



THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP

Minister for Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

June 28, 2008

FUNDING BOOST - TRANSITION CARE - HELPING OLDER AUSTRALIANS RETAIN THEIR INDEPENDENCE AFTER A HOSPITAL STAY

The Australian Government today announced the first stage of its \$293.2 million transition care program to help older Australians recover and regain their independence after a major hospital stay.

The Minister for Ageing, Mrs Justine Elliot announced 228 fully-funded transition places – some of them coming on line as early as next week (July 1).

This would benefit up to 1,710 older Australians – in a full year - as each funded place will be used by up to eight (7.5) different older Australians a year.

By mid-2012, up to 92,500 older Australians would benefit from the Transition Care Program. This is a Rudd Labor Government election commitment.

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

Examples of low intensity therapy services 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; eating and eating aids;
- managing incontinence;
- transport to appointments; and
- moving, walking, and communication.

Mrs Elliot said: “Older Australians – after being in hospital – want to return to their homes rather than going to a nursing home prematurely.”

“This is about making sure that older Australians retain their independence and ensuring their quality of life,” Mrs Elliot said.

An evaluation – to be published shortly – by Flinders University of 5,510 older people found when two groups of frail older Australians are discharged from hospital, those who received transition care had fewer re-admissions to hospital and were less likely to move into nursing homes. **(Source: National Evaluation of the Transition Care Program findings, April 11, 2008)**

In the 2008-09 Federal Budget, the Australian Government committed \$293.2 million over four years to the Transition Care Program, providing an extra 2,000 places on top of the existing 2,000 places for older people after a hospital stay.

This builds on the previous Government's 2,000 transition care places which was funded jointly with the States and Territories. The new program is fully funded by the Commonwealth.

The increase will bring the capacity of the Transition Care Program to 4,000 places by the end of the 2011-12 financial year. When all places are fully operational, up to 30,000 older people may benefit from transition care each year.

These places will become operational progressively over the year, with some of them as early as next week (July 1, 2008).

There will be better coverage of transition care in rural and regional areas such as the Hunter region of NSW, the Central region of Victoria, the Central and Northern regions of Queensland, country areas in South Australia and the North West of Tasmania.

There will also be increased transition care provision in high growth areas such as the coastal regions of NSW and Queensland.

States Territory	Transition care places allocated in 2007-08	People receiving benefit* (This is based on 7.5 persons a bed a year)
New South Wales/ACT	71	532.5
Victoria	68	510
Queensland	38	285
South Australia/NT	23	172.5
Western Australia	18	135
Tasmania	10	75
Total	228	1710

Media contact: Ruci Fixter - 0415 359 023 or (02) 6277 7820