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COTA OVER 50s WELCOMES FUNDING BOOST FOR TERRITORY AGED CARE

COTA Over 50s has welcomed the decision to support the entry of a new aged care provider into the Northern Territory. The funding boost announced by the new Federal Minister for Ageing, Justine Elliot will provide 65 additional residential aged care packages, but importantly means that Southern Cross Care will now be providing services to the Territory's seniors for the first time.

In welcoming the Federal Government decision to provide \$6 million to Southern Cross Care to help build a new 65 bed residential facility in Darwin, COTA Over 50s Executive Director Dr Geoffrey Bird paid tribute to the hard work of COTA (NT) in advocating for additional care and accommodation options for the Northern Territory's seniors. "This result is a morale booster for all members of COTA Over 50s, who are constantly working with State and Territory Governments to improve the lives of our seniors" said Dr Bird.

The dramatic growth of the population of seniors in the Northern Territory (approximately 27% increase in numbers of people aged over 65 years between the 2001 and 2006 Censuses) means that the demand for aged care will continue to increase in the foreseeable future. The entry of Southern Cross Care into the Territory not only provides additional choice regarding aged care, but it is hoped it will also lead to more options in supported accommodation and independent (retirement village) living. COTA Over 50s strongly supports the greater level of choice and potential new options which are expected to be available to Territory seniors as a result of this Federal Government initiative.

"The provision of affordable, high quality and appropriate accommodation for Australia's seniors is a very high priority item for COTA Over 50s and we will continue to work with the Federal Government and State and Territory Governments to ensure our senior's accommodation needs are met" said Dr Bird.

For further information please contact Dr Geoffrey Bird – 0409 705 951