



THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP

Minister for Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

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Transition Care: Helping Older Western Australians Regain Their Independence

More than 720 older Western Australian residents have benefited from the Australian Government's \$293.2 million Transition Care Program since November 2007.

This allows most of them to move from hospitals and back into their own homes instead of prematurely entering aged care homes.

Minister for Ageing, Mrs Justine Elliot provided the update on the WA Transition Care Program at the Stirling Lodge and Aged Care Transitional Aged Care Service in Yokine, WA.

Transition care places provide up to 12 weeks of care with a possible extension of six weeks, either in the client's own home or in a bed-based residential setting following a hospital admission.

It provides low intensity therapy services, such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy, dietetics, podiatry, speech therapy, nursing and/or personal care services.

Mrs Elliot said: "Transition care places change and improve the lives for older Australians."

"Australians have the longest life expectancy in the English speaking world.

"The life expectancy of women in Western Australia – particularly Perth and around the Wheat belt – is among the longest life expectancies in the world. ABS Deaths, Australia 3302.0, 2006, p 18, found that female life expectancy at birth was highest in Sunshine Coast SD (Statistical Division) in Queensland (84.7 years), Upper Great Southern SD in Western Australia (84.6 years) and Perth (84.4 years).

"We are helping Australia and Western Australia prepare for the challenges of the 21st century and our ageing population," Mrs Elliot said.

Of the 723 older Western Australians, who have used the WA Transition Care program:

- 37 per cent received transition care in a bed-based residential setting;
- 40 per cent received care in their own homes; and
- 23 per cent received a mix of both.

Department of Health and Ageing data found that 78 per cent of transition care participants in 2007-2008 had improved or maintained their functioning.

And almost half (49 per cent) were able to return to the community after taking part in the program.

The Transition Care Program currently operates 178 transition care places in Western Australia. Of these, 108 are provided in a community setting; and 70 are provided in a bed-based residential setting.

Last month (March), Mrs Elliot officially created 49 further places for Western Australia as part of the second release of 470 places under the four year \$293.2 million transition care plan.

In addition, Mrs Elliot has written to all State and Territory Health Ministers formally offering the places.

Nationally, last financial year, more than 10,100 older Australians received transition care.

The Federal Government provided \$52.8 million for the Australian Transition Care Program in 2007-2008 and in 2008-2009, it is expected to provide up to \$78 million.

Over the full four years, it is expected to provide \$293.2 million to transition care in all states and territories.

Each funded place can be used by up to seven or eight different older Australians a year.

By mid-2012, when all 4,000 transition care places are fully operational, up to 30,000 older Australians would benefit each year.

Ageing in Western Australia

Overall, as a jurisdiction, Western Australia has a life expectancy for both men and women of 79.2 and 84 years, respectively.

Western Australia has 173,317 people over the age of 70, comprising 8.2 per cent of its population and that is expected to increase to 292,109 by 2020, comprising 10.8 per cent of the population.*

Population Projections for Western Australia population 70+

Year	2007	2010	2015	2020
Population 70+	173,317	191,616	230,954	292,109
Per cent of population	8.2 per cent	8.5 per cent	9.3 per cent	10.8 per cent

*Based on 2006 census

Residential aged care funding in Western Australia

Over the next four years, the Australian Government will provide record funding and support of over \$2.4 billion to Western Australia's 251 approved residential aged care homes operating 14,252 places.

And in 2008-2009 alone, Western Australian aged care providers will receive record funding of \$537 million for residential care – an increase of 8.5 per cent over the previous financial year.

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