



THE HON CHRISTOPHER PYNE MP

Minister for Ageing

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New agreement for nation's biggest care program

A new agreement to continue management of Australia's largest community care program has been signed by the Australian Government and the states and territories, the Minister for Ageing, Christopher Pyne, announced today.

The new agreement will enable improved, longer-term planning in the Home and Community Care program, which is funded jointly by the Australian Government and the states and territories.

The program is investing \$1.65 billion in 2007-08 to provide care for about 775,000 frail older Australians, younger people with disabilities and their carers.

"The program helps frail older people and people with disabilities to continue to live in their own homes. It provides services such as domestic assistance, personal care, nursing and community transport," Mr Pyne said.

"Planning arrangements are being improved under the new agreement, and all governments will move to three-year planning cycles.

"These improvements will lead to greater certainty for the program's clients, as well as for communities and service providers.

"Relationships between the Australian Government and the states and territory governments also will benefit. The new agreement will enable a more collaborative approach to decision-making and implementation of improvements in the program.

"In addition to the Australian Government's investment of more than \$1 billion in the program in 2007-08, the Government will provide an additional one-off \$30 million to make it easier for older people and those with disabilities to obtain services and information.

"These funds will also improve national consistency in eligibility and assessment for services. This will help reduce overlap and duplication in administration," Mr Pyne said.

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