



THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP

Minister for Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 6 June 2008

NEW SERVICE HELPS PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA, CARERS AND FAMILIES

Minister for Ageing, Mrs Justine Elliot today announced a new service offering vital support to people with dementia and their carers.

Mrs Elliot officially opened the *Dementia Behaviour Management Advisory Service* in Woolloongabba – operated by Alzheimer's Australia (Queensland).

Currently, there are 40,000 people living with dementia in Queensland – this will reach 171,000 by 2050. (*Access Economics*)

The Australian Government has provided funding of \$2.6 million over two years for the *Dementia Behaviour Management Advisory Service* in Queensland. This is part of \$22 million committed for dementia behaviour advisory services across Australia.

Mrs Elliot said the service will improve the quality of life of people with dementia whose behaviour is having an impact on their care.

“The *Service* will also help Queensland's carers cope with the challenging and sometimes distressing behaviour of people with dementia – through improving the understanding of the illness,” Mrs Elliot said.

This week Mrs Elliot's announced a plan to consult on a national dementia symbol for use on medi-tag bracelets and new measures requiring nursing homes to report missing residents – to further protect people with dementia.

Across Australia there are 200,000 Australians affected by dementia including about one in four people aged 85 years and over.

Mrs Elliot said this is expected to double in the next 20 years as Australia's population ages.

“Dementia is a major challenge for families and communities – which will only increase with our growing ageing population,” Mrs Elliot said.

“The *Behaviour Management Advisory Service* will provide practical assistance such as assessment and support; clinical supervision and mentoring of carers and care staff.

“The aim is to take some of the stress and distress out of caring for a person affected by dementia,” Mrs Elliot said.

“While we all hope for the scientific breakthrough that will treat dementia more effectively, or even cure it – this service and centre will provide great help and some hope,” Mrs Elliot said.

Mrs Elliot said the new dementia service was one of several valuable services provided by Alzheimer's Australia (Queensland). It also operates Dementia and Memory Community Centres in Brisbane and eight smaller regional centres in Queensland.

The centres, funded by the Australian Government through the National Dementia Support Program, offer information and advice about dementia, dementia services and brain health. *For more information about the National Dementia Support Program phone the National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500.*

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