



**THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP**  
**Minister for Ageing**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**15 August 2008**

**ELLIOT: COMMUNITY CARE AND NURSING HOMES – PROVIDING CHOICE**

Minister for Ageing, Mrs Justine Elliot today defended the Federal Government's support for community care, saying it helped older Australians remain independent and in their homes.

ABC Radio reported comments today (August 15 at 11am) by Torbay Retirement Village CEO, a major age care provider which runs Torbay Hostel at Hervey Bay who suggested Commonwealth-funded community care reduced people going into nursing homes.

Mrs Elliot said: "Community care is about giving older Australians a choice."

"Older Australians want to remain independent and in their own homes as long as possible and then have the option going to a nursing home, if it is needed. It is best to have two strong systems."

Mrs Elliot cited an independent Monash University study that found home-based community care packages for older Australians improved their quality of life and kept them healthier.

Mrs Elliot stressed that she was committed to a long-term viability of the residential aged care sector but also wanted to ensure that there was a strong community care sector too.

"I have met with many Queensland aged care providers and will continue to work in partnership with them, however, there can be two strong systems giving people choice."

The comments were made by Mr Phillip Parry – CEO of Torbay Retirement Village – on ABC Radio Wide Bay today (August 15 at 11am) about an Australian Institute of Health Welfare annual report – **Aged Care Packages in the community 2006-07** released yesterday (August 14).

The report found that nearly 56,000 people received help at home through community care packages nationally.

Mr Parry said the trend means many nursing homes were losing money to community care because they were remaining in their homes.

Mr Parry told the ABC Radio:

**“We’ve also discussed it with other providers and we’ve found that it is becoming more and more common that people are running vacancies in the low care section.”**

Mrs Elliot said there has been strong growth in community aged care service delivery in recent years which is planned and is expected to continue to grow for several more years with Australia’s ageing population.

The Rudd Labor Government is providing more than \$40 billion over the next four years for aged and community care. In 2008-2009, \$2.2 billion will be spent on community care.

Mrs Elliot expressed surprise at the comments as Torbay Retirement Village received \$5.139 million in the previous financial year (2007-2008) from the Federal Government to support 165 places – 29 high care and 136 low care in the Torbay Hostel.

In addition, 10 CACP (Community Aged Care Packages) were managed from the retirement village – totalling about \$130,000.

Over the last 10 years, Queensland aged care providers received the highest level of increases in financial support in the nation – and their level of funding continues to grow under the Rudd Government.

This year (2008-2009), Queensland aged care providers will receive more than \$1.2 billion.

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