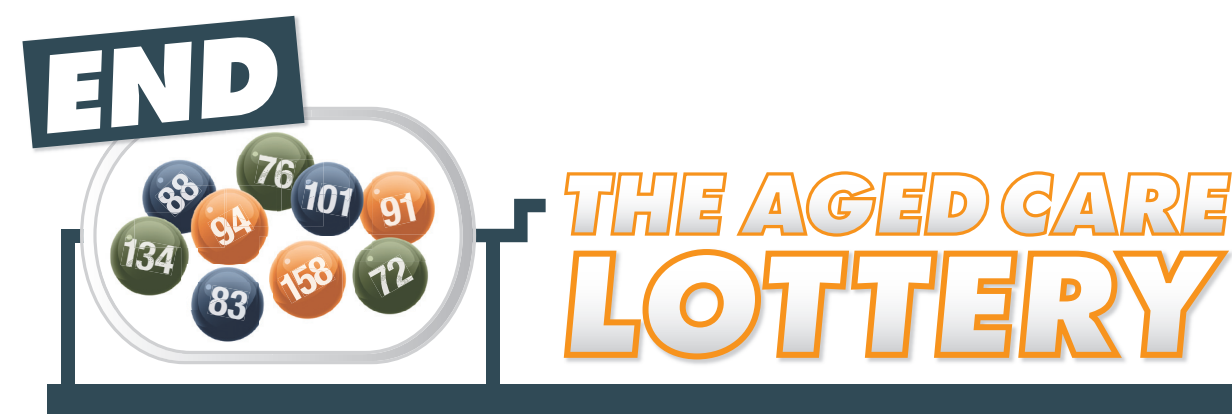




Australians deserve to

agewell

preparing for our future now



National Aged Care Alliance

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› End the Aged Care Lottery

Getting access to aged care right now in Australia is a matter of chance. Depending on where you live you will either get a service that allows you to live independently at home or a bed in an aged care home or you won't.

Our aged care system is currently rationed, based on an arbitrary numbers game, rather than a system that is based on the need for care.

Only 116 of every 1000 people over the age of 70 get the support and services they need. If you are number 117 you miss out.

Government determines how many of the places within the 116 are home care packages and how many are residential care beds. This means that people can't choose where they receive the care they need.

And it's why people have to wait for aged care services at home or sometimes have to move far away from loved ones to access an aged care bed. This is why there is so much pressure on partners and families to fill the gaps.

The Government's *Living Longer. Living Better* aged care reform package makes a significant start in addressing this issue by lifting the number of places and beds to 125 per head of population over the age of 70 by 2021 - 22. More of these places will be available to help people to live independently in their own home.

The Productivity Commission's report *Caring for Older Australians* recommended removing the rationing system for aged care services altogether. The Government acknowledged the need to remove the arbitrary and unfair aged care ratios,



but stopped short of doing so. It is good that more people will get access to the services they need, but ultimately this limited system remains in place and people who need support will still miss out.



The rationing approach :

- Creates a mismatch between where services are available and where they are needed.
- Limits consumer access to services and choices including their preferred service provider and where they can receive services – in their own home or in a residential setting.
- Blunts competition, therefore potentially making aged care more expensive for the Government and the consumer.
- Discourages service innovation as providers are told what they can provide.
- Generates the need for regulation and the red tape that goes with managing a rationed system. Not having to have an annual Aged Care Approvals Round (ACAR) would be a major saving for service providers and Government by significantly reducing red tape in aged care.

The Productivity Commission also recommended work be done to properly explore the cost of providing aged care so we can better plan for, and meet the needs of, our ageing population now and into the future.

› The solution

The National Aged Care Alliance is calling for all political parties to support the recommendations of the Productivity Commission and end the aged care lottery so all older people can age well. We are calling for:

- A level of resources for eligible individuals (determined by a needs based assessment at the aged care Gateway) to meet their needs however they choose to do so – in their own home or a residential care home.
- Removal of the current regulatory restrictions on the quantity and type of services providers can offer. This would enable providers to be more responsive to older people's needs and preferences. This could be introduced gradually with an initial focus on freeing up the provision of home based and community care. It would deliver a red tape saving for the industry and Government with the removal of the annual ACAR.
- Commitment to an independent 'Cost of Care' study so we can make better, informed decisions about how we fund aged care into the future.



› Facts

For individuals who are waiting for services and support

- 30% of people are likely to be waiting more than three months for a package of services to help you stay at home¹.
- Over 30% of older people who have a need for assistance with some aspect of daily living reported that their needs were not fully met².
- More than a quarter of people who need high level residential care - those who have the very highest needs - wait more than three months³.

1. Productivity Commission Report on Government Services 2013 Elapsed Times for aged care services. 2. Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) Survey of Disability Ageing and Carers (SDAC). 3. Productivity Commission Report on Government Services 2013 Elapsed Times for aged care services

For the future of Australia

- By 2056, 25% of Australia's population will be 65 years or older including 7% who will be aged 85 years or over.
- By 2050 it is estimated that 3.5 million people will need to use aged care services.
- By 2050 there will be 900,000 Australians living with dementia. Over 60% of people with dementia live in the community.
- 2.6 million Australians provide unpaid assistance to older people or those with a disability. 29% of these are primary carers, that is people who provide the majority of the informal help needed.
- By 2050 we will need an additional 500,000 aged care workers.

It's time for a multi-partisan commitment to providing care for older people when and where they need it. It's time to end the aged care lottery and make sure we all age well.