



**THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP  
MINISTER FOR AGEING**

Mr Jim Toohey et al  
Queensland Aged Care Alliance  
C/- Chief Executive Officer  
TriCare Limited  
PO Box 439  
Mt Gravatt Queensland 4122  
(07) 3360 - 9101

Dear Mr Toohey et al

**Open letter – in response to Queensland Aged Care Alliance**

Thank you for your letter of 26 June 2008 concerning the views and position of the members of the Queensland Aged Care Alliance.

I have expressed publicly and privately my desire on many occasions to work closely with members of the aged care industry and to listen to your views.

I therefore welcome your offer to work in partnership. A meeting with me or my staff is only a telephone call away in either my Tweed Heads or Canberra ministerial offices.

But I would remind you and your members that we have met formally and informally on many separate occasions in the last six months, but my door is always open.

For the record, the Queensland Aged Care Alliance and the Australian Government are both looking and working in the same direction: we both want a long-term and viable residential aged care sector.

However, despite the views of some of your members, the Australian Government will not compromise on quality, compliance, unannounced visits by the Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency and on the matter of police checks for staff.

As I have said publicly, I will continue to remind the aged care sector that they are receiving substantial taxpayers' subsidies and as a Minister, I have a responsibility to ensure that frail and aged residents are getting quality care.

The Rudd Labor Government is investing record funds in the aged and community care sector. Over the next four years, we will invest more than \$40 billion into aged and community care nationally; of which \$26.8 billion will go directly into the nation's 2,870 nursing homes.

I think it is important to put some information about Queensland's aged care sector on the record. As for Queensland aged care providers, the Australian Government will provide \$5.4 billion over the next four years to the State.

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 (2008-09) Queensland aged care providers will receive more than \$1.2 billion. This represents an increase of more than eight per cent in the subsidy for a resident at the same level of frailty compared to 2007-08; and

Queensland high-care providers recorded the highest returns in Australia after costs, in the order of \$10.31 per resident a day in 2005-06.

As for formal dialogue, in the coming months, there will be many opportunities for the Queensland sector to put their views on the future direction of the aged care sector.

There will be the Review of the Conditional Adjustment Payment (CAP) which was announced on Budget night. The industry will be invited to make submissions. This will offer the opportunity for you to provide advice on the financial challenges that the industry is facing and the progress that has been made.

There will also be the ACAR and Community Care reviews and the ongoing monitoring of the ACFI (Aged Care Funding Instrument) which the Australian Government has committed to examining after 18 months.

I am aware that many Queensland providers and their hard-working dedicated staff are delivering and providing a world class service.

I look forward to working with you to meet the challenges and improve the performance of the sector even further. In particular, I will welcome your analysis and advice on policies relating to the support for residential aged care and care services to the frail and elderly in their own homes.

Thank you again for your letter and offer of involvement in the important reviews in the aged care sector that the Government has announced for the coming months.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Elliot', written in a cursive style.

**JUSTINE ELLIOT**