



Monday 2 August 2010

## **Media Release – Federal Election Comment**

### ***AGED CARE MUST BE ABOUT OLDER PEOPLE'S NEEDS***

Alzheimer's Australia and the Council on the Ageing (COTA) have joined forces in a call for the next Federal Government to do more than tinker with short term funding fixes to residential care and commit to major increases in community aged care.

In a joint statement, Glenn Rees, CEO of Alzheimer's Australia and Ian Yates, Chief Executive of COTA Australia said: "Consumers want real reform that results in increased choice for older people. The starting point has to be how to better meet the needs of older Australians, particularly those in the older age groups and those with dementia".

"Key to this is increased community care, with a whole new range of well funded care packages that are much more controlled by consumers, giving them more choice, greater independence and better quality of life.

"It will not be possible to sustain Australia's reputation as a country with a world class aged care system if the focus remains only on patching up residential care and ignores the undersupply, underfunding and under-development of community care. We have had a decade of short term funding fixes instead of grasping the challenge of real reform".

"The cornerstone of government aged care policy for 25 years has been to enable older people to stay at home longer. That becomes increasingly illusory if community support and care services are not better funded and made more flexible through consumer directed care".

"We welcome the intention of both major parties to take seriously the recommendations made by the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Aged Care. But we want to see both parties commit now to change that will better meet the needs of older Australians".

"Consumers have the major stake in aged care and should be recognised as equal partners in any new bodies or arrangements set up at the national level to reform, redesign and better fund aged care".

"We agree with providers that the indexation of aged care subsidies and generation of capital funding are real problems. But the bigger question is what the funding is achieving. It is clear that the outcomes are currently not those being sought by consumers".

**For interviews with Glenn Rees, please contact Tegan McGrath on 02 6278 8924 or 0407 232 212.**

**For interviews with Ian Yates please call 0418 835 439 or 08 8232 0422.**

[www.alzheimers.org.au](http://www.alzheimers.org.au)

[www.cotaaustralia.org.au](http://www.cotaaustralia.org.au)