



## THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP

### Minister for Ageing

#### MEDIA RELEASE

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#### **Aged Care Providers Recognising Community Care – 10-To-One Oversubscription in 2008-2009 Aged Care Approvals Round**

Australia's aged care providers are recognising the future of their sector is in the expansion in the provision of support and care for older Australians in their own homes through community care places, the Minister for Ageing, Mrs Justine Elliot said.

Mrs Elliot was responding to one of the strongest responses to the call for applications to provide community care places in Australia.

Mrs Elliot today released further preliminary national data showing the aged care sector has sought **27,039 community care places for the 2,784 places** on offer from the Australian Government in the 2008-2009 Aged Care Approvals Round.

"This is a huge response and it is a 10-to-one over-subscription," Mrs Elliot said.

"It is wonderful that the aged care sector are listening and responding to the concerns and preferences of older Australians," Mrs Elliot said.

"Older Australians are telling us they want the choice to remain in their homes and only want to enter nursing homes when it is absolutely necessary.

"Older Australians are healthier and more active in they are in familiar surroundings.

"This is about encouraging a strong community care sector and a healthy residential aged care one which is there when it is needed by older Australians."

Mrs Elliot said the Australian Government is looking at ways to expand community care in the future.

The Australian Government received a healthy and competitive response to ACAR residential 2008-2009 aged care bed application process. A revised summary has found that there were 13,956 applications for 7,663 places.

Last financial year, 61,739 older Australians received care at home through a community care or flexible care package. At the same time, 208,079 people used nursing home or hostel care.

In addition, the Australian and State and Territory governments assist more than 800,000 people each year through Home and Community Care programs. The total funding for HACC is \$1.788 billion, of which the Australian Government contributes 60 per cent (\$1.090 billion).

The Australian Government funds three community care packages. They are:

- Community Aged Care Packages (CACP) – which provides six-to-eight hours of in home support through personal care, meal preparation and domestic services for people who would otherwise require low-level residential aged care;
- Extended Aged Care at Home (EACH), which provides up to 18 hours of specialised care with a clinical component for people who would likely use high-level nursing home care; and
- The specialised Extended Aged Care at Home Dementia Packages (EACHD) which provides targeted care for people with dementia and behavioral problems to assist them to remain in their own homes.

As at June 2008, there were almost 40,000 CACP packages, more than 4,200 EACH packages and more than 2,000 EACHD packages in Australia.

It is estimated that about 200,000 Australians currently have dementia. With the projected rise to Australia's aged population it is estimated the number of people living with dementia will increase to almost 465,000 by 2031.

Dementia is one of the major reasons why older people enter residential aged care or seek assistance from community care programs.

In addition, the Australian Government is developing a Charter of Rights and Responsibilities for community care.

It is consulting with consumers, aged care providers and other interested groups. The Ageing Consultative Committee is considering a draft charter and it will be released later this year.

#### **Aged Care Approvals Round 2008-2009 – Community Care preliminary data**

State/territory	CACP (Community Aged Care Packages)			EACH (Extended Aged Care at Home) and EACH Dementia		
	Places available	Applications received	No of places sought	Places available	Applications received	No of places sought
NSW	578	273	7,624	310	324	3,157
Victoria	392	182	4,772	218	162	1,839
Queensland	450	160	3,758	160	122	1,185
WA	166	64	1,202	170	59	739
SA	101	55	1,152	64	62	457
Tasmania	52	38	545	27	37	185
ACT	30	12	282	15	12	87
NT	40	6	45	15	6	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,809</b>	<b>790</b>	<b>19,380</b>	<b>975</b>	<b>784</b>	<b>7,659</b>

This is also about responding to Australia's ageing population. Australians now have one of the longest life expectancies in the world due to advances in medicine and active lifestyles here.

Currently, there are some 2.8 million Australians – about 13 per cent of the population – aged 65 and over. This number is expected to triple in 40 years. The current life expectancy is 81.4 years and by 2060, an Australian woman can expect to reach the age of 90 on average.

Over the next four years, funding for aged and community care would reach record levels of more than \$41.6 billion. In 2008-2009, the Australian Government will increase community care funding to \$2.2 billion – an increase of \$260 million over 2007-2008.

Over the next three years, the Rudd Labor Government would create more than 37,000 new aged care places. This builds on the 221,144 aged care beds and community care places already operational.

Decisions on the 2008-2009 ACAR places are made independently by the Department of Health and Ageing.

ACAR Assessments of the applications are underway and final decisions are expected by mid-year.

**For more information, contact Minister Elliot's office on (02) 6277 7280**