Federal Government takes action to get younger people out of aged care homes

22 March 2019

The Federal Government has unveiled a national action plan to reduce the number of younger people living in aged care facilities.

Minister for Families and Social Services, Paul Fletcher, and Assistant Minister for Social Services, Housing and Disability Services, Sarah Henderson said it is unacceptable that nearly 6,000 young Australians, almost 200 under the age of 45, are living in residential age care facilities.

“The Federal Government recognises the aged care system is designed to support the needs of older people. It is not designed or necessarily well-equipped to meet all of the needs a younger person with disability may have,” Mr Fletcher said.

Minister Fletcher said the Government has been working with key stakeholders to set ambitious but achievable goals to get younger people out of residential aged care.

Under the national action plan, the Federal Government is committing to:

- support those already living in aged care aged under 45 to find alternative, age-appropriate housing and supports by 2022, if this is their goal;
- support those already living in aged care aged under 65 to find alternative, age-appropriate housing and supports by 2025, if this is their goal; and
- halve the number of younger people aged under 65 entering aged care by 2025.

“This practical plan with concrete actions is designed to dramatically reduce the number of younger people aged under 65 needing to live in aged care,” Mr Fletcher said.

“But we will not stop there; beyond 2025, we will continue our work to minimise to the fullest extent possible the number of younger people under 65 years of age entering and living in aged care.

“This action plan builds on the Government’s recent reforms to Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) to remove restrictions for participants to access SDA funding and stimulate investment and construction of specialist housing for people with disability,” said Mr Fletcher.

Ms Henderson said the NDIS will also help people to increase their capacity to live in the community, opening up more options than they had previously.

“The National Disability Insurance Agency’s (NDIA) new Complex Support Needs Pathway will provide specialised support to all younger people in residential aged care,” Ms Henderson said.

“NDIA planners will work with younger NDIS participants and their families as a priority to look at housing options and include funding for home modifications or SDA where required.

“By July 2020, younger eligible NDIS participants in aged care will have their appropriate SDA type recorded in their plans so they can receive a budget for SDA before they have found a property.

“With the goodwill and co-operation of all stakeholders and building on the reforms to SDA we have recently announced, I believe these goals are realistic and achievable,” said Ms Henderson.

Find out more about The Younger People in Residential Aged Care—Action Plan (external) .

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