



THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP

Minister for Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

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First *Charter of Rights* for Older Australians Receiving Home Care

The nearly 56,000 older Australians who receive help at home through community aged care packages will get a greater say in the provision of their services - under the Rudd Labor Government.

The Minister for Ageing, Mrs Justine Elliot today announced the Australian Government was developing a **Charter of Rights and Responsibilities for community care and flexible care packages**.

There will be consultation with consumers, aged care providers and other interested groups. The formal consultation will begin today at the Ageing Consultative Committee in Canberra. A draft Community Care Charter has been prepared.

“Home care packages help older Australians continue to live in their own homes and remain independent and active,” Mrs Elliot said.

Australians now have the world’s second longest life expectancy – at 81.4 years after the Japanese. By 2060, an Australian woman can expect to reach the age of 90 and by mid-century, most Australians can expect – on average – to reach the mid-to-late 80s.

Over the next four years, the Rudd Labor Government is investing a record \$40 billion in nursing homes and hostels and community care services.

In 2008-2009, \$2.2 billion of that will be spent on community care alone.

Community care packages complement the nearly 3,000 nursing homes and hostels in Australia providing more than 170,000 beds.

“As our population ages, growth in demand for home and community care will also increase – and with that care recipients and their carers should get a bigger say in the delivery of their own care,” Mrs Elliot said.

“At the moment, there is a charter for nursing homes and hostels, but none for community care.

“Put simply, this is about giving older Australians a greater say in the services they receive,” Mrs Elliot said.

Mrs Elliot said people should have real choice in the community care packages, they receive and a say in the arrangements for the delivery of that care.

“The Community Care Charter will clearly spell out the rights and responsibilities of consumers of home care services funded by the Australian Government,” Mrs Elliot said.

The Australian Government funds three community care packages. They are:

- Community Aged Care Packages (CACPs), which provides support services for older people who would otherwise require low-level residential aged care;
- Extended Aged Care at Home (EACH), for people who need high-level care; and
- the specialised Extended Aged Care at Home Dementia packages (EACH Dementia), which provide the equivalent of high-level residential care in the home for people with dementia.

Mrs Elliot said the charter would clearly explain the flexibility older Australians have in making decisions about their care and their ability to negotiate their package of services.

Once developed, the charter would be provided to each recipient of packaged community care programs when their care package is being negotiated.

The draft Community Care Charter says each recipient of a community care service funded by the Australian Government has the right to:

- Full and effective use of his or her personal, civil, legal and consumer rights;
- Quality care appropriate to his or her needs;
- Be treated and accepted as an individual, and to have his or her individual preferences taken into account and treated with respect;
- Maintain his or her personal independence;
- Maintain control over, and continue making decisions about, the personal aspects of his or her daily life, financial affairs and possessions;
- Complain and to take action to resolve disputes;
- Have access to advocates and other avenues of redress; and
- Be free from reprisal, or well-founded fear of reprisal, in any form for taking action to enforce his or her rights.

For more information, contact Minister Elliot's office on (02) 6277 7280