

# s47C

**From:** s47F [redacted]@liteneasy.com.au>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 8 December 2022 2:19 PM  
**To:** s47F [redacted]@Health.gov.au>  
**Subject:** RE: Lite n' Easy submission to the Albanese Government for In-Home Aged Care

**REMINDER:** Think before you click! This email originated from outside our organisation. Only click links or open attachments if you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi s47F [redacted]

I wanted to touch base with you regarding the below. Appreciate it's been a busy couple of weeks for you however appreciate if there was an opportunity to catch up with our team.

Thanks,  
s47F [redacted]

Lite n' Easy  
 Home Care & NDIS  
 P: s47F [redacted]  
 M: s47F [redacted]  
 E: s47F [redacted][@liteneasy.com.au](mailto:s47F@liteneasy.com.au)

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**From:** s47F [redacted]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 29 November 2022 11:03 AM  
**To:** s47F [redacted][@health.gov.au](mailto:s47F@health.gov.au)  
**Cc:** Dennis Stark s47F [redacted]  
**Subject:** Lite n' Easy submission to the Albanese Government for In-Home Aged Care  
**Importance:** High

Good morning s47F

By way of introduction, my name is s47F, BDM for Home Care & NDIS at Lite n' Easy.

Lite n' Easy has recently submitted a response to the In-Home Aged Care discussion paper and we wanted to share this with you and the Minister for Aged Care, The Hon Anika Wells MP.

Each year, Lite n' Easy prepares and delivers over 10 million healthy meals each year to more than 15,000 older Australians who qualify for the federally funded Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) or Home Care Package (HCP). This makes Lite n' Easy one of the largest meal providers nationwide for older Australians. The growth has been supported by the launch of a dedicated meal range for older Australians developed specifically off the research from our team of dietitians – My Choice <https://www.liteneasy.com.au/my-choice/>

Our learnings, experience and passion in this space is the reason we felt compelled to make a submission to the Federal Government's *A New Program for In-Home Aged Care* discussion paper, which I have attached.

Our recommendations to the Federal Government include:

- Adoption of a sector-wide, preventative health model which focusses on nutrition as any early intervention method to improve the health of seniors and increase the likelihood of making living at home a longer-term, viable option;
- Engage with existing organisations and health service providers who are already innovating and creating proven, evidence-based differences in the lives of older Australians; and
- Make access to nutritious meals mandatory in all support plans, that sit outside of the assessment requirements, enabling flexibility to adapt to changing needs and circumstances.

We are committed to working for positive solutions in this sector and would be happy to discuss further. I have copied Lite n' Easy CEO Dennis Stark who has previously met with Minister Wells at our Banyo facility.

Thank you for your time and we look forward to hearing from you.

Thanks,

s47F

Lite n' Easy\_Email Signature\_02\_300



**s47F** – National Business Development Manager Home Care & NDIS

Mitchell's Quality Foods | Lite n' Easy | [liteneasy.com.au](http://liteneasy.com.au)

Phone: 07 **s47F** | Ext: 4351 | M: **s47F** | **s47F**

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**From:** [Mel METZ](#)  
**To:** s47F ; [Mel METZ](#)  
**Subject:** s47F - Mel METZ | Message count: 6 | Room id:  
Y2izY29zcGhyazovL3VzL1JPT00vOTQwOGYzMjAtMjliNC0xMWVvLTgwY2MtMDc5YjRjZGE5Yjg3

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May 15 at 01:07 PM AEST | s47F @health.gov.au: just in a mtg with Lite n Easy

s22

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**From:** s47F  
**To:** s47F  
**Subject:** FW: Lite n' Easy submission to the Albanese Government for In-Home Aged Care  
**Date:** Monday, 16 January 2023 12:45:28 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.jpg](#)  
[LITENEASY\\_IHAC\\_22.pdf](#)  
**Importance:** High

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Thanks,

s47F

Lite n' Easy  
 Home Care & NDIS

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M: s47F

E: s47F

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**To:** s47F @health.gov.au

**Cc:** Dennis Stark s47F

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**Importance:** High

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- ▣ Engage with existing organisations and health service providers who are already innovating and creating proven, evidence-based differences in the lives of older Australians; and
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We are committed to working for positive solutions in this sector and would be happy to discuss

further. I have copied Lite n' Easy CEO Dennis Stark who has previously met with Minister Wells at our Banyo facility.

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s47F

Lite n' Easy\_Email Signature\_02\_300



s47F – National Business Development Manager Home Care & NDIS

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**From:** s47F  
**To:** s47F  
**Cc:** [Dennis Stark](#)  
**Subject:** Lite n' Easy submission to the Albanese Government for In-Home Aged Care  
**Date:** Tuesday, 29 November 2022 12:09:04 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.jpg](#)  
[LITENEASY IHAC 22.pdf](#)  
**Importance:** High

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Wednesday, 23 November 2022

To whom it may concern,

## Response to: A New Program for In-Home Aged Care Discussion Paper

Lite n' Easy thanks the Department of Health and Aged Care for the opportunity to participate in the consultation process regarding reform in the Australian Aged Care sector.

The Federal Government's discussion paper: "A new program for in-home aged care," provides a welcome opportunity for engagement between industry and government to ensure Aged Care is optimised for senior citizens, their families, and workers in the industry.

Under the current funding framework, older Australians can receive funding for meal preparation and meal delivery, but not the cost of food, as a "help at home" service through the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) or a Home Care Package (HCP).

*Lite n' Easy is currently the largest meals provider to HCP recipients.*

While best known for its weight loss and healthy convenience products, Lite n' Easy has become an established, trusted supplier of meals to older Australians.

Lite n' Easy produces more than 1.5 million meals every week in our 6 state-of-the-art kitchens nationwide. That's more than 10 million home delivered meals to CHSP and HCP recipients per year via a delivery network that covers more than 95% of the metro, regional and rural population.

*We are the only meals provider with size and scale, and a trusted community brand, to help the Federal Government provide high-quality, consistent policy outcomes to improve nutrition for older Australians.*

This means we're an ideal provider for funding to meet the full cost of care while achieving value for money across different service types, regions, and client cohorts.

As **Prime Minister Anthony Albanese** said in his 2022 Budget Reply speech, "A really hard part of growing old and losing some of your independence is not being able to cook for yourself, let alone visitors or family. For most of us, meals are something we look forward to, a daily ritual that brings us together and gives us moments of joy."

And we agree.

That's why we launched My Choice in 2021, to directly address the challenge of appetite and malnutrition risk in older Australians.

The My Choice range of energy and protein dense main meals, soups, and desserts is designed to meet the nutritional needs of seniors at risk of malnutrition and to support healthy ageing, meaning older Australians can stay in their homes longer.

Our customer surveys report a significant increase to their nutritional intake, with more than 90% of elderly customers reporting they can finish an entire My Choice meal.

But we provide more than a healthy, tasty, nutritious meal, we provide social connection and personal interactions.

The majority of our 13,000 weekly HCP customers prefer to call one of our five Australian based call centres each week to place their orders, with their call time being in excess of 5 minutes.



These calls provide invaluable human interaction, sharing a joke, asking how someone is, discovering new meals and offers, verifying their order is correct and expectations will be met and sharing the enjoyment and joy of good food.

Our national delivery fleet covering in excess of 95% of the metro/regional/rural population, provides flexible home delivery service options.

Our drivers' average tenure with us is 9 years, meaning long term driver-customer relationships are developed helping with social connection, reducing isolation and loneliness.

This is one of the reasons Lite n' Easy has recently been rated No.1 in Canstar Blue's 'Healthy Meal Delivery' services for the third year in a row, winning in 2020, 2021 and now 2022.

We have unique expertise, knowledge and experience to share with Government to help them achieve their goal of ensuring the new in-home aged care program delivers excellence in aged care services for older Australians, their families and their carers.

It is widely reported that older Australians want to remain at home for as long as possible before entering a residential aged care facility (RACF), including recent comments from the **Minister for Aged Care, The Hon Anika Wells, MP** to *The Australian* saying:

*"[Baby boomers] have told us loud and clear they want to stay in their homes as long as possible."*

This goal is fully supported by Lite n' Easy because it's about choice and control for Australians, by providing people with real choices about who provides their services and the types of services they receive. But, as we will outline, choice and control is only possible with nutritious meals.

The recent Federal Election saw increased interest in reform of the Aged Care sector, with a specific commitment from Federal Labor to ensure *"there is better food for residents of aged care homes."*

The Albanese Labor Government has committed to work closely with the sector to develop and implement mandatory nutrition standards for aged care homes to ensure every resident has access to nutritious food.

In this context, Lite n' Easy is pleased to present this submission which considers early intervention through nutrition as an approach in the potential delay of entry into residential and clinical care for older Australians.

Further, this submission outlines the role Lite n' Easy can play in contributing to a solution for the challenges of a sector experiencing continued, exponential growth at great financial and labour cost to governments and communities around Australia.

Lite n' Easy is committed to assisting in informing policy development in partnership with the Department of Health and Aged Care and thanks you for your time considering Lite n' Easy's evidence and recommendations.

Please feel free to contact me directly through s47F, National Business Development Manager Home Care & NDIS, on s47F or s47F to discuss further.

Kind regards,

s47F

Chief Executive Officer  
Lite n' Easy Group

# A New Program for In-Home Aged Care

## Submission Paper

### Recommendations:

1. **Preventative Health:** Supporting the Department of Health and Aged Care's desire for services that achieve **value for money**, Lite n' Easy recommends the adoption of a sector-wide preventative health model using early intervention, focusing on nutrition, as a mechanism to sustain budget spending for long term growth.

This will assist in delaying elderly Australians from exerting further pressure on already exacerbated budget constraints and **directly supports** the goal to provide older Australians with the supports they need to remain independent and out of residential care.

- i) *Additionally, the Royal Commission into Aged Care marked the availability of nutritious and visually appealing meals as one of three categories for 'urgent review'.*
- ii) *There is a clear, causal link between malnutrition and falls; falls and hip fractures; hip fractures and extended hospital stay; acceleration into residential aged care = \$ cost blowout for aged care growth.*

2. **Engage with Innovators:** To promote innovation that increases quality of care, Lite n' Easy recommends the Department of Health and Aged Care immediately engage with existing organisations and health service providers who are already innovating and creating proven and evidence-based difference in the lives of older Australians.

This **directly supports** the goal to provide people with real choices about: who provides their services; the types of services they receive; and achieving **value for money**.

- iii) *Lite n' Easy is a proven leader in innovation through food, nutrition and dietetics research, food manufacturing economies of scale and streamlining the unique administration-based consumer servicing requirements for this age cohort.*

3. **Mandate Meals:** Lite n' Easy recommends the Department of Health and Aged Care make access to nutritious meals mandatory in all support plans, that sit outside of the assessment requirements. This will enable flexibility to adapt to changing needs and circumstances.

This **directly supports** a focus on the discussion paper, to ensure the flexibility to respond to the changing needs of older Australians and the government's objective in the discussion paper of people who can afford to contribute to the cost of their care should do so.

- iv) *Lite n' Easy believes access to nutritious meals is profoundly important to older Australians when circumstances quickly change. The co-contribution for meals equals a cost benefit to the government, potentially reducing the need for clinical intervention.*

## Executive Summary:

Lite n' Easy is committed to working closely with the Australian Federal Government on a suite of measures designed to effectively reform and manage the Aged Care sector more effectively to the mutual benefit of providers, governments, communities, and most of all, Aged Care recipients themselves.

Lite n' Easy welcomes the Government's collaborative approach with industry to provide input into finding cost-effective solutions to strengthen the sector and outcomes for recipients.

We strongly support providing people with real choices about who provides their services and the types of services they receive and our national footprint means we're an ideal provider for funding to meet the full cost of care while achieving **value for money** across different service types, regions, and client cohorts.

The release of the Federal Government's discussion paper provides an effective opportunity to collaboratively design a framework for the sector that focuses on five key priority areas, including:

1. How to give older Australians the opportunity to manage their own services simply and easily should they choose to do so;
2. How to best implement the desired clinical oversight and practical assistance through care partners for older Australians receiving care at home;
3. How to fund providers to meet the full cost of care while achieving **value for money** across different service types, regions, and client cohorts;
4. How to ensure the flexibility to respond to the changing needs of older Australians; and
5. How to foster innovation and future investment in in-home aged care.

While Lite n' Easy welcomes the focus on these areas as part of wholesale reform in the sector, there has been a concerning lack of discussion or detail in the document around a key aspect of Aged Care reform that formed a significant part of the Federal Government's electoral platform, including multiple mentions since the May Federal Election: nutrition.

Along with the parallel area of service flexibility, which also was not detailed in the discussion paper, nutrition, or specifically:

*Lack of nutrition, is one of the key drivers of early admission into clinical or residential care for older Australians.*

A focus on nutrition will form a key theme of this submission, with government to consider early intervention through nutrition as an approach in the potential delay of entry into residential and clinical care for older Australians.

This becomes particularly pertinent, as according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data, peak growth in the 75+ demographic will occur in 2025, with population growth in 85+ demographic growing at 80,000 people per year for the next 10 years.

**Lite n' Easy produces more than 1.5 million meals every week** in our 6 state-of-the-art kitchens nationwide. That's more than 10 million home delivered meals to CHSP and HCP recipients per year via a delivery network that covers more than 95% of the metro, regional and rural population.

*Lite n' Easy is the only meals provider with size and scale, and a trusted community brand, to help the Federal Government provide high-quality, consistent policy outcomes to improve nutrition for older Australians.*

With nearly four decades experience feeding Australians and the trust of consumers nationwide, Lite n' Easy is uniquely placed to offer expert advice to this discussion paper informed by our experience, knowledge informed by extensive research and development and lived experience of interacting with tens of thousands of Australians from diverse backgrounds each week.

Lite n' Easy's **My Choice** range has been developed in line with strict nutritional parameters, produced by our team of accredited dietitians in conjunction with the Australian Dietary Guidelines and the Meals on Wheels National Meal Guidelines.

Lite n' Easy recognises there are differences between in-home and residential aged care and are aware of the importance of making sure older Australians have the choice and control to stay in their homes by providing them with healthy, prepared nutritious meals.

This will form the core of Lite n' Easy's responses to the indicative model, as well as the subsequent discussion questions.

*As a trusted, existing brand that has been embedded in the Australian community for decades, Lite n' Easy is the ideal, and most readily available, partner for the Federal Government in Aged Care reform.*

The continued support of the Government throughout the Federal Election campaign, and subsequent interaction with the new Minister for Aged Care, most recently during her visit to Banyo site in August 2022 is a demonstration of this support.

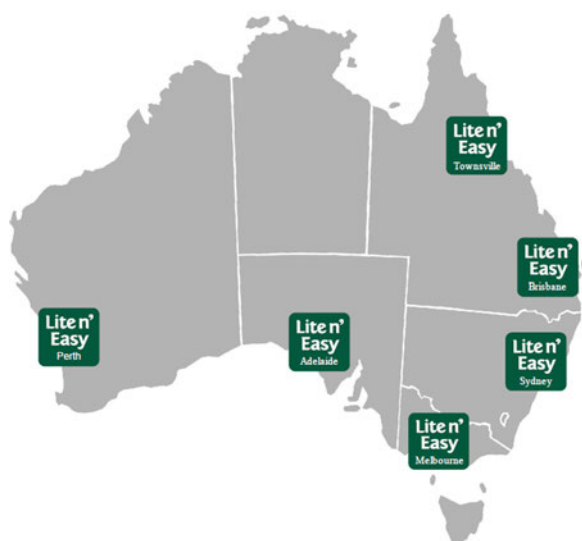
Lite n' Easy provides the following recommendations and evidence statements in support of proposed reform.

This document has been released under the Freedom of Information Act 1982 by the Department of Health and Aged Care

## Who we are:

Lite n' Easy is a 100% Australian owned business, operating since 1986.

We have 6 state-of-the-art kitchen facilities located across Australia, including in Townsville, backed by \$80 million of capital investment since 2020.



- ✓ We employ **1,750 Australians**
- ✓ Produce more than **1.5 million fresh and frozen meals each week**
- ✓ Complete **15,000+** home deliveries to **HCP & CHSP** recipients every week
- ✓ Deliver to more than **95%** of the metro, regional and rural population
- ✓ Operate 5 Australian based call centres with over **150 local customer care specialists** speaking with older Australians in their own communities
- ✓ Answer **7,000+** inbound home care customer calls to place their weekly orders
- ✓ Established more than **800** HCP provider accounts for split billing
- ✓ Maintain a world-class team of **accredited dietitians and chefs** developing meals with a **whole food approach**, for example, sauces made from natural stock

This means we are an ideal provider for funding to meet the full cost of care while achieving **value for money** across different service types, regions, and client cohorts.

On 31 August 2022 the Minister for Aged Care, The Hon Anika Wells MP, visited Lite n' Easy in Banyo QLD, expressing support for our work for in-home nutrition saying:

*"I'm also interested wearing my new hat as Minister for Aged Care, because Lite n' Easy is trying to do some really innovative and important things around nutrition for people in aged care, specifically people who are at home, and trying to stay at home and just need a bit more support."* (emphasis added)

As Minister Wells said, we help older Australians to live at home longer, something we know the Baby Boomer generation want.

## Our My Choice range:

In direct response to the issue of appetite and malnutrition risk in older Australians, **My Choice** by Lite n' Easy was launched in 2021.

**My Choice** was designed by our qualified team of dietitians and chefs to specifically prevent malnutrition and unintentional weight loss in older Australians.

This range of energy and protein dense main meals, soups, and desserts is designed to meet the nutritional needs of seniors at risk of malnutrition and to support healthy ageing.

**My Choice** was developed in line with strict nutritional parameters, produced by the Lite n' Easy team of dietitians.

In the absence of national guidelines that specify meal requirements for older Australians with small appetites, the Lite n' Easy dietitians developed a set of internal meal guidelines based on a review of nutrient reference values for people over 70 years, current scientific evidence and consultation with Nutrition Professionals Australia.

The **My Choice** range also meets the Meal on Wheels independent National Meal Guidelines, and we're the only food provider to do so.

**My Choice** dinners have been well accepted by elderly customers.

Our customer surveys report a significant increase to their nutritional intake, with more than 90% of elderly customers reporting they can finish an entire **My Choice** meal compared to only 56% eating a larger portion that contained equivalent energy and protein.

Customer satisfaction for this range is also very high, with customers enjoying the flavour and eating experience.

With the **My Choice** range, Lite n' Easy can support the healthcare system by providing older Australians with nourishing meals that are a pleasure to eat, and in doing so, meet the nutritional requirements of this cohort.



## Lite n' Easy Home Support: The Nutrition Landscape

Lite n' Easy is partnering with s47G on a research project, examining how malnutrition and frailty accelerate older Australians entering clinical care sooner and how food can delay this.

This is part of a review into the current CHSP meals funding model s47G are completing, and we will share a final copy of this research paper with the Department of Health and Aged Care.

Initial results received 22 November 2022 report:

- Frailty has inter-related components that require a holistic consideration, including physical, cognitive and social
- Each of these three aspects of frailty is closely linked to nutritional status
- At home nutrition support has the potential to improve the health of all seniors and may prolong entry into residential aged care, promoting their independence
- Costs relating to the health care of an under nourished person can be 20% more per annum
- Preventing malnutrition via meal delivery services is cost-effective
- A 2010 Access Economics report prepared for the Australian Meals on Wheels Association found meal supplements for undernourished clients have a benefit: cost ratio of 2.07 with savings to the health system of more than **\$463 million over 10 years**

## Nutrition: A key consideration

Food and nutrition were highlighted as a key area of concern in the final report arising from the Royal Commission. However, disappointingly, the word “**nutrition**” is not used once in the released discussion paper.

As outlined, one of the key election promises by the now Albanese Government was to ensure more nutritious meals were available to older Australians.

Public evidence shows that meals are more than a part of daily activities, and adequate nutrition is an essential element of health management, playing a key role in preventing frailty, maintaining quality of life and functional independence and delaying entry to residential aged care.

*There is a clear economic imperative for the Federal Government to make savings in future budgets by increasing spending on prevention as opposed to traditional reactive care measures.*

Due to several factors related to ageing, an older person is more challenged with achieving an adequate nutritional intake than a younger person, placing older Australians at a higher risk of malnutrition.

Malnutrition contributes to increased number of hospitalisations, increased time spent during hospital stays and a higher mortality risk, and therefore poses a significant burden from both a healthcare and an economic perspective.

In the 2019 publication Malnutrition in older Australians, Dietitians Australia stated:

*“People with malnutrition are at higher risk of falls, infection and pressure wounds and they experience greater mortality than people who are well nourished. They also experience longer recovery from illness or injury and are less able to carry out activities of daily living”.*

Figure 1 identifies that the cost of falls in Australia for people aged 80 years and over in FY2016 was almost **\$1 Billion dollars**.



Figure 1:

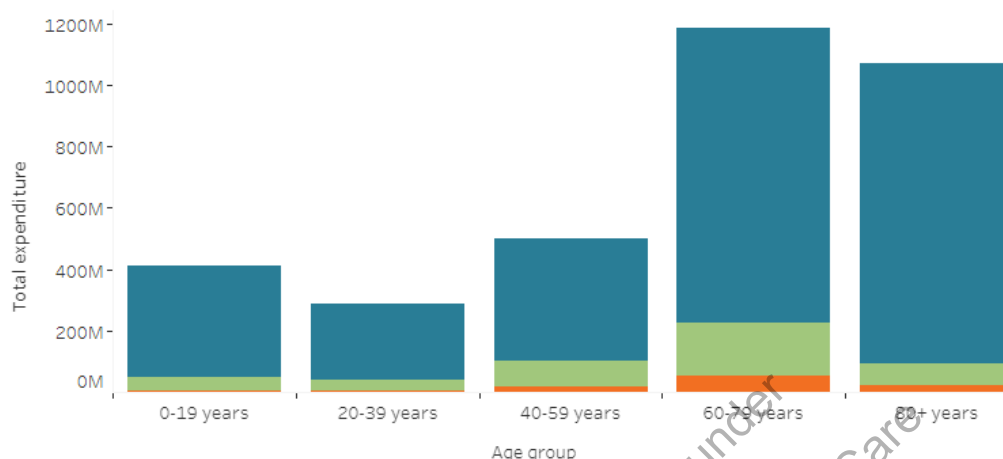
## All expenditure by demographics, type of injury and area of expenditure, 2015-16

Select from the following

Injury classification: Cause of Injury  
 Explore by cause/nature of injury: Falls  
 Explore by type of expenditure: Total expenditure  
 Explore by sex: Total perso...

Hospitals  
 Non-hospital medical  
 Pharmaceuticals

To reset 'Explore by cause/nature of injury', select another 'Injury classification'.



Despite challenges, there are clear options to reduce the risk of older Australians developing malnutrition.

This can be managed by addressing nutrient intake through food and, if required, nutrition supplements. A more cost-effective solution than treatment is early intervention with a food first approach, which has the potential to facilitate extended time at home with greater quality of life, delaying entry into residential or clinical care.

Malnutrition can be prevented by providing older Australians access to nutritious, high-quality meals that are both accessible and affordable.

A primary consideration for ensuring nutrition is appropriately consumed is to ensure the meal is of a high standard of quality, which is something that Lite n' Easy has been able to consistently achieve with more than 36 years in the industry.

Through our **My Choice** range of meals, there is an opportunity to offer the Federal Government an effective and sustainable nutrition alternative for in-home aged care, **directly supporting program growth to meet an ageing population.**

*It is Lite n' Easy's view that making nutritious, enjoyable, home-delivered meals easily accessible to Australia's community-based aged population achieves the best value for money and supports positive preventative healthcare outcomes.*

A significant factor affecting nutritional intake in older Australians is a reduced appetite. This cohort are not aware of the heightened importance of adequate nutrition during this period of their life. This, paired with price-sensitivity, means that often low-cost, low nutrition food is prioritised above a nutritious and adequate diet.

Lite n' Easy is continually looking at ways to innovate and ensure consumers are receiving value. A recent consumer survey showed **56% of older Australians couldn't finish a regular Lite n' Easy meal** or they were meal splitting to share or save money by using one meal for two separate eating occasions.

The introduction of the **My Choice** range has been well accepted by customers and made a significant increase to their nutritional intake, with now more than **90% reporting they can finish an entire My Choice meal** in one sitting. Customer satisfaction for this range is also very high, with customers enjoying the flavour and eating experience.

## Responses to the indicative model:

**Model inclusion 1:** Assessment for aged care services using verified assessment tools.

**Response 1:** Malnutrition screening is essential for early intervention.

Lite n' Easy welcomes the inclusion of frailty in all assessments and emphasises the prevalence of malnutrition amongst community-dwelling seniors. Early identification and early intervention of malnutrition is essential to prevent functional decline and expedited institutionalisation.

The Malnutrition Screening Tool is a verified assessment tool that is currently used in hospital settings. There is an alternative assessment tool, the Mini Nutritional Assessment – Short Form (MNA-SF), that is validated for use in both hospital and community settings. It is easily administered, requires no special training to use, and should be included in all assessments for aged care services.

This **directly addresses** a focus of the discussion paper to ensure there is flexibility to respond to the changing needs of older Australians and supports the goal of in-home aged care programs doing more to provide older Australians with the supports they need to remain independent.

In the *Aged Care Legislation Amendment (Improved Home Care Payment Administration No. 1) Bill 2020* second reading, now **Prime Minister Anthony Albanese stated**, “The royal commission heard stories of degradation, suffering, abuse, neglect and systemic failure. We heard that up to half of older Australians in residential aged care are malnourished. **Think about what that means: they are literally starving in a wealthy country like ours.**”

Additionally, in its submission to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, **Dietitians Australia stated that:**

*“Malnutrition is an accelerator to entry to residential aged care.”*

Gen Data's FY2021 report shows 54% of people exiting a home care package moved into a residential aged care facility. The economic argument for the government is early intervention.

Based on Lite n' Easy calculations, a delay of one year from home care to residential aged care could save the government up to **\$55,315 per person annually**.<sup>1</sup>

ABS data shows peak growth in the 75+ demographic will occur in 2025, with population growth in 85+ year old's growing at 80,000 people per year for the next 10 years.

Helping this specific age cohort stay in their own home for just one year can save the federal budget up to **\$4.4 Billion dollars annually**.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>\$55,315 figure based on the cost of the average aged care resident bed per day of \$231 (sourced from page 4, The Cost of Residential Aged Care, [Research Paper 9](#), Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety), minus the average Home Care Packages (HCP) cost of \$29,000 per annum (sourced from the My Aged Care, Home Care Packages [website](#)).

<sup>2</sup>\$55,315 multiplied by 80,000 figure from growth in 85+ year old's growing at 80,000 people per year

**Model inclusion 2:** Early support for independence at home, including aids and equipment, home modifications and allied health.

**Response 2:** Reduce the financial and administrative barriers to obtaining meals.

Older Australians are amongst the most disadvantaged members of our community and are necessarily price sensitive, with recent inflation increases providing further pressure on individual budgets.

It is clear the absence of adequate funding for meals will lead to an increase in consumers seeking low cost, low nutrition options that can expedite the onset of malnutrition and frailty, and therefore entry into various levels of care.

Requirements for assessments for eligibility for meals funding creates another barrier to accessing this necessary service and is counter to the indicative model's emphasis on early intervention.

Given the clinical significance of adequate nutrition, meals should be available to older Australians who have already qualified for funding, reducing the need for government time and resources on process requirements, and instead driving funding to areas of most need.

This **directly addresses** a focus of the discussion paper to ensure there is flexibility to respond to the changing needs of older Australians.

The consumer co-contribution that is already in place and widely accepted by consumers, means the Government is essentially paying less for more.

**Model inclusion 3:** Support plans for monthly ongoing services that outline service levels.

**Response 3:** Meal preparation and delivery a mandated service.

Lite n' Easy's experience as the largest meals provider to HCP recipients has found the most important feature of the existing model is the flexibility afforded to recipients who can use their funding for meals at any point for the duration of their package. This is due to the consumer directed care feature within the current HCP model.

Older Australians work with their provider to design their home care package and make changes quickly when needed, without reassessment. For an older person, meal preparation and delivery may not have been a consideration during their initial assessment, however when circumstances change quickly, recipients know they can use their funding for vital essential daily services without re-assessment.

As such, Lite n' Easy considers meal preparation and delivery to be an ongoing support in every support plan, that is a standalone mandated category and one that supersedes assessment. Consumers who reside in regional, rural and remote areas face particularly difficult circumstances if meals are not approved in their initial plan or are only approved on a month-to-month basis.

It is well reported through the media that many community-based services lost volunteers throughout the pandemic. Governments are using different modelling to alleviate staff shortages within the larger aged care sector. Infrequent delivery to these areas may leave already vulnerable consumers without essential services when circumstances change.

**Model inclusion 4:** Flexibility for older Australians to adjust services according to their needs.

**Response 4:** Meal delivery and social connection are separate service types.

The discussion paper states, *"In the case of meals delivery, there may be value in considering how this funding can also be used to support social connection."*

Social connection and meals are two critically important but *separate* service types and should therefore be funded separately. Combining the funding for both service types has the potential to dilute the quality of either or both services, specifically as there is no data available to accurately measure meal delivery and social support funding separately.

In addition, there is no data available to suggest exactly how many people require social support funding with meal delivery. The government should take this into consideration in designing an aged care system that is **value for money** based on a clear definition of **quality spending**. Funding these services separately will provide better transparency around service standards and create more choice and self-determination for older Australians.

In Lite n' Easy's experience, most HCP customers call us to place their meal order, with average time on-call more than double that of a similar weight loss or healthy convenience customer. The social benefits are significant with customers experiencing extended human interaction e.g. asking how they are, jovial interactions, customer satisfaction in meal verification and meeting expectations, welfare checks, and the opportunity to share information on new meals and offers.

**Model inclusion 5:** Potentially higher levels of support at home (pending further research).

**Response 5:** Meeting the future demand and cost for in-home aged care.

The absence of adequate funding for meals will lead to consumers seeking low cost, low nutrition options that can expedite the onset of malnutrition and frailty. Needing an assessment for eligibility for meals funding creates another barrier to accessing this necessary service.

For Lite n' Easy, the best way to ensure simple and accessible meal funding is to keep the category both flexible and assessment free, as outlined in the current model. This means if consumer circumstances change suddenly, meals can still be accessed at short notices.

Noting the low availability of data on HCP and meals, Lite n' Easy has both quantitative and qualitative data around consumer outcomes that helps prove the low cost to government due to the consumer co-contribution.

This **directly supports** the government's objective in the discussion paper of people who can afford to contribute to the cost of their care should do so.

These assessment and regulatory barriers have also been experienced within the NDIS, where participants are often waiting extended periods of time for meal funding to be approved.

The administrative burden placed on NDIS participant's works directly against some who are trying to obtain approved services, leading to a failure in participant managed healthcare through choice and control.

**Model inclusion 6:** A mixed-funding model for providers with a combination of activity-based payments in arrears and grants.

**Response 6:** Consumer choice and flexibility.

In a constrained budget environment, healthcare grant funding requires even more careful consideration. Over time, older Australians have highlighted the need for more choice and flexibility in managing aged care services.

To provide real choice and flexibility, a range of different service providers are required, with a need to be financially viable in order for these providers to operate.

We have an established network with decades of experience and Lite n' Easy is keen to work closely with the Department of Health and Aged Care to provide **value for money** and support choice and control for older Australians with nutritious meals, helping them stay in their own home longer, enjoying all the benefits that brings.

**Model inclusion 7:** Risk-proportionate regulation.

**Response 7:** Home-delivered meals are an important source of nutrition for older Australians.

Many CHSP and HCP recipients are consumers of home-delivered meals. However, there is currently no mechanism to ensure government-funded meals provided to older Australians are nutritionally adequate or are made to a standard, such as the Australian Dietary Guidelines or the Meals on Wheels National Meal Guidelines.

Lite n' Easy's **My Choice** range has been developed in line with strict nutritional parameters, produced by the Lite n' Easy team of dietitians in conjunction with the Australian Dietary Guidelines and the Meals on Wheels National Meal Guidelines.

Funding for meal providers should be contingent on adherence to evidence-based nutrition standards that are tailored to the needs of older Australians. Home delivered meal providers should all adhere to strict food safety protocols, such as the HACCP Food Safety Methodology, to ensure the safety of older Australians are being met.

Compliance to food safety standards in the production and supply of food, is both a regulatory requirement as well as an assurance that businesses are meeting the legal obligations to protect vulnerable consumers.

When it comes to catering for older Australians, Lite n' Easy understands the importance of how heightened food safety and hygiene plays a significant role to prevent food-borne infections, injury, health complications or death.

As a result, Lite n' Easy operates under a robust food safety management system, delivering food safety for high-risk food handling and complying with the requirements outlined within the Australian Food Standards 3.3.1 (Food Safety Programs for Food Service to Vulnerable Persons) and Codex Alimentarius Alinorm: 2003/13A HACCP and GMP.

All Lite n' Easy kitchens are HACCP certified.

**Model inclusion 8:** Automatic data capture on services delivered, enabling improved reporting for older Australians and providers and better program oversight by government.

**Response 8:** Royal Commission into Aged Care Recommendation 33

To enable true oversight of the program and for the ability of the Department of Health and Aged Care to accurately capture data, the funding of social supports needs to exist separately to the funding of meal preparation and delivery. The Royal Commission into Aged Care Recommendation 33 is to fund a separate social support category.

Lite n' Easy's customer feedback has made it clear that not all consumers who require meals also require social supports. Some of Lite n' Easy's senior customers who use government funding have a preference to leave their meals as requested.

In other situations, customers do enjoy a lengthier exchange with delivery partners. To create transparency, social support funding needs to be separately measured, not based off assertions within the current CHSP model that the two streams are inseparable.

In February 2020, now Prime Minister Anthony Albanese addressed the Queensland Media Club, highlighting that:

*"Older Australians are increasingly experiencing loneliness and social isolation."*

Separating the funding streams of these categories will drive program sustainability by enabling the Department of Health and Aged Care to build accurate data sets about social isolation as well as measure the accurate financial cost to the economy.

This will enable the ability to create counter initiatives or measures that can alleviate the financial burden.

**Model inclusion 9:** Program growth to meet an ageing population.

**Response 9:** Early intervention and program sustainability.

The Department of Health and Aged Care should consider early intervention through nutrition as an approach in the potential delay of entry into clinical care for older Australians.

*There is an economic imperative to the government, where the cost of spending in early intervention by way of nutrition plus the consumer co-contribution equals a long-term saving to the government by preventing or delaying entry into residential aged care, hospital and emergency departments.*

This **directly supports** the government's objective in the discussion paper of people who can afford to contribute to the cost of their care should do so.

The Journal of Primary Health Care in New Zealand published a research article in 2020 titled, "High prevalence of malnutrition and frailty among older adults at admission to residential aged care."

In the study, older adults were screened for malnutrition within the first week of admission to the facility. The results revealed that 93% were either malnourished or at risk of malnutrition.

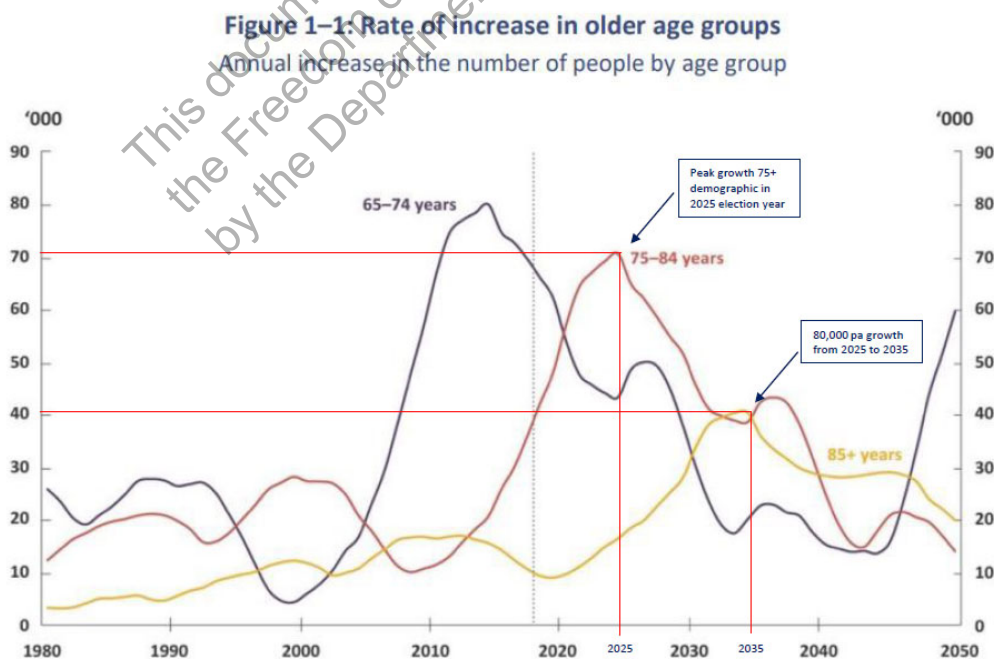
A program that identifies early intervention as a measure of program sustainability can represent true **value for money** for both the consumer and the Department of Health and Aged Care in delivering older Australians with easily accessible essential services, including meals.

The need to increase resources to support older Australians is indeed significant and will become critical for the future of Australia and the government over the next decade.

ABS data, **Figure 1-1** below, shows peak growth in the 75+ demographic will occur in 2025, with population growth in 85+ year old's growing at 80,000 people per year for the next 10 years.

Based on Lite n' Easy calculations, a delay of one year from home care to residential aged care could save the government up to **\$55,315 per person annually**.<sup>1</sup>

Helping this specific age cohort stay in their own home **for just one year** can save the federal budget up to **\$4.4 Billion dollars annually**.<sup>2</sup>



Note: All population projection charts use series B of the Australian Bureau of Statistics population projections unless noted otherwise. Lines are smoothed using a moving average. Dotted line indicates the break between historical and projected results.  
Source: ABS, 2018.



## Response to discussion questions

### Focus question 3:

#### ***What key services and types of providers may require supplementary or additional grants?***

Meal delivery services could use supplementary grants that alleviate rising transport costs, particularly in regional, rural, remote and outer remote areas. Road transport costs often affect our ability to deliver to remote and outer remote areas.

Additional grants will also provide the opportunity to deliver social supports to those in rural and remote areas who experience social isolation or loneliness.

Rural and remote areas have been particularly affected by the severe and ongoing shortage of volunteers that community-based organisations have experienced as a result of the pandemic.

#### ***What are the positive and negative experiences providers have from current grant programs for in-home care, and the key learnings for future provision of grant funding?***

Over the last three years Lite n' Easy has received up to 15 enquiries per day from CHSP recipients wanting to use their grant funding for Lite n' Easy meals.

Due to the nature of grant extensions, Lite n' Easy has been unable to secure grant funding directly and relies on CHSP providers to strike up third party relationships with the organisation.

This has resulted in Lite n' Easy turning away up to 15 older Australians, who are grant funded consumers, each day who have indicated a preference for Lite n' Easy meals.

**Lite n' Easy produces more than 1.5 million meals every week** in our 6 state-of-the-art kitchens nationwide. That's more than 10 million home delivered meals to CHSP and HCP recipients per year via a delivery network that covers more than 95% of the metro, regional and rural population.

We are the only meals provider with size and scale, and a trusted community brand, to help the Federal Government provide high-quality, consistent policy outcomes to improve nutrition for older Australians.

*The Department of Health and Aged Care should examine ways to allow Lite n' Easy to allow CHSP recipients access to our healthy and nutritious My Choice range of meals within the first quarter of 2023.*

The **My Choice** range was not completed when the initial tender for food providers was issued in 2020 so we could not apply, but there is unmet consumer demand and we have a quality product, backed by evidence, that **My Choice** provides the nutritional requirements older Australians need for in-home care.

An unintended consequence of the current grant funding model has been the creation of effective monopolies that have left consumers without services and without choice. Some providers who have been issued grant funding for meals have been unable to deliver services at all, due to the low price per meal funding, consumer debt and the ongoing lack of volunteers.

When these providers cannot deliver meals, there may be no alternative service, particularly in regional, rural and remote areas where access to meals may be harder to procure than in metropolitan areas.

During the pandemic, Lite n' Easy witnessed several CHSP meals providers become unable to deliver services due to COVID outbreaks, lengthy periods of isolation for staff and the inability to keep up with constant administrative changes.

The Gen Data Aged Care Data Snapshot FY21, reveals 96,216 CHSP recipients received 9,725,108 meals at a cost to the government of \$84,548,000. Recipients face systemic barriers in accessing grant funding, most notably being choice and control over services. CHSP meals funding is considerably lacking in transparency at the unit (output) level.



Providers can spend up to ~\$9 or more per meal output with the average customer co-contribution being ~\$9 per meal. There is no available data of what constitutes the delivered meal. The meal could consist of one course or up to three courses, like soup, meal and dessert.

At potentially more than \$18 per single meal output, the current meals grant funding model is both unsustainable for future growth and can potentially drive consumers to reverse outcomes such as malnutrition, particularly if they split the nutritional value of a three-course meal over two or more settings, which is common.

#### Focus question 5:

##### ***How might we support innovative approaches to safely deliver higher levels of care at home?***

Implementing Royal Commission Recommendation 33 social supports category will allow Lite n' Easy and Meals on Wheels brands to combine services in providing older Australians with access to nutritious, healthy meals, supporting their physiological needs and the sense of connection that extends from social support visits.

*By combining core strengths, Lite n' Easy and Meals on Wheels can pioneer a new quality spending model that services as an outlet for early intervention and supports the Federal Government in its objectives to keep older Australians at home longer.*

##### ***How might we encourage innovations that increase the quality of care?***

The **My Choice** range of meals produced by Lite n' Easy for older Australians was created through a desire to provide an innovative meals solution for the portion of our customer base who were moving into the third or fourth stage of ageing.

Due to the size and underlying infrastructure of our core business, Lite n' Easy can provide the Department of Health and Aged Care with expanded capabilities in the administration of social supports, including delivery of social support in person, face to face on delivery of meals, and delivery of social support over the phone through one of our five state of the art Australian based contact centres.

Removing the systemic barriers to the current funding models will greatly assist organisations to innovate.

## Conclusion:

**Nutrition Action:** Lite n' Easy can provide the Federal Government with an effective and sustainable nutrition action.

There is an opportunity to immediately offer the government a progressive long-term partnership which can sustain into the future of the Aged Care program.

Lite n' Easy provides both the dietitian expertise and meal production as one holistic service.

Some of the benefits that Lite n' Easy can provide the Federal Government through a partnership include:

- Established **100% Australian** owned business
- Economies of scale, quality spending & **value for money**
- Nutrition **early intervention** to counter malnutrition
- An existing, **trusted**, national delivery network and growing

There are a large number of publicly available research pieces outlining the role of nutrition in the prevention of malnutrition in the Aged Care sector. However, it is clear that very few organisations have the capability to deliver meaningful, national action.

Additionally, there are currently many government-funded administrative-based mechanisms available to older Australians to assist in reducing the prevalence of malnutrition and increase nutritional intake.

*The effective solution is to partner with Lite n' Easy, an innovative meal delivery service, who continues to conduct the nutritional research by a team of in-house dietitians, who has in-depth meal production knowledge, who has national capabilities and who has the desire to create real change in the lives of senior Australians.*

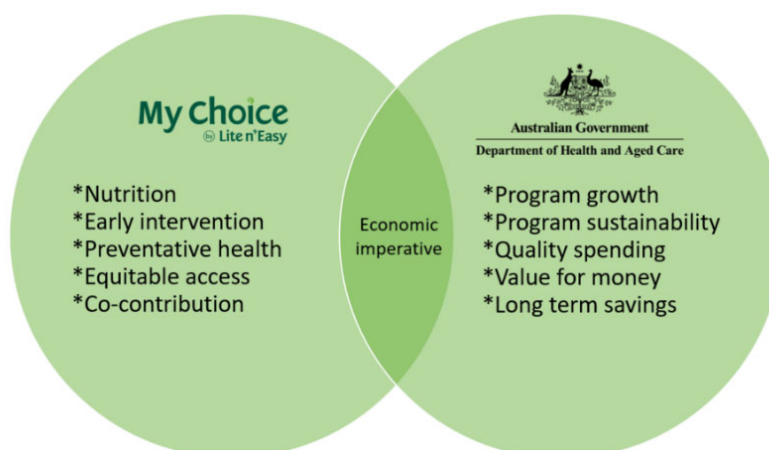
**Economic impact:** While clearly an initiative driven to assist with better health outcomes, the preventative health model in aged care also has significant economic impact.

There is consensus that the current reactive aged care system is unsustainable, with the Federal Government's significant under-spend in funding across CHSP and HCP.

The systemic impediments for consumers and providers to access funding could be driving consumers with existing access to funding streams to negative outcomes, including malnutrition, due to price sensitivity and program confusion.

Diagram 2 reveals the economic imperative for the government in progressively introducing a nutrition preventative health measure. Make nutritious healthy meals available to all recipients of the in-home support program.

Diagram 2



## References:

Ferguson M, Capra S, Bauer J, Banks M. Development of a valid and reliable malnutrition screening tool for adult acute hospital patients. *Nutrition*. 1999 Jun;15(6):458-64. doi: 10.1016/s0899-9007(99)00084-2. PMID: [10378201](#).

Links to referenced sources

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<sup>1</sup>\$55,315 figure based on the cost of the average aged care resident bed per day of \$231 (sourced from page 4, The Cost of Residential Aged Care, [Research Paper 9](#), Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety), minus the average Home Care Packages (HCP) cost of \$29,000 per annum (sourced from the My Aged Care, Home Care Packages [website](#)).

<sup>2</sup>\$55,315 multiplied by 80,000 figure from growth in 85+ year old's growing at 80,000 people per year.

**From:** s47F  
**To:** s47F; [RICHARDSON, Rebecca](#); s47F  
**Cc:** [Minister Wells](#); s47F  
**Subject:** s47G [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Date:** Wednesday, 30 November 2022 1:48:21 PM  
**Attachments:** [FW Ministerial Complaint - Residents of](#) s47G [.and](#) s47G  
[- Email 2 of 4.msg](#)  
[FW Ministerial Complaint - Residents of](#) s47G [.and](#) s47G  
[- Email 3 of 4.msg](#)  
[FW Ministerial Complaint - Residents of](#) s47G [.and](#) s47G  
[- Email 4 of 4.msg](#)  
[FW Ministerial Complaint - Residents of](#) s47G [.and](#) s47G  
[- Email 1 of 4.msg](#)

---

Hi Aged Care team

As discussed, please see attached emails from s47F regarding s47G .

Thanks,

s47F

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by the Department of Health and Aged Care

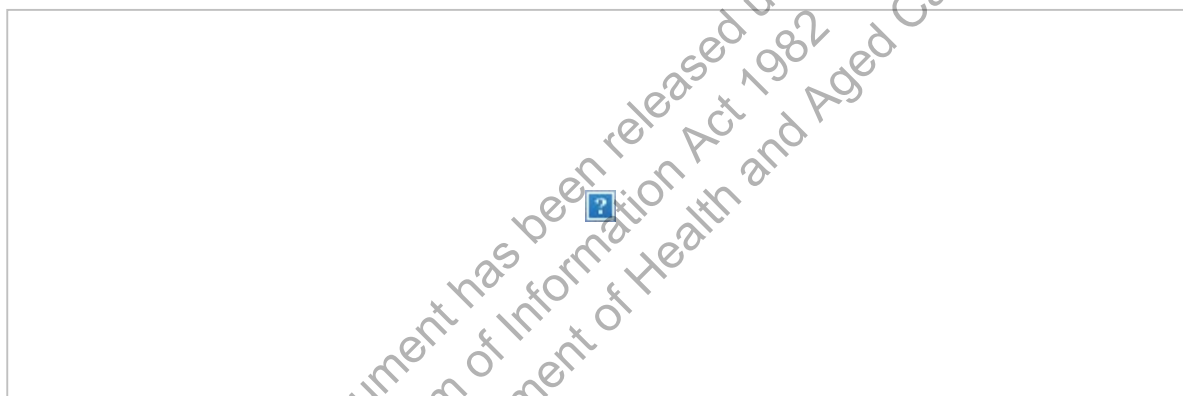
**From:** [Wells, Anika \(MP\)](#)  
**To:** s47F  
**Subject:** FW: Ministerial Complaint - Residents of s47G and s47G  
 - Email 1 of 4  
**Date:** Wednesday, 30 November 2022 1:39:31 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[2022.11.30 Ministerial Complaint to Ministers for Aged Care.pdf](#)  
[TAB 1\[2\].pdf](#)  
[TAB 2\[2\].pdf](#)  
[TAB 3\[1\].pdf](#)  
[TAB 4\[1\].pdf](#)

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H s47F

As discussed, aged care packages involved may fall under the purview of the Minister

s47F



**From:** s47F  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 30 November 2022 11:59 AM  
**To:** Wells, Anika (MP) <Anika.Wells.MP@aph.gov.au>; Butler, Mark (MP) <Mark.Butler.MP@aph.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Re: Ministerial Complaint - Residents of s47G and s47G - Email 1 of 4

Dear Ministers

**Attached** for your attention is our Ministerial Complaint lodged on behalf of our clients, the Residents of s47G against s47G.

Due to the volume of supporting documents, these will be sent over four emails.

This is the first of four emails and contains:

1. **Ministerial Complaint;** and
2. **Tabs 1-4.**

Yours faithfully

s47F

s47G

T. s47F  
M. s47F  
E. s47G  
W. s47G

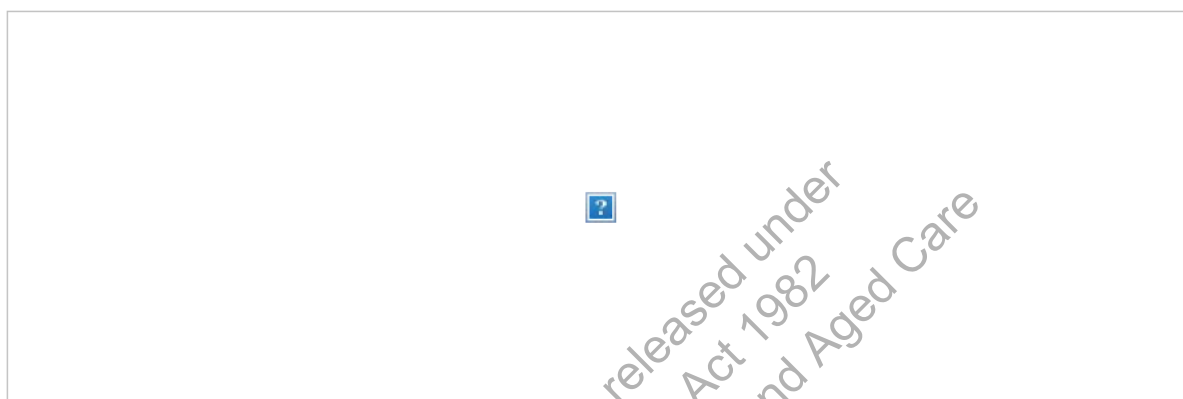


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**From:** [Wells, Anika \(MP\)](#)  
**To:** s47F  
**Subject:** FW: Ministerial Complaint - Residents of s47G and s47G  
 - Email 2 of 4  
**Date:** Wednesday, 30 November 2022 1:34:51 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[TAB 5 - Part A.pdf](#)

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**From:** s47F  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 30 November 2022 11:59 AM  
**To:** Wells, Anika (MP) <Anika.Wells.MP@aph.gov.au>, Butler, Mark (MP) <Mark.Butler.MP@aph.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Re: Ministerial Complaint - Residents of s47G and s47G  
 - Email 2 of 4

Dear Ministers

This is the second of four emails and contains:

**Tab 5 – Part A** - correspondence.

Yours faithfully

s47F  
 s47G

T. s47F  
 M. s47F  
 E. s47G  
 s47G



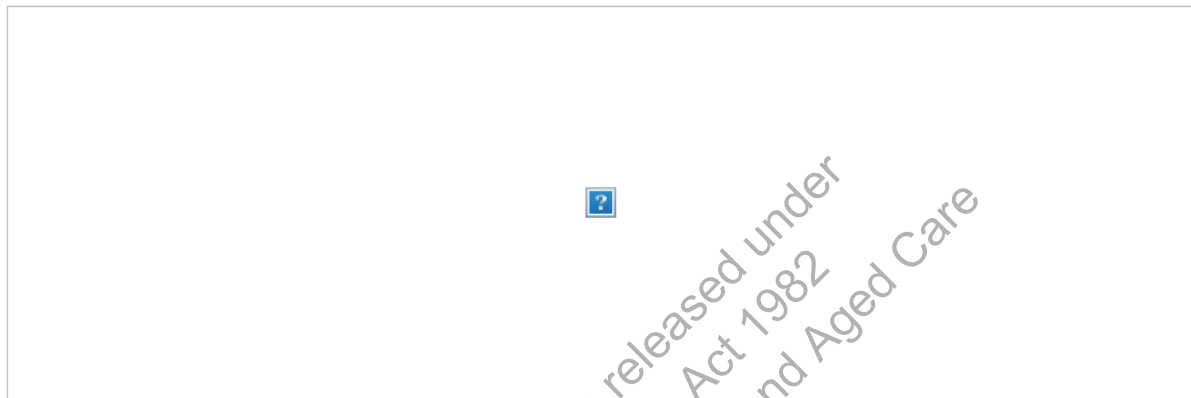
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**From:** [Wells, Anika \(MP\)](#)  
**To:** s47F  
**Subject:** FW: Ministerial Complaint - Residents of s47G and s47G  
 - Email 3 of 4  
**Date:** Wednesday, 30 November 2022 1:35:33 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[TAB 5 - Part B.pdf](#)

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**From:** s47F  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 30 November 2022 11:59 AM  
**To:** Wells, Anika (MP) <Anika.Wells.MP@aph.gov.au>; Butler, Mark (MP) <Mark.Butler.MP@aph.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Re: Ministerial Complaint - Residents of s47G and s47G  
 - Email 3 of 4

Dear Ministers

This is the third of four emails and contains:

**Tab 5 – Part B – Correspondence.**

Yours faithfully

s47F

**s47G**

T. (s47F  
 M. s47F  
 E. **s47G**  
 W.

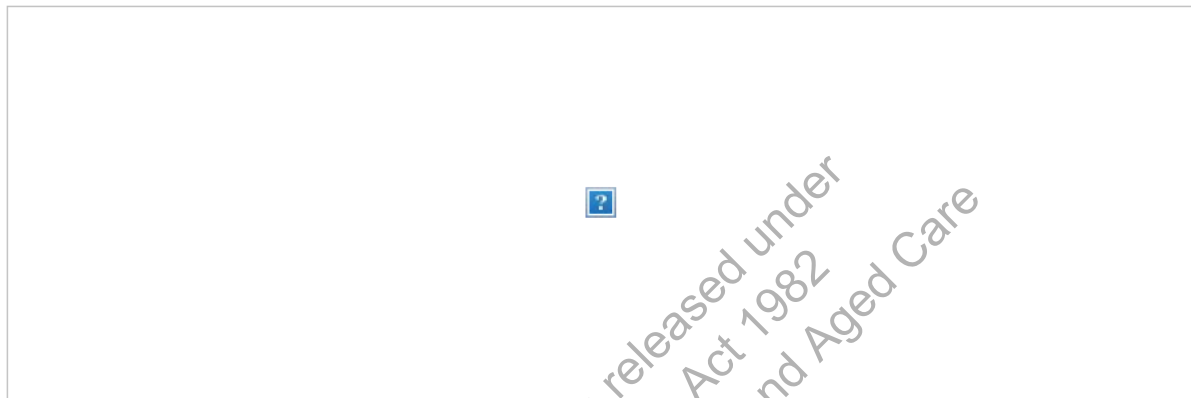


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**From:** [Wells, Anika \(MP\)](#)  
**To:** s47F  
**Subject:** FW: Ministerial Complaint - Residents of s47G and s47G  
 - Email 4 of 4  
**Date:** Wednesday, 30 November 2022 1:39:21 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[TAB 5 - Part C.pdf](#)

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**From:** s47F  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 30 November 2022 12:00 PM  
**To:** Wells, Anika (MP) <Anika.Wells.MP@aph.gov.au>; Butler, Mark (MP) <Mark.Butler.MP@aph.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Re: Ministerial Complaint - Residents of s47G and s47G - Email 4 of 4

Dear Ministers

This is the fourth and final email and contains:

**Tab 5 – Part C – Correspondence.**

Yours faithfully

s47F

**s47G**

T. s47F  
 M. s47F  
 E. s47G  
 W.



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**From:** [RICHARDSON, Rebecca](#)  
**To:** s47F  
**Cc:** s47F  
**Subject:** Meals on Wheels [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Date:** Thursday, 29 September 2022 9:05:29 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
**Importance:** High

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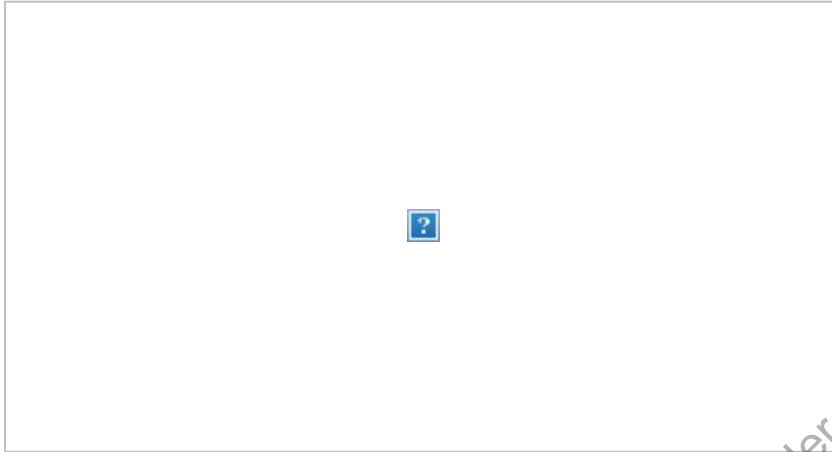
Hi s47F

Below is a summary of the advice I have given our Minister in relation to in-home meals services. As mentioned yesterday, Minister Wells is keen to close the loop with Minister Butler on this, I don't think they've had the opportunity yet. Given his keen interest thought it good to give you early visibility too.

s47C

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# s47C



Happy to discuss.

Cheers

Rebecca Richardson

Office of The Hon Anika Wells, Minister for Aged Care & Sport

T: 02 s47F | M: s47F | E: s47F [@health.gov.au](mailto:s47F@health.gov.au)

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**From:** [Lakshman Gunaratnam](#)  
**To:** s47F  
**Subject:** Meals on Wheels and Sharyn Claydon  
**Date:** Tuesday, 20 December 2022 1:57:35 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[1756559459\\_20231220.pdf](#)

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Hi s47F

I hope you're well and looking forward to a well-deserved break!

Yesterday Miles Morgan Australia (MMA) organised an event with Sharon Claydon MP, the Meals on Wheels Newcastle branch and Lite N' Easy.

The event highlighted a Lite N' Easy donation to Meals on Wheels Newcastle of 500 meals for Christmas and was covered by the Newcastle Herald, article attached.

We're happy to organise a similar event for Minister Wells next year.

Steve Georganas MP has also recorded a message of support for the Parliamentary Friends of Meals on Wheels group, [viewable here](#), in his role as co-chair.

Mr Georganas mentioned MMA's work, Future Fit, to modernise the operations of Meals on Wheels as part of the new in-home care program.

I'd be grateful if Minister Wells could consider recording a similar message if the schedule permits and consider being involved in the launch event of the group when Parliament resumes in February.

Grateful for your time, thank you.

Kind regards  
Lakshman  
Lakshman Gunaratnam  
CEO

s47F  
s47F [@milesmorgan.com.au](mailto:s47F@milesmorgan.com.au)





20 DEC, 2022

## Donated meals spread joy

Newcastle Herald, Newcastle

Page 1 of 2

# Donated meals spread joy

BY HELEN GREGORY

FOR SISTER Maureen Rigby, her three Newcastle Meals on Wheels deliveries each week are more than lunches, dinners and desserts. They're also about connection.

"I find they're very respectful and personally interested in you," Sister Rigby said. "They want to bring the meals right inside and even put them in the fridge for you if you need that. They're very busy too, I admire them. It's volunteer work and they're so committed to their work and delivery to people. It saves us going down the street a lot to buy veggies... I just find them great men, they really are." She said clients also received small gifts on their birthdays, Easter and Christmas.

Donald McGregor has been volunteering with the Hamilton branch for 10 years and encouraged friends to join him. "I get a lot of self satisfaction giving back to the community," said Mr McGregor, who delivers meals to Waratah on Monday and Hamilton South and parts of Merewether and Adamstown on Friday. "Some of our clients lead very lonely lives and some days we're the only people that they see. There's always a smile on their face at the door when you arrive with the meals and over the years you form a close relationship with them. We're all on first name terms

and [we] really watch out for each other. The volunteers are a great bunch of people and you make a lot of friends, which is a bonus."

Mr McGregor delivered to Sister Rigby her regular order on Monday, as well as a Lite n' Easy traditional Christmas

dinner meal. Lite n' Easy donated 500 of the dinners for Meals on Wheels Newcastle clients. The two organisations recently formed a partnership, which Meals on Wheels Newcastle general manager Damien Isaacs said would improve "choice and range" for clients. "This part of the population is growing and growing rapidly and being able to do that work efficiently and economically is going to be the biggest challenge moving forward. It doesn't mean in any way that Meals on Wheels stops cooking it means we are all working together to provide what is needed... by not competing we're putting our energy into the same goal."

The Meals on Wheels network is working with Miles Morgan Australia to modernise its operations.





20 DEC, 2022

# Donated meals spread joy

Newcastle Herald, Newcastle



Donald McGregor, Sharon Claydon, Sister Maureen Rigby and Life n' Easy chief executive Dennis Stark.

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under the Freedom of Information Act 1982  
by the Department of Health

From: Minister Wells DLO  
To: s47F  
Cc: Minister Wells DLO  
Subject: Weekly Advisors Report [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
Date: Wednesday, 11 January 2023 4:13:21 PM

Hi s47F

Please see below your weekly advisor report of PDMS items with you:

Questions on Notice			
PDR No	Subject	Date First Sent To MO	PDR Link
s22			
Ministerial Submissions			
PDR No	Subject	Critical Date	PDR Link
s22			
Ministerial Correspondence			
PDR No	Subject	Date First Sent To MO	PDR Link
s22			
MC22-023544	Exemption Request Lite N Easy	6/01/2023	MC22-023544
s22			
Ministerial Briefs			
PDR No	Subject	Date First Sent To MO	PDR Link
s22			

Thanks!  
s22

**From:** [Lakshman Gunaratnam](#)  
**To:** s47F  
**Subject:** Miles Morgan Australia and the Gateway  
**Date:** Sunday, 9 October 2022 4:45:37 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

**REMINDER:** Think before you click! This email originated from outside our organisation. Only click links or open attachments if you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear s47F

Further to earlier conversations with Elliot Stein, I wanted to update you on an opportunity to progress the Minister's aged care agenda in relation to safety for older Australians, while being able to concurrently improve workforce attraction and retention.

I hope this email gives you some context for a further discussion when you have time.

### Progressing the Minister's safety agenda

People care about safety in aged care. While extending the SIRS into home care is a great first step, there are other things the government can do to strengthen safety for older Australians – and help the workforce in the process.

The former government committed (including funding in the Budget) to create an aged care worker registry – bricks and mortar. Like all existing registries, the concept was for benefits to flow one way – that is, to mitigate the risk for government.

The reason why I am keen to speak with you is to present an opportunity to not only fast-track the delivery of an aged care worker registry for government, but to deliver so much more, for so much less than what the previous government committed to. While both registries would improve safety for older Australians, our proposal will also:

- Improve transparency and provide peace of mind for families and carers (families and employers can search verified credentials of prospective workers through their online profile with near real-time updates)
- Reduce red tape and overheads for providers (verified credentials, meaning faster recruitment processes and less time repeating basic training)
- Create skills pathways for workers (workers can also securely share their profile with prospective clients and employers) and
- Capture information the government needs to set informed and impactful policies across health and other care portfolios, education and training, and to some extent workplace relations.

Two explainer videos on the Australian Care Worker Gateway can be viewed at the link below, the first explains what the Gateway and how it will help clients and their families and the second explains the specific benefits for aged care workers.

Link to videos and an outline of the Gateway proposal is here: <https://milesmorgan.com.au/gatewayproposal/>

The Australian Care Worker Gateway will be owned and controlled by government. Miles Morgan Australia (MMA) is seeking to be a delivery partner to help prototype and build the Gateway, which ultimately could be sector agnostic.

### Our credentials

We have been engaged by the Department of Health and Aged Care on a number of aged care related initiatives, including: the Aged Care Workforce Strategy; a review of aged care services in Regional, Rural and Remote Australia (the department submitted our work to the Royal Commission); and are currently engaged improve business sustainability and digital capability across the Meals on Wheels network. We understand the workforce challenges, particularly around workforce attraction and retention.

MMA has demonstrated experience delivering complex ICT projects including:

- Prototyped information exchanges between tertiary institutions and private care providers
- Drafted the Aged Care Digital Strategy for the Department of Health and Aged Care
- Developing a core platform for the Meals on Wheels network including a incident response and wellness app for in-home care, and a platform to improve meal choice (in collaboration with Lite N Easy).

I'd welcome to chance to discuss the Gateway with you at a time and location convenient to you, explain what we can do to support Government design and deploy the Gateway, and answer any questions you have from watching the videos.

Kind regards

Lakshman

Lakshman Gunaratnam

CEO

s47F

s47F [@milesmorgan.com.au](mailto:@milesmorgan.com.au)



**From:** [Lakshman Gunaratnam](#)  
**To:** s47F  
**Subject:** Parliamentary Friends of Meals on Wheels  
**Date:** Friday, 25 November 2022 12:19:10 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[Draft Email - PFG Meals on Wheels.docx](#)

**REMINDER:** Think before you click! This email originated from outside our organisation. Only click links or open attachments if you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear s47F

Thank you for your time.

As discussed, Miles Morgan Australia (MMA) have been working with Steve Georganas MP to restart the Parliamentary Friends of Meals on Wheels, a copy of the email circulated this week is attached.

MMA is working with Meals on Wheels to deliver the reform project called FUTURE FIT, to help stabilise and transform its service network in preparation for the new in-home aged care program.

This is funded by the Department of Health and Aged Care and we're also completing a study for the Department, with meals provider Lite n' Easy, to quantify the importance of good nutritious food to support older Australians stay in their own home longer.

Mr Georganas' office advise us they've already had over the required 10 responses of MPs and Senators so will formally register the group next week.

We're planning a launch event for early next year, subject to the 2023 sitting calendar, we're keen to involve Minister Wells to support your good work for in-home aged care.

I know you're busy with parliament next week, but after that I would be grateful if you had time to for a Teams meeting or meet in-person to discuss how we can involve Minister Wells.

I travel to Melbourne and Canberra regularly so can fit around your schedule.

Thank you and look forward to hearing from you

Kind regards  
 Lakshman  
 Lakshman Gunaratnam  
 CEO

s47F  
 s47F [@milesmorgan.com.au](mailto:s47F@milesmorgan.com.au)



This document has been released under  
the Freedom of Information Act 1982  
by the Department of Health and Aged Care

Dear Senators and Members

Mark Coulton MP and Steve Georganas MP warmly invite you to join the ***Parliamentary Friends of Meals on Wheels***.

The purpose of this friendship group is to raise awareness and recognise the vital work Meals on Wheels volunteers do in our communities every day. This work is more than just delivering healthy and nutritious meals, it includes high-frequency contact with our most vulnerable citizens, safeguarding our communities from the significant health impacts of social isolation and loneliness.

For around 60 years, Meals on Wheels has delivered food and friendship to older Australians and those in need.

At last count, more than 7 million meals are delivered by more than 23,000 registered volunteers to 90,000 people each year in NSW, QLD, SA and TAS alone.

Meals on Wheels has embarked on an ambitious reform project called FUTURE FIT, to help stabilise and transform its service network in preparation for the new in-home aged care program.

If you would like to join or have any inquiries, please respond via email to [steve.georganas.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:steve.georganas.MP@aph.gov.au) or [mark.coulton.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:mark.coulton.MP@aph.gov.au)

Kind regards

**Steve Georganas MP**  
Member for Adelaide  
(Co-Chair)

**Mark Coulton MP**  
Member for Parkes  
(Co-Chair)

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the Freedom of Information Act 1982  
by the Department of Health and Aged Care

**From:** [Invites.Wells](#)  
**To:** [Paula Gelo](#)  
**Cc:** s47F  
**Subject:** FW: Lite n Easy - Minister Wells - Meeting request [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Date:** Tuesday, 4 June 2024 5:48:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [Lite n Easy - Minister Wells - Meeting request - 15-16 May 2024.pdf](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)

Good Afternoon Paula,

On behalf of Hon. Anika Wells, Minister for Aged Care, Minister for Sport and Federal Member for Lilley, thank you for requesting a meeting for Lite n Easy.

Unfortunately Minister Wells is unable to meet and sends her apologies. Her adviser, s47F would be happy to meet on her behalf.

Please reach out to s47F (cc'd), directly to organise a mutually convenient time.

Kind regards,

s47F

**Executive Assistant**

Office of the Hon Anika Wells MP  
 Minister for Aged Care and Minister for Sport  
 Member for Lilley

**From:** Invites.Wells s47E(d) @Health.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 8, 2024 1:05 PM  
**To:** PGelo s47F @HAdvisorsAPA.au>  
**Subject:** RE: Lite n Easy - Minister Wells - Meeting request - 15-16 May 2024 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi Paula,

Thanks for your email. The request will be considered in due course, but please be advised that a meeting next week will not be possible.

Kind regards,

s47F

**Executive Assistant**

Office of the Hon Anika Wells MP  
 Minister for Aged Care and Minister for Sport  
 Member for Lilley  
 P: 02 6277 7720 | M: s47F | E: s47F @health.gov.au  
 Ministerial Office: Suite M1.51 | PO Box 6022  
 Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

**From:** Paula Gelo s47F @HAdvisorsAPA.au>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 7, 2024 8:19 AM  
**To:** Minister Wells <[Minister.Wells@Health.gov.au](mailto:Minister.Wells@Health.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** Lite n Easy - Minister Wells - Meeting request - 15-16 May 2024  
**Importance:** High

**REMINDER:** Think before you click! This email originated from outside our organisation. Only click links or open attachments if you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Minister

Please find attached correspondence from on behalf of our client Lite n Easy who are seeking to meet with you.

We appreciate it is a busy time for you during budget week and understand if a meeting request is unable to be accommodated - we would be happy to meet with you post budget.

Our client is also happy to meet with you in QLD in your electorate if that suits you.

H/Advisors and Lite n Easy are both listed on the Federal Lobbyists register.



Kind regards

s47F

Director

t s47F

m s47F

a Level 1, The Realm, 18 National Circuit, BARTON ACT 2600



Sydney | Canberra | Adelaide | Melbourne | Brisbane

[HAdvisorsAPA.au](http://HAdvisorsAPA.au)

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by the Department of Health and Aged Care

6 May 2024

Hon Annika Wells MP  
Minister for Aged Care  
PO Box 182  
Nundah QLD 4012

Via Email: [Anika.Wells.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Anika.Wells.MP@aph.gov.au)

Dear Minister Wells

**Re: Meeting request to support finalisation of new Aged Care Act legislation**

I write to seek a meeting to discuss how Lite n' Easy can work with you and your Department in the ongoing reform in the aged care sector.

We were very pleased to provide a submission to the draft Aged Care Act consultation, and I attach our submission to this request for your attention. Equally, we were pleased to have you confirm recently that there will be additional time taken to consider the submissions received through that process, to ensure the robust and comprehensive development of the final draft legislation.

As a leading food provider to aged care recipients, Lite n' Easy currently supports more than s47G(1)(a) older Australians every week through the aged care system in regional and metropolitan areas across the country. This broad reach gives us unique insight into many aspects of aged care, which we are very happy to share with the Government through these processes.

The Exposure Draft seeks to bring important changes and we support many of its objectives. The design of our service inherently centres the right of an individual to exercise choice, and we are pleased to see this same tenant as a core component of the Government's aged care reform.

In our submission we provided three key recommendations:

1. The Australian Government support older Australians to exercise individual choice, by ensuring they have access to dietitian developed, nutritious meals that account for the individual personal preferences and the unique nutritional requirements of this age group.
2. The Australian Government continue and increase support measures for older Australians to stay at home for longer, if they chose to, by ensuring they can access the kinds of care they need: Ensuring access to nutritious meals, contributes to helping older people stay at home longer.
3. The Australian Government expand support for providers offering food related services in regional and remote communities: Quality equitable access needs to be prioritised.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss our submission with you in detail at your earliest convenience. There is also significant opportunity for Lite n' Easy to support the Government and Department in its continued focus on improving service in regional, rural and remote areas, as well as supporting the current and future changes that will come to at-home care support as well.

We wholeheartedly agree that this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create long-lasting change in the lives of all older Australians. It is important work, and Lite n' Easy would be happy to explore the additional ways we could work collaboratively with you.

I will be in Canberra during budget week on the 15-16 May 2024, appreciate this is a busy time for you but if this does not suit alternatively, we are happy to arrange a virtual meeting post budget at a mutually agreeable time.

To arrange a meeting, please contact Paula Gelo from H/Advisors APA on s47F @hadvisorsapa.au or s47F

Regards,

s47F

Nathan Hayman  
CEO | Lite n' Easy

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the Freedom of Information Act 1982  
by the Department of Health and Aged Care

**From:** s47F  
**To:** s47F  
**Subject:** Lite n' Easy + MOW in Newcastle  
**Date:** Monday, 16 January 2023 1:14:57 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.jpg](#)  
[LNE MOW article 22.pdf](#)

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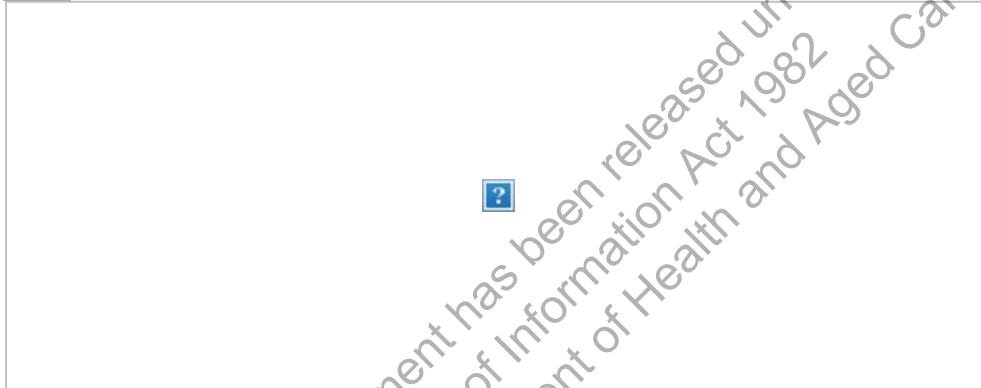
Hi s47F

Thanks for arranging to meet with us.

Please find attached the Newcastle Herald article featuring Lite n' Easy and MOW Newcastle, where we donated 500 Christmas meals to assist the branch. MP Sharon Claydon met with us and came along for the delivery with our CEO Dennis Stark, pictured on the second page.

Thanks,

s47F



**s47F – National Business Development Manager Home Care & NDIS**

Lite n' Easy | Mitchell's Quality Foods | [liteneasy.com.au](http://liteneasy.com.au)

Phone: 07 s47F | M: s47F | s47F [@liteneasy.com.au](mailto:s47F@liteneasy.com.au)



20 DEC, 2022

## Donated meals spread joy

Newcastle Herald, Newcastle

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# Donated meals spread joy

BY HELEN GREGORY

FOR SISTER Maureen Rigby, her three Newcastle Meals on Wheels deliveries each week are more than lunches, dinners and desserts. They're also about connection.

"I find they're very respectful and personally interested in you," Sister Rigby said. "They want to bring the meals right inside and even put them in the fridge for you if you need that. They're very busy too, I admire them. It's volunteer work and they're so committed to their work and delivery to people. It saves us going down the street a lot to buy veggies... I just find them great men, they really are." She said clients also received small gifts on their birthdays, Easter and Christmas.

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dinner meal. Lite n' Easy donated 500 of the dinners for Meals on Wheels Newcastle clients. The two organisations recently formed a partnership, which Meals on Wheels Newcastle general manager Damien Isaacs said would improve "choice and range" for clients. "This part of the population is growing and growing rapidly and being able to do that work efficiently and economically is going to be the biggest challenge moving forward. It doesn't mean in any way that Meals on Wheels stops cooking it means we are all working together to provide what is needed... by not competing we're putting our energy into the same goal."

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Newcastle Herald, Newcastle

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Donald McGregor, Sharon Claydon, Sister Maureen Rigby and Life n' Easy chief executive Dennis Stark.