

MEDIA RELEASE

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Aged care at what cost?

Australia was only marginally closer to resolving the immediate and longer term pressures confronting the aged care industry, and older people, a week out from the federal election, the Campaign for Care of Older Australians (CCOA) said today.

CCOA Chair Greg Mundy said CCOA's aged care debate was positive, with the Minister for Ageing, Justine Elliot, Senator Concetta Fierravanti-Wells and Senator Rachel Siewert each acknowledging our ageing population would present new hurdles.

"Their joint commitment to the Productivity Commission Inquiry into aged care was welcome but the major parties' policies do not go far enough and won't meet the needs of an ageing population.

"There is no sign that the ALP is prepared to introduce interim measures to address current shortfalls in funding and services. The Coalition's promise to increase care subsidies goes only some way towards reducing the dearth of funding and neither major party has offered a full solution to the issue of capital investment.

"Funding is an issue we can't ignore, no matter how unpalatable it might be for governments and the public.

"With an ageing population we can **no longer** afford to put off the hard questions if we are serious about their future well-being and comfort.

"We are all ageing which means we have a collective responsibility to ensure we have a system that works; a system that offers more choice, improved access and sustainability; a system we want for our families and ourselves."

Video highlights of the CCOA debate will be available on Friday at www.thegrandplan.com.au. Members of the aged care industry are encouraged to vote on each party's policy using the survey on the website.

Visitors to the website can view CCOA's new vision for caring for older Australians, send a post card to an older person who has played a grand role in their lives and automatically send a letter to their local MP.

CCOA comprises the peak bodies and national service providers of residential and community based aged care services.

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Aged & Community Services Australia, Aged Care Association Australia, Anglicare Australia, Baptist Care Australia, Catholic Health Australia, Churches of Christ Living Care, Sir Moses Montefiore Jewish Homes, Lutheran Aged Care Australia, The Salvation Army Aged Care Plus, The National Presbyterian Aged Care Network, UnitingCare Australia