

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Justine Elliot, MP
Federal Minister for Ageing

The Hon Paul Lynch
NSW Minister for Ageing
NSW Minister for Disability

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\$546 Million to Improve Home and Community Care in NSW

More than 210,000 older Australians and people with disabilities living in NSW will receive more help at home, personal and respite care, home modifications, community transport and social support.

This is under a historic \$546 million joint partnership by the Australian and NSW Governments.

This is about the Federal Government working in partnership with State and Territory governments to meet the challenges of the 21st century and our nation's ageing population.

The funding through the Home and Community Care (HACC) program will provide a range of important services to help older Australians and those with disabilities remain independent and in their own homes for longer.

The NSW HACC Plan will focus on a comprehensive range of services including expansion of these services to improve:

- Independence at home through domestic assistance, social support, food delivery and respite;
- Access to community transport;
- Availability of centre based day programs; and
- Assessment, case management and counselling, support, information and advocacy.

Over the next four years, the Australian Government will provide more than \$40 billion to aged and community care. In 2008-2009 alone, \$2.2 billion of that will be spent on community care.

Federal Minister for Ageing, Mrs Justine Elliot said the HACC Program is a part of the Australian and NSW Governments' vision for a world-class community care system that delivers affordable and accessible care for frail older people, younger people with a disability and their carers.

"We are constantly reminded that as people age they want to remain in their own homes and communities.

"Without Home and Community Care services many people would have to move prematurely into residential care," Mrs Elliot said.

NSW Minister for Ageing Mr Paul Lynch said the three year process had allowed NSW to develop a comprehensive plan that would guide future reforms and developments of the HACC Program.

"We will be able to improve access to HACC services so we can better assist the frail aged and people with functional disabilities to live independently in their own homes and communities and enhance their quality of life.

“Extensive consultation has been conducted across the state with clients, carers, service providers and peak organisations before this plan was finalised,” Mr Lynch said.

The HACC Program is a key element of the Australian and NSW Governments’ vision for a world-class community care system delivering quality, affordable and accessible care for frail older people, younger people with a disability and their carers.

The \$546 million allocation is a 7.13 per cent increase on last financial year and is the first stage of an inaugural three year plan for NSW.

Media Contacts:

For Minister Lynch: 0408 602 936

For Minister Elliot: 02 6277 7280