NEW FLEXIBLE AGED CARE PLACES HELP OLDER AUSTRALIANS STAY AT HOME FOR LONGER

Thousands of Australians will benefit from an innovative new form of flexible aged care that will help older people remain in their own homes for longer after injury or illness.

The Minister for Aged Care, Ken Wyatt AM, MP, today announced 475 Short-Term Restorative Care places with an estimated total expenditure of up to $34.7 million a year.

The new places are part of the 2016-17 Aged Care Approvals Round (ACAR).

Mr Wyatt said: “The new short-term restorative care places aim to help people, who are experiencing illness or who have suffered an injury, from prematurely entering residential aged care.

“It will help older people to manage daily tasks, maintain their independence and stay in their homes for as long as possible.

“It increases the care options available in circumstances, for example, where older people would benefit from targeted intervention to recover from short-term incapacity or injury.

“This new approach provides older people with short-term care packages of up to eight weeks to help them get back on their feet and improve their quality of life.

“The care plan is designed with, and approved by, the person receiving the care and can be delivered at home, in an aged care home or a combination of both.”

Mr Wyatt said if an older person suffered a fall at home and was approved for Short-Term Restorative Care, their care provider could arrange for physical therapy with the support of the person’s doctor and allied health professionals, who would work together to identify potential hazards in their home and get them back on their feet.

Mr Wyatt said 400 of the Short-Term Restorative Care places would be available in 2016–17, with the remaining 75 places to be available in 2017–18.
The eight-week time limit that applies to this program means that from next year more than 3,000 older people can potentially access this program through these 475 places.

Mr Wyatt said: “Older Australians want and need flexible services that will help them when they need it and encourage independence for as long as possible.

“Short-Term Restorative Care is just that – helping people age well and access care when and where they need it on an ‘as-needs’ basis.

“This package represents a big step forward in designing services that place the needs and wishes of the consumer at the core.”

Additional residential aged care places and the capital grant components of the 2016–17 Aged Care Approvals Round will be announced at a later date.

Information about the 2016–17 Short-Term Restorative Care outcomes, including details of the successful approved providers, is available at: https://agedcare.health.gov.au/2016-17ACAR

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