



## **THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP**

### **Minister for Ageing**

#### **MEDIA RELEASE**

26 March 2009

#### **Getting Older Australians Out Of Hospital and Back in Their Homes, Regaining Their Independence: \$293.2 Million Transition Care**

The Rudd Labor Government's \$293.2 million Transition Care Plan is on track and it has already helped more than 10,000 older Australians during last financial year regain their independence after a hospital stay.

The Minister for Ageing, Mrs Justine Elliot today also officially approved the creation of the second tranche of 470 transition care places – as part of the election commitment.

In the 2007-2008 financial year, 10,146 people received assistance through transition care.

Research from the Department of Health and Ageing on the 2007-2008 transition care places found that 78 per cent of transition care participants had improved or maintained their functioning.

And almost half (49 per cent) were able to return to the community after participating.

**Last week, Mrs Elliot officially approved the creation of the next 470 places to be allocated by March 31, 2009 and available from July 1, 2009. Mrs Elliot signed the Instrument under subsection 12-3 (1) of the Aged Care Act.**

**The transition care places are all expected to be operating by June 2010– in line with the COAG (Council of Australian Governments) Implementation Plan.**

**Mrs Elliot made the transition care announcements at the “Change Champions Seminar on “Transition Care for Older People” in Sydney.**

Transition care places are about helping older Australians get out of hospital and regain their independence, helping free up valuable hospital beds in state hospitals.

It can be provided for a maximum of 12 weeks, with a possible extension of another six weeks, either in the client's own home or in a home-like environment in a bed-based residential setting.

Nationally, by mid-2012, when all 4,000 transition care places are fully operational, up to 30,000 older Australians will benefit each year. Each funded place can be used by up to seven or eight different older Australians a year.

The Rudd Labor Government is in the process of allocating the second stage of its four year plan.

Currently, there are 79 transition care services operating 2,218 places across Australia.

As at 19 March, 218 of the 228 transition care places allocated for 2008-2009 are operational with the final 10 places to start in Tasmania over the coming months.

“Older Australians – after a hospital procedure – want to return to their homes rather than staying in hospital or going into a nursing hostel prematurely,” Mrs Elliot said.

The Australian Government is working closely with the State and Territory Governments to provide extra transition care places to help older people make a smooth transition from hospital back to their homes or into residential care.

**Under the Rudd Labor Government's Transition Care Plan, as at 19 March 2009:**

- South Australia has made all of its 17 new places operational;
- Victoria has made all of its 68 new places operational;
- The ACT has made its two new places operational;
- NSW has made all of its 69 places operational;
- Western Australia has made all of its 18 new transition care places operational;
- Queensland has made all of its 38 transition care places operational; and
- The Northern Territory has made all of its 6 transition care places operational.

**Total allocated & operational TCP – by State/Territory as at March 19, 2009**

State	Allocated TCP	Operational TCP
NSW	772	772
VIC	570	570
QLD	389	389
SA	193	193
WA	178	178
TAS	67	57
NT	22	22
ACT	37	37
AUST	2,228*	2,218

*\* 228 of these 2,228 transition care places are part of the first stage of the Rudd Labor Government election commitment – bringing the total to 4,000 by 2011-12.*

**Transition Care - background**

Transition care provides a package of services tailored to the person's needs. This may include a range of low intensity therapy services and nursing support and/or personal care services.

Examples of low intensity therapy service may include:

- Physiotherapy;
- Occupational therapy;
- Dietetics;
- Podiatry; and
- Speech therapy, counselling and social work.

Examples of personal care services may include assistance with:

- Showering, dressing and eating;
- Managing incontinence;
- Transport to appointments; and
- Moving, eating and communication.

State and Territories are the approved providers for the Transition Care Program under the *Aged Care Act 1997*, which allows them to determine the model of transition care based on local need.

**Details: please contact the Minister's office on 02 6277 7280.**