

9 May 2019

## Older Australians Ignored in Campaign - National Day of Action Planned

Aged care providers, staff, clients and families are being urged to come together on Tuesday 14 May to take part in a National Day of Action to let their local candidates know that aged care is an issue of national importance.

CEO of Leading Age Services Australia (LASA), Sean Rooney, said aged care had been largely ignored by the major parties in the election campaign despite both sides saying they are committed to making the aged care system better.

“Older Australians and those that care for them deserve real vision and commitment from the next government of this country and they and their loved ones have a right to know where the parties stand on aged care before they head to the ballot box.

“We cannot wait until after the Royal Commission to get on with this vital work,” Mr Rooney said.

Under the slogan ‘I Care for Aged Care’ LASA’s election campaign says politicians must:

- Fix 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
- Legislate wait times of no more than three months to address the unacceptable impact on older Australians that sees almost 130,000 older Australians waiting, sometimes for more than year, to receive essential care and services in their own homes
- Invest in workforce growth and development

The campaign also calls for elevation of the responsible minister to the Cabinet alongside the creation of a comprehensive national ageing well strategy.

“Around 1.3 million older Australians receive some form of aged care or support, and the industry employs 366,000 people nationally,” Mr Rooney said.

“LASA has already put forward a series of policy solutions and is calling on all Australians to challenge their local MPs and candidates to declare “*I Care for Aged Care*” in an effort to make all political parties and candidates commit to making the aged care system better.

“We’re urging aged care providers, their staff, clients and local communities to take part in the *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.

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

“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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