

MEDIA RELEASE

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Major parties silent on aged care policies

It's the second week of the federal election campaign and the two major parties' aged care policies remain a mystery, which could be solved during the Leaders' debate on Sunday night.

The Campaign for Care of Older Australians (CCOA) – a group of 11 peak bodies and national aged care providers – has called on both parties to release their policies and confirm they will take immediate action to fix the problems confronting aged care in 2010.

CCOA's vision for caring for older Australians, **The Grand Plan**, includes short term actions required to sustain aged care services in the lead up to major reforms needed to ensure the next generation of older Australians will have the care and support they want and need.

CCOA Chair Greg Mundy welcomed this week's commitment by the Prime Minister and the Minister for Health and Ageing to make aged care a priority in their second term of government.

"However, the Government has not said what it intends to do immediately to assist aged care services in the lead up to major reforms," Mr Mundy said.

"Current funding for care subsidies is significantly less than all the cost of living indicators at a time when 60 per cent of residential services are not financially sustainable.

"The Liberal Opposition has also acknowledged the need for reforms but not commented on how it would address the urgent issues facing the industry.

"Our online survey of more than 1000 people revealed that aged care was of concern for people of all ages ahead of education, employment and the environment.

"Australians need to know if the parties will act on short term priorities including an increase in care subsidies, a cost of care study and flexible payment options for aged care accommodation.

"There are more than 2.6 million people aged over 65 on the electoral roll. More than 1 million people are supported by aged care services and the numbers of older people are growing. They should know the next government's policy on aged care, before they vote."

For more information on The Grand Plan visit www.thegrandplan.com.au

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