

Alliance members available for comment
Wednesday October 31 at 3.30pm
Quality Hotel, Corner Melrose Drive and Launceston Street, Woden

Frail, older people need services not tax cuts

The National Aged Care Alliance (the Alliance) - which represents **27 peak consumer groups, unions, aged care providers and health professionals** - is meeting today in Canberra to call on the major parties to get serious about aged care solutions this election.

Frail older Australians need well-funded, quality and considered assistance, with timely access to health care, not tax cuts. Older Australians have served this country well and now deserve the best possible care but their needs have so far been largely ignored by both major political parties in the election campaign.

The Alliance has developed practical solutions for an ailing aged care system that is facing a rapidly growing demand for services.

The stresses and demands of a system that is significantly under-funded and under-resourced are being borne by families, dedicated staff, and providers. Failure to provide substantial funding and forward planning for the aged care sector today will result in a second class system tomorrow.

The Alliance calls on all parties in the Federal election campaign to set out strategies that will ensure all older Australians are cared for safely and with dignity no matter where they reside.

The Alliance has a blueprint for the next government to build a robust and affordable system to provide all Australians, including Indigenous peoples and those from different cultural backgrounds, with choice and fairness in accessible quality aged care services.

New thinking is needed in key areas if the system is to respond flexibly to the many and varied accommodation and care needs of older Australians

The Alliance recommends:

- additional residential and transitional care, including hospital in the home and programs in residential aged care that will reduce hospital admissions of older people;
- community and residential care subsidies that keep pace with increasing costs of care;
- an increase in the number of care packages to support people living at home;
- wages and working conditions comparable with the acute health care sector for all staff working in aged care;
- increased funding for Aged Care Assessment Teams to provide an improved and more timely service to older people;
- enhanced access to primary care for older people, including those with dementia; and
- extra support services for carers and families.

The Alliance considers an investment of \$2 billion would be necessary to address the needs of the aged care system over the next 3 years.

Further details of the Alliance's federal election platform are available at www.naca.asn.au.

Contact details: Communications officer: Libby Muir 0413 834 979