



**THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP**

**Minister for Ageing**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**\$4.9 Million Dementia Respite Care Unit to Help Carers Get a Well Deserved Break**

Minister for Ageing, Justine Elliot today officially opened the Brotherhood of St Laurence's new \$4.9 million respite centre in Frankston.

The new centre is specifically designed to provide respite care for people living with dementia and their carers.

Almost 2.6 million Australians provide care for family members or friends with a disability, mental illness, chronic condition or who are frail aged. Of these about 500,000 are primary carers – the people who provide the most care

“Carers play an important role in Australian society, dedicating so much to improve the quality of the lives of our elderly and people with disabilities,” Minister Elliot said.

“Caring for someone full time is physically and emotionally demanding and carers need to be able to take deserved breaks.

“One of the challenges of an ageing population is the increasing prevalence of dementia; more than 200,000 Australians are now living with the condition and nearly one million Australians are involved in caring for people with dementia.

“This service will help meet the needs of carers and the people they care for by providing dementia specific care in homelike surrounds,” Minister Elliot said.

The Australian Government provided \$400,000 in capital funding to the project which created an estimated 50 jobs during its construction and employs 48 full time staff.

The Brotherhood of St Laurence has been funded under the Rudd Government's National Respite for Carers Program since 2001, and receives more than \$610,000 a year to help provide more than 11,000 hours of respite care a year.

The new dementia-specific respite centre forms an integral part of the Brotherhood of St Laurence's work in Victoria, which includes 83 residential aged care places, 374 Community Aged Care Packages, 68 Extended Aged Care at Home packages and 43 Extended Aged Care At Home Dementia packages.

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