

MEDIA RELEASE

28 November 2023

Ken Smith AO announced as new Chair of The Benevolent Society

[The Benevolent Society](#) has announced [Ken Smith AO](#) as its new Chair following yesterday's Annual General Meeting.

Mr Smith, who joined the Board of Directors in October this year, brings extensive executive human services leadership experience to his new role.

"I'm thrilled to be stepping into the role of Chair with an organisation that has been helping Australians since 1813," he said. "I'm looking forward to working with the Board and the Executive team to continue The Benevolent Society's long history of influencing and leading positive social change."

Former Chairman Tim Beresford, who commenced his tenure on the Board in February 2013, described his five-year-term as Chair as extremely rewarding and enriching. "I would like to thank our Board for their support and commitment and welcome our Incoming Chair, Ken Smith.

"I would like to acknowledge our CEO, Lin Hatfield Dodds, for her inspiring leadership over the past two years. As my chapter in history for this organisation closes, I look back with a huge sense of pride on our collective achievements. Over the years, I have enjoyed travelling across New South Wales, Queensland, and South Australia to meet our teams. I have always been struck by their professionalism, commitment, and dedication to deliver positive social outcomes for their communities."

Lin Hatfield Dodds, CEO, The Benevolent Society, extended her deep appreciation to our departing Chair and a warm welcome to Ken. "Tim's focus on excellence, and his belief in our staff have been evident in every conversation I've had with him since I became CEO," she said. "His leadership has been characterised by insight, integrity, and wisdom.

"I welcome Ken, with his extensive leadership experience and deep expertise in public policy, as our Incoming Chair as we look ahead to 2024 and beyond to deliver our vision of a just society where everyone can live their best lives. The depth of experience and expertise of our Board will continue to drive The Benevolent Society forward."

Mr Smith is currently a Professor of Practice at Queensland University of Technology and does sessional work with University of Queensland. He has worked on many national policy issues over the past three decades, including housing and urban affairs, social welfare and education. In 2021, he was recognised for his distinguished service to public administration and to public leadership and education with an AO (Officer in the General Division of the Order of Australia).

[Professor Lorraine Sheppard](#) also joined the Board of Directors in October this year. She is a professor of physiotherapy and healthcare management and an experienced Non-Executive Director (NED) and Chair in clinical governance across several industry bodies and the not-for-profit sector.

Through her leadership and service delivery in allied health, clinical and aged care services, Professor Sheppard is familiar with the changing nature of aged care, government reforms and responding to the needs of people who seek care.

“I have a strong interest in driving support for vulnerable people and was drawn to The Benevolent Society’s values,” she said. “I’m looking forward to contributing to the important work they do and value the opportunity to contribute my clinical governance experience and understanding.”

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About The Benevolent Society

The Benevolent Society, operating since 1813, provides integrated support services to children, young people and families, older Australians, people with disability and carers. It has more than 1,000 people-first practitioners working to help people live their life, their way. As one of Australia’s first charitable organisations, The Benevolent Society has pioneered positive social change and uses its practice wisdom to advocate for a just, caring society. Visit benevolent.org.au for more information.

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