



THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP

Minister for Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

19 June 2009

MINISTER WELCOMES INDEPENDENT AIHW REPORT

Minister for Ageing, Justine Elliot today welcomed the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) report - *Residential Aged Care in Australia 2007–08: a statistical overview*.

The report found that, on 30 June 2008, Australia had 175,472 operational residential aged care places, an increase of 5,401 compared to the same time last year – an increase of more than three per cent.

The AIHW report also confirms that the Government is on track to meet the target ratio of 88 operational residential aged care places per 1000 population, aged 70 years and over by 2011.

Minister for Ageing, Justine Elliot said Australians are living longer, healthier lives due to medical advances and lifestyle choices.

“By 2056 the Australian Bureau of Statistics predicts that the over-65s will make up 23 per cent of Australia’s population.

“The Rudd Government is committed to providing affordable access to appropriate care and services for Australians as they age.

“Over the next four years this Government will provide more than \$44 billion in funding for aged care and community care,” Minister Elliot said.

“The Rudd Government will continue its substantial investment in the nation’s aged care system.

“During 2009-10 funding will increase to \$9.9 billion, including \$7.1 billion for residential aged care – an increase of almost 10 per cent on last year’s funding,” Minister Elliot said.

Other findings in the report included:

- There were 105,030 admissions to residential aged care between 1 July 2007 and 30 June 2008, of which 53,737 were for permanent care;
- On average, the length of time people spend in residential aged care is increasing. The average length of stay for permanent residents in residential aged care during 2007–08 was 147.8 weeks compared with 145.9 last year and 131.3 weeks in 1998–99; and
- Of the 47,338 residents who had been assessed under the new Aged Care Funding Instrument (ACFI) 76 per cent of these residents were classified as high care residents and around 48 per cent had a recorded diagnosis of dementia.

“The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare report shows the Government’s ongoing commitment to high quality, accessible and affordable care is benefiting older Australians,” Minister Elliot said.

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