

2 May 2019

## Delays on aged care not good enough

Leading Age Services Australia (LASA), the voice of aged care, has accused the major parties of ignoring the needs of older Australians in the federal election campaign.

LASA CEO Sean Rooney says Labor has put aged care workforce issues on the backburner until after the Aged Care Royal Commission which is expected to hand down its final report in 2020.

“This simply isn’t good enough. We need adequate funding now to improve the pay, conditions, training and career pathways for aged care workers.

“In addition, our politicians must address as a matter of urgency the funding emergency in residential aged care, which sees an estimated 43 per cent of facilities currently operating at a loss, and the almost 130,000 older Australians waiting, sometimes for more than year, to receive essential care and services in their own homes.

“We appreciate the Prime Minister’s elections commitment of \$34 million to establish a new Aged Care Workforce Research Centre, but it is important for the next Government to get on with making aged care better as an urgent priority.

“To better meet the needs of older Australians and to create an aged care system that supports ageing well we need to:

- fix the funding emergency in residential care and commit to ensuring funding meets the growing costs of delivering high quality care
- fix the unacceptable impact on older Australians by legislating reasonable wait times for home care services
- invest in workforce growth and development
- have a minister for older Australians and aged care in Cabinet and develop a comprehensive national ageing well strategy

“LASA stands ready to work with the next government of Australia to ensure these issues are addressed as a priority to achieve a sustainable and world class aged care system.

“Older Australians and those that care for them deserve real vision and commitment from the next government of this country.

“Putting off any action until after the Royal Commission is unacceptable. Older Australians need a better aged care system now.

“We’re also urging aged care providers, their staff, clients and local communities to take part in a national day of action on Tuesday 14 May to let their local candidates know that aged care is an issue of national importance,” Mr Rooney said.

“Making the system better should be a priority for all political parties and candidates.”

Read more about the “*I Care for Aged Care*” campaign here: <https://lasa.asn.au/federal-election-2019/>

### **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.

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