

## Media Release

# Dementia is core business for aged care

- **Shortfall of 279,000 aged care places by 2050**
- **Dementia is a key driver of this increased demand**
- **Shortages in both community and residential care places**

A new report from Access Economics warns that Australia is facing a shortage of 279,000 aged care places by 2050.

The report, *Caring Places Volume 2*, which is a follow-up to *Caring Places Volume 1* released in August 2010, looks at how this will impact on every federal electorate in Australia. The shortages are for both residential care places and community care packages and the projections are based on current Government policy.

Ita Buttrose, President Elect of Alzheimer's Australia said: "60% of people in nursing homes have dementia, and we know that the number of Australians with dementia will grow to almost 1 million by mid-century.

"The undersupply of residential and community aged care places can be attributed in large part to the increasing numbers of those over 85 years and the growth in the number of people with dementia.

"These numbers show that dementia care is core business for aged care."

The report, commissioned by Alzheimer's Australia, comes one month after the release of the Productivity Commission's draft report on aged care reform.

"The Productivity Commission's report, made a great start in recommending entitlement to aged care, increased consumer choice and flexibility of services," said Buttrose.

"However we were discouraged to see that not one of the 42 recommendations dealt specifically with dementia and we urge the Commission to make dementia care the highest priority as they finalise their deliberations."

Alzheimer's Australia CEO Glenn Rees said: "The reform of aged care should recognise the extra demands that dementia care places on family carers as well as the additional costs on service providers.

"A comprehensive plan is needed to address the dementia epidemic that embraces not only aged care reform but ensuring timely diagnosis and making hospitals safer places for people with dementia."

Volume 2 of the *Caring Places* report shows the numbers of additional aged care services that will be required across the States and Territories, as well as

Commonwealth Electoral Divisions and Aged Care Planning Regions. It is available at [www.alzheimers.org.au](http://www.alzheimers.org.au).

The top 6 electorates nationwide by projected aged care supply deficit by 2050:

1. Paterson (NSW): 2,943 community packages and residential care places short
2. Mayo (SA): 2,883 community packages and residential care places short
3. Lyne (NSW): 2,873 community packages and residential care places short
4. Flinders (VIC): 2,872 community packages and residential care places short
5. Lalor (VIC): 2,857 community packages and residential care places short
6. Fairfax (QLD): 2,850 community packages and residential care places short

\* Caring Places: Planning for Aged Care and Dementia 2010 – 2050, Access Economics, February 2011, page 21, Table 1.5

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**Both Ita Buttrose AO, OBE, and Glenn Rees will be available for comment at the Alzheimer's Australia NSW, Sir Michael Parkinson Fundraiser Lunch. Glenn Rees will also be available for earlier comment.**

### **Lunch with Sir Michael Parkinson**

**Date: Friday 25 February 2011**

**Venue: Strangers Dining Room, NSW Parliament House**

**Time:**

**12.30pm Official welcome**

**1.30pm Address by the Sir Michael Parkinson, CBE**

**2pm Audience Q & A with Sir Michael Parkinson**

**Media:**

**An informal media conference will follow the Audience Q & A in the foyer of the Strangers Dining Room, Alzheimer's Australia President Elect Ita Buttrose AO, OBE, Mr Glenn Rees, CEO Alzheimer's Australia and The Hon. John Watkins, CEO Alzheimer's Australia NSW will be available to talk about the new report *Caring Places: Planning for Aged Care and Dementia 2010 – 2050 Volume*, prepared for Alzheimer's Australia by Access Economics.**

**Media enquiries:**

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## Key facts and statistics

- An estimated 269,000<sup>1</sup> Australians currently live with dementia
- Without a significant medical breakthrough, that is expected to soar to about 981,000 by 2050<sup>1</sup>
- Each week, there are 1500 new cases of dementia in Australia. That is expected to grow to 7,400 new cases each week by 2050<sup>2</sup>
- Dementia is the third leading cause of death in Australia, after heart disease and stroke<sup>3</sup>
- **One in four people over the age of 85 have dementia**
- Dementia is fatal and, as yet, there is no cure
- Dementia has an impact on every part of the health and care system
- The total estimated worldwide costs of dementia were US\$604 billion in 2010<sup>4</sup>
- These costs account for about 1% of the world's gross domestic product
- If dementia were a country, it would be the world's 18<sup>th</sup> largest economy
- If it were a company, it would be the world's largest, exceeding Wal-Mart (US\$414 billion) and Exxon Mobil (US\$311 billion)
- Australia faces a shortage of more than 150,000 paid and unpaid carers for people with dementia by 2029<sup>5</sup>
- The cost of replacing all family carers with paid carers is estimated at \$5.5 billion per annum<sup>5</sup>
- Dementia will become the third greatest source of health and residential aged care spending within two decades. These costs alone will be around 1% of GDP
- By the 2060s, spending on dementia is set to outstrip that of any other health condition. It is projected to be \$83 billion (in 2006-07 dollars), and will represent around 11% of the entire health and residential aged care sector spending
- Dementia is already the single greatest cause of disability in older Australians (aged 65 years or older)

### What is dementia?

Dementia is the term used to describe the symptoms of a large group of illnesses which cause a progressive decline in a person's functioning. It is a broad term used to describe a loss of memory, intellect, rationality, social skills and physical functioning. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia, accounting for between 50 – 70% of all dementia cases.

Dementia can happen to anybody, but it is more common after the age of 65. However, people in their 30s, 40s and 50s can also have dementia.

***Alzheimer's Australia** is the peak body for people with dementia and their families and carers. It provides advocacy, support services, education and information.*

### National Dementia Helpline: 1800 100 500

(The National Dementia Helpline is an Australian Government Initiative)

**Dementia is a National Health Priority**

**[www.alzheimers.org.au](http://www.alzheimers.org.au)**

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<sup>1</sup> Caring Places: Planning for Aged Care and Dementia 2010 – 2050, Access Economics, July 2010

<sup>2</sup> Keeping Dementia Front of Mind: Incidence and prevalence 2009 – 2050, Access Economics, August 2009

<sup>3</sup> Causes of Death, Australia, 2008, Australian Bureau of Statistics, March 2010

<sup>4</sup> World Alzheimer Report 2010, The Global Economic Impact of Dementia, Alzheimer's Disease International, 21 September 2010

<sup>5</sup> Making Choices, Future Dementia Care: Projections, Problems and Preferences, Access Economics, May 2009