



THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP

Minister for Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

22 January

2009-10 Aged Care Approvals Round Commences

Minister for Ageing Justine Elliot, today announced that more than 12,000 new aged care places throughout Australia, worth more than \$477 million in annual funding, will be on offer as part of the 2009-10 Aged Care Approvals Round (ACAR).

Increasing the number of aged care places is essential to meeting the challenge of Australia's ageing population. The Government is committed to a sustainable aged care sector and is providing more funding, for more services, to more older Australians than ever before.

The ACAR is an annual competitive process that allocates new Australian Government-funded aged care places to service providers who best demonstrate that they can meet the growing needs of the ageing population within their local region. Applications are independently assessed and judged against criteria such as financial strength, capacity to provide care and the providers past experience with providing care.

The ACAR will give aged care providers the opportunity to apply for:

- Residential, community and flexible aged places worth \$477.6 million a year;
- Up to \$160 million in zero real interest loans; and
- More than \$41 million in capital grants to construct or upgrade residential aged care facilities.

The new 12,218 aged care beds and community care packages build on the more than 225,000 places already operational in Australia.

This year's ACAR will include the provision of additional community care places that help older Australians retain their independence by providing practical and clinical care in the community.

The Rudd Government will also be providing more than \$200 million in capital assistance to support investment in residential aged care facilities.

Minister Elliot said: "It is important that the Rudd Government continues to make services available to assist in meeting the challenges of our ageing population.

"Importantly, this year there will be an additional commitment to community care places. These services are in high demand with older Australians, and their families, telling me that as they age they prefer to remain in their own homes and communities, close to their families and friends.

"We recognise this and to help support older Australians to remain at home the Government is providing practical assistance through community care services to help older people retain their independence.

"We are also committed to providing high quality residential aged care services. We are supporting increased availability of residential aged care places by allocating more bed licences and supplementing this allocation with a capital assistance package made up of low interest loans and capital grants to support construction and investment," Minister Elliot said.

The Rudd Government is providing more services to more older Australians and has already:

- Increased operational aged care places by 9,100;
- Budgeted to increase funding by almost \$2.3 billion - an increase of 30 per cent;
- Increased the number of Transition Care places to help older Australians regain their independence after a hospital stay which helped 12,000 people last year;
- Invested \$500 million in additional sub-acute care services to help older Australians regain and retain their independence;
- Invested more than \$135 million in workforce training and skills development to improve quality of care and help build the aged care workforce of the future; and
- Provided more than \$1 billion to the joint state, territory and Commonwealth Government, Home and Community Care (HACC) program this financial year.

"On average, over the next four years, residential aged care providers will receive more than \$66,000 a year for each resident in their care, including nearly \$45,000 a year in Commonwealth funding," Minister Elliot said.

To assist aged care providers in the ACAR application process, a number of information sessions will be conducted in capital cities and regional centres over the coming weeks with the information provided at these sessions to be posted online on www.health.gov.au/acar2009-10

For further information, including the locations and times of the information sessions contact the **Aged Care Information Line on 1800 500 853** or the Department's office in the respective state or territory.

Advertisements seeking applications will appear in metropolitan and selected regional newspapers on Saturday 30 January 2010. Applications will close on 15 March 2010.

Decisions on aged care places are made independently by the Department of Health and Ageing. The aim of the process is to ensure that the allocation of aged care places best meets the identified needs of the community.

2009-10 Aged Care Approvals Round state and territory breakdown

State or Territory	Residential	Community (CACP – Community Aged Care Package)	EACH (Extended Aged Care at Home)	EACH Dementia	Total
NSW	2,244	517	115	57	2,933
Victoria	1,490	428	338	210	2,466
Queensland	2,003	337	578	350	3,268
Western Australia	1,564	107	384	250	2,305
SA	237	135	17	10	399
Tasmania	245	28	10	10	293
ACT	286	10	88	58	442
NT	71	20	11	10	112

For more information, contact Mrs Elliot's office on (02) 6277 7280