

**Strict embargo until 9.00am AEST, 13 March 2019**

## **Age services sector launches federal election campaign – ‘I Care For Aged Care’**

The age services sector is seeking to make aged care a major issue in the federal election with the launch today of a campaign highlighting key issues impacting on the delivery of quality care and services for older Australians and offering solutions to make the aged care system better.

Under the slogan, ‘I Care For Aged Care’, the campaign says politicians must address:

- the funding emergency in residential aged care, which sees an estimated 43 per cent of facilities currently operating at a loss, with even greater pressure being experienced by facilities operating in rural and remote locations
- the unacceptable impact on older Australians that sees more than 120,000 older Australians waiting, sometimes for more than year, to receive essential care and services in their own homes

The campaign calls for funding relief for residential care providers, as well as legislating maximum waiting times for home care packages. Furthermore, the campaign calls for investment in workforce growth and development, and elevation of the responsible minister to the Cabinet alongside the creation of a comprehensive national ageing well strategy.

Launching the campaign at the Leading Age Services Australia (LASA) Queensland State Conference on the Gold Coast today, LASA CEO Sean Rooney said aged care is an issue of national importance and making the system better should be a priority for all political parties and candidates.

“This campaign is about ensuring that older Australians can access the care they need, and that this care is adequately funded to reflect the actual costs of delivering high quality care and services, whilst we also attract and train high performing staff.

“Whilst the Aged Care Royal Commission goes about its important role, we believe that there are things we can be doing to make the aged care system better right now.

“Aged care matters because around 1.3 million older Australians receive some form of care or support.

“Aged care is a major employer, particularly in regional areas, with 366,000 staff employed in the sector, including clinicians, care workers and administrators.

“We are accountable for our performance and do not shy away from our responsibility to deliver safe, quality care, with compassion, always. But we are constrained by the fact that

funding has not kept pace with rising costs and the growing needs and expectations of older Australians.

“How we care for older Australians reflects who we are as a nation. Aged care matters just as much as health and education.”

“All Australians should tell their candidates at this election, ‘I Care For Aged Care’.”

### **About Leading Age Services Australia (LASA)**

LASA is the national peak body representing and supporting providers of age services across residential care, home care and retirement living. Our purpose is to enable a high performing, respected, and sustainable age services industry delivering accessible, affordable, quality care and services for older Australians.

We represent providers of age services of all types and sizes located across Australia’s metropolitan, regional and rural areas. Consistent with the overall industry profile, 57% of our Members are not-for-profit providers, 33% are for-profit providers and 10% are government providers.

Our diverse and representative membership gives LASA the ability to speak with credibility and authority on issues of importance to older Australians and the age services industry.