



## **THE HON CHRISTOPHER PYNE MP**

### **Minister for Ageing**

#### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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#### **More respite for carers of people with high care needs**

Carers of frail older Australians will soon have more opportunities for community-based respite care, with the announcement today of the results of the Australian Government's July *Invitation to apply for funding to provide high care community respite services to carers of frail older Australians*.

The Minister for Ageing, Christopher Pyne, said 28 services across Australia would be offered funding totalling about \$15 million over four years under the National Respite for Carers Program (NRCP) to provide new or expanded respite care services to carers of frail older Australians with high care needs.

"It's no secret that many Australians who care for an older person make themselves available 24 hours a day, seven days a week," Mr Pyne said.

"However, having access to respite care is crucial to sustaining carers in their roles.

"Respite care gives carers a vital break so that they can carry out other responsibilities or tend to their own needs.

"The 28 new or expanded services being funded under this announcement will complement the more than 600 other respite care services funded across Australia."

This initiative is one of several funded under the \$1.7 billion *Securing the future of aged care for Australians* announced in February 2007, in which the Australian Government committed an additional \$26.5 million for an extra 100,000 days of community-based respite over the next four years to the carers of frail older Australians with high care needs.

A second invitation for funding under this initiative will be issued in 2009.

Carers will be able to draw on the additional respite services by contacting service providers directly or through a network of service organisations such as Commonwealth Carer Respite and Carelink Centres, which can be contacted on 1800 059 059.

The NRCP is an Australian Government program that provides respite and other support to carers. Funding for the NRCP has increased more than ninefold since 1996-97, to an estimated \$185 million in 2007-08.

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