



THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP

Minister for Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

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More transition beds operational – helping older Australians regain their independence

The Australian Government today announced another 66 transition care places -- bringing the national total to 101 fully-funded places. The new ones are in Victoria and NSW.

This is almost half of the places pledged by the Australian Government.

The Federal Government has committed to create 228 fully funded places under its \$293.2 million transition care plan.

Minister for Ageing, Mrs Justine Elliot made the announcement today at the 2008 Australian Health Congress in Sydney where she spoke on "How the Health Revolution will impact on the growing ageing population".

Transition care places help older Australians recover and regain their independence after a major hospital stay.

There are now 52 new places in Victoria including Bendigo, Barwon, Peninsula and metropolitan Melbourne and 14 new NSW places in Griffith, Balmain and Goulburn.

In addition, there are a further 16 transition care places in the Coffs Harbour region of NSW and another 18 in Western Australia in the pipe-line.

This will complement places already announced in other parts of Victoria, South Australia and the ACT.

Other jurisdictions in Australia will be receiving the places as they are allocated and finalised.

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.

"This is also about preparing for the challenges of the 21st century and responding to the needs of Australia's ageing population."

On June 28, the Minister for Ageing, Mrs Justine Elliot announced 228 fully-funded transition care places.

The 228 places are expected to 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 the person's 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.

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 were 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.

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