



**Senator the Hon Santo Santoro**  
**Minister for Ageing**  
**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Major boost to aged care services**

The Howard Government has delivered a major injection of new aged care places across Australia, to boost the quality and availability of services for older Australians.

The Minister for Ageing, Senator Santo Santoro, today announced 7,777 new places in the 2006 Aged Care Approvals Round (ACAR). The places will cost an additional \$206 million per year.

The Government has also allocated \$38.6 million in capital grants to assist aged care providers to build or maintain quality residential facilities for older Australians.

Senator Santoro said the new places represented another major investment by the Howard Government in the quality and sustainability of aged care in Australia.

“The Howard Government has exceeded its 2001 election commitment of providing 200,000 operational aged care places by June 2006,” Senator Santoro said.

“We are now well on track to deliver on our promise of 108 places for every 1,000 people aged 70 years or over by the first day of 2008. This compares with a ratio of just 93 places for every 1,000 people aged 70 years or over when Labor held office.

“There has never been a time when there have been more places or a higher ratio in Australia.”

In line with the Government’s philosophy of providing care to older people in their own homes where ever possible, the allocations include 3,148 community care places, in the form of Community Aged Care Packages and Extended Aged Care at Home packages. These will provide a variety of low- and high-level home-based aged care services.

“The allocations also include more than 660 Extended Aged Care at Home Dementia packages, which provide the equivalent of high-level residential care for frail older people with dementia who wish to – and are able to – continue to live at home with appropriate care assistance,” Senator Santoro said.

“These packages help older Australians to continue living in their own homes, close to their families and friends, their churches, their shops and their clubs.

“More importantly, they can continue sleeping in their own beds, in surroundings with which they are familiar and comfortable. They can enjoy the best possible quality of life.”

Senator Santoro also noted that the new allocations included more than 4,500 places for people with identified special needs. More than 1,000 places would focus on the needs of older Australians from non-English-speaking backgrounds and almost 3,000 would deliver services in regional, rural and remote areas of Australia.

“Today’s announcement further demonstrates the Howard Government’s ongoing commitment to: providing greater choice in the type of care available to older Australians; improving access to services, particularly in regional, rural and remote communities; and promoting a sustainable aged care industry.

“I am delighted that aged care providers have embraced the Government’s vision for a world-class system of aged care and committed themselves to providing high quality, affordable and accessible services to meet the individual needs and choices of older Australians.”

Following a rigorous assessment, the new aged care places were allocated to applicants who demonstrated they could best meet the care needs of the ageing population within a specified region.

Approved providers now have two years in which to make these new places fully operational. They will be required to report quarterly to the Department of Health and Ageing on their progress in bringing these places online.

Additional information is available at: [www.health.gov.au/acar2006](http://www.health.gov.au/acar2006)

**Media contact: Malcolm Cole - 0408 612 603**

**Table 1: Overview of results of the 2006 Aged Care Approvals Round**

State or territory	Residential places	Community places	Total of all places	Recurrent funds (\$m)	Capital grants (\$m)	Community Care Grants (\$m)	Total (\$m)
NSW	1,401	1,006	2,407	61.861	7.072	0.405	69.338
VIC	1,029	727	1,756	52.413	12.468	0.276	65.157
QLD	974	800	1,774	41.974	7.205	0.644	49.823
WA	590	282	872	23.722	1.475	0.010	25.207
SA	275	223	498	13.003	4.884	0.042	17.929
TAS	155	40	195	4.407	2.632	0.121	7.160
ACT	190	40	230	7.182	-	0.035	7.217
NT	15	30	45	1.432	2.875	0.031	4.338
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4,629</b>	<b>3,148</b>	<b>7,777 *</b>	<b>\$205.994</b>	<b>\$38.611</b>	<b>\$1.564</b>	<b>\$246.169</b>

\* **Note:** A small number (151) of places has yet to be allocated.