



Margaret May MP

Shadow Minister for Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

20 June 2008

MM20/06/08

OSTRICH APPROACH DRIVES AGED CARE BACKWARDS

Shadow Minister for Ageing Margaret May has said Justine Elliot's (Minister for Ageing) attack on aged care providers was nothing short of thuggery.

Mrs May said: "What is the Minister thinking of when she comes out attacking aged care providers – a group of people who she needs to work constructively with to secure the future of older Australians.

"Minister Elliot has taken a swipe at providers in Queensland and Victoria – is that because a number of providers have questioned the Government's lack of direction in policy making?

"Aged care is at crisis point.

"We're already starting to see the signs with facilities being forced to close their doors, beds being under-subscribed and decisions being made at the board level to halt funding applications for further beds.

"Forty per cent of providers are operating in the red and the situation is only going to get worse.

"The Minister has ruled out refundable deposits but has offered no solutions.

"Sticking your head in the sand doesn't solve problems, they only get worse and I have no doubt they are going to get seriously worse under the Rudd Government.

"Our ageing population is the biggest social challenge that Australia faces and it's of tremendous concern that the Minister is operating in a policy free zone.

"She has no plan to secure the future of aged care and this lack of vision is starting to unravel the aged care system.

"This lack of vision is compounded by the fact that she is undermining the system at every opportunity.

"The Minister was going to cut funding to aged care in the Budget and back-flipped at the last moment.

"Now she has announced a Review into the Conditional Adjustment Payment subsidy. Not before time as the Review was to have been completed by now. So until this review is completed, aged care providers are not able to make plans for the future and this sense of uncertainty does nothing for the industry.

“My challenge to the Minister is to start working in the interests of older Australians rather than against them.

“Australia is facing considerable challenges with its ageing population.

“It’s time the Minister started addressing those challenges rather than involve herself in political point scoring because her office is offended by constructive observations made by some sectors of the industry.

“A policy free Ministerial office intent on petty political point scoring puts the future security and wellbeing of older Australians at risk”, Mrs May said.

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