans said that it was important that the Government make this a priority over the next term, but also vital that they ensure their more immediate COVID recovery was age-inclusive.

“Our economic recovery and our economic future – including retraining, upskilling and jobs – needs to include all Queenslanders.”

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Media contact

Mark Tucker-Evans 07 3316 2903
Chief Executive

Lisa Hodgkinson 07 3316 2908
Communications Coordinator