

Positive Ageing

SETTING THE PUBLIC AGENDA FOR POSITIVE AGEING

**PER CAPITA EVENT
MADDOCKS LAWYERS, SYDNEY**

NOVEMBER 21, 2013

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I AM DELIGHTED TO BE HERE THIS AFTERNOON TO DISCUSS THE IMPORTANCE OF POSITIVE AGEING, SOMETHING I DEFINITELY BELIEVE IN!

I'D LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE SUPPORT OF THE VINCENT FAIRFAX FAMILY FOUNDATION AND THE MELBOURNE LORD MAYOR'S CHARITABLE FUND FOR PROVIDING THE FUNDING TO ENABLE PER CAPITA TO CONDUCT AN IMPORTANT TWO-YEAR STUDY ON LONGEVITY AND POSITIVE AGEING, AND I'M DELIGHTED TO BE INVOLVED IN LAUNCH OF *STILL KICKING – LONGEVITY AND AGEING: THE DEMOGRAPHIC CLIMATE CHANGE OF OUR TIME...* WHICH IS THE FIRST OUTCOME OF THIS WONDERFUL PROJECT. CONGRATULATIONS TO EMILY MILLANE, PER CAPITA RESEARCH FELLOW.

I'M PASSIONATE ABOUT SOCIAL CHANGE AND HAVE SPENT THE LAST 30 YEARS AS AN ADVOCATE TO ACHIEVE BETTER OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE WITH CHRONIC DISEASE, INCLUDING HIV/AIDS, MACULAR DEGENERATION, ARTHRITIS AND DEMENTIA.

BEING AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR HAS BEEN A PRIVILEGE. IT HAS GIVEN ME A PLATFORM TO VOICE MY CONCERNS ABOUT ISSUES THAT I BELIEVE MATTER A GREAT DEAL TO MANY AUSTRALIANS AND I'VE USED MY YEAR TO PUT POSITIVE AGEING AND ALSO ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND OTHER DEMENTIAS, ON THE POLITICAL AND PUBLIC AGENDAS.

I'M SO WEARY OF HEARING PEOPLE LAMENT ABOUT HOW WE ARE FACING AN "AGEING TSUNAMI" – AS IF THE FACT THAT AUSTRALIANS ARE LIVING LONGER THAN EVER BEFORE IS A TRAGEDY OF SOME KIND.

THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS RECENTLY RELEASED THE LATEST LIFE EXPECTANCY DATA SHOWING THAT IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, THE NATION'S AVERAGE LIFE EXPECTANCY INCREASED BY SIX MONTHS... TO A REMARKABLE 82 YEARS OF AGE. THIS IS HIGHER THAN CANADA, NEW ZEALAND, THE UK AND THE US.

AUSTRALIANS OVER THE AGE OF 90 ARE NOW THE FASTEST-GROWING GROUP IN THE POPULATION. WHAT'S MORE, RIGHT NOW THERE ARE AROUND 3,000 CENTENARIANS IN AUSTRALIA; BY MID CENTURY IT'S EXPECTED THIS FIGURE WILL GROW TO 50,000.

WE SHOULD BE PROUD OF THESE ACCOMPLISHMENTS. BUT THEY DO COME WITH A RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT PEOPLE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ACHIEVE A GOOD QUALITY OF LIFE AS THEY AGE.

OVER THE PAST YEAR I'VE BEEN WORKING HARD TO SPARK A CULTURAL SHIFT IN HOW WE CONCEPTUALISE OLDER AGE.

IT'S TIME WE STOPPED THINKING THAT LIFE STOPS AT 65 AND RECOGNISE THAT OLDER PEOPLE MAKE IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR SOCIETY.

WHETHER THROUGH WORK, VOLUNTEERING, OR HELPING WITH GRANDCHILDREN, OLDER PEOPLE MAKE A HUGE IMPACT ON BOTH OUR ECONOMY AND OUR COMMUNITIES.

THERE'S NO DOUBT, AUSTRALIA'S AGEING POPULATION IS CHANGING OUR WORLD AND OUR EXPECTATIONS OF OLDER AGE.

STILL KICKING – LONGEVITY AND AGEING: THE DEMOGRAPHIC CLIMATE CHANGE OF OUR TIME, OUTLINES SOME OF THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS OF AUSTRALIA. AND REINFORCE THE IMPORTANCE OF BUILDING AN AUSTRALIA THAT SUPPORTS POSITIVE AGEING.

IT REMINDS US OF THE NEED TO CREATE A SOCIETY WHERE OLDER PEOPLE HAVE GREATER FINANCIAL SECURITY, BETTER HEALTH, A HIGHER QUALITY OF LIFE AND MORE SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT.

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN AUSTRALIA WAS AMONG THE GLOBAL LEADERS IN LOOKING AFTER ELDERLY CITIZENS.

NOT ANY LONGER. THE REPORT'S FINDINGS SHOW THAT WE NOW RANK 14TH ON THE FIRST GLOBAL AGEWATCH INDEX, BEHIND THE USA, THE UK AND IRELAND. HOW VERY DISAPPOINTING.

THE QUESTION WE ALL NEED TO ASK OURSELVES IS: "HOW DO WE WANT TO LIVE IN THE LATER YEARS OF OUR LIFE?"

AND WE ALL KNOW THE ANSWER DON'T WE.

I WANT AUSTRALIA TO BECOME A WORLD LEADER AGAIN IN SUPPORTING OLDER PEOPLE BY MAKING THE MOST OF THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT EMPLOYMENT, HEALTH AND CARE, AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT SHOULD OFFER THEM.

BUT TOO OFTEN I HEAR OF PEOPLE BEING DENIED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES BECAUSE THEY ARE “OVER QUALIFIED” OR “WON’T FIT IN WITH THE COMPANY CULTURE”.

THE MYTHS ABOUT OLDER WORKERS ARE ENDLESS. IN A RECENT SURVEY COMMISSIONED BY THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, ONE IN 10 BUSINESS RESPONDENTS ADMITTED TO HAVING AN AGE ABOVE WHICH THEY WILL NOT RECRUIT – AND THAT AVERAGE IS 50 YEARS OLD. CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

SO LET ME POINT OUT A FEW FACTS ABOUT OLDER WORKERS.

- **OLDER WORKERS ARE MORE LIKELY TO STAY AT A JOB FOR LONGER. WORKERS AGED OVER 55 ARE FIVE TIMES LESS LIKELY TO CHANGE JOBS COMPARED WITH WORKERS AGED 20-24, REDUCING ONGOING RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING COSTS.**
- **IMMATURE AGE WORKERS ARE LESS LIKELY TO TAKE SICK LEAVE AND EXPERIENCE WORK RELATED INJURIES. A RECENT ABS SURVEY FOUND THAT MATURE WORKERS TOOK HALF THE NUMBER OF DAYS OFF COMPARED TO WORKERS AGED 25-34 AND WERE ALSO LESS LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE WORK-RELATED INJURIES.**

- **AUSTRALIANS AGED 55-64 ARE THE FASTEST GROWING USERS OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

ANOTHER COMMON MYTH IS THAT PEOPLE SHOULD RETIRE AS THEY NEED A BREAK FROM THE STRESS OF WORK TO FOCUS ON STAYING HEALTHY AND BEING HAPPY IN THEIR LAST YEARS OF LIFE. THE REALITY IS HOWEVER THAT BEING AT WORK PROMOTES BOTH MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH.

RESEARCH FROM THE U.S. HEALTH AND RETIREMENT STUDY FOUND THAT RETIREMENT LEADS TO AN INCREASE IN DIFFICULTIES ASSOCIATED WITH MOBILITY AND DAILY ACTIVITIES, HEALTH CONDITIONS AND ILLNESS, AND A DECLINE IN MENTAL HEALTH.

THERE HAS BEEN SOME ENCOURAGING NEWS ABOUT DELAYING RETIREMENT AND THE IMPACT THIS MAY HAVE ON RATES OF DEMENTIA.

A RECENT STUDY IN FRANCE FOUND THAT DELAYING RETIREMENT CAN ALSO REDUCE THE RISK OF DEMENTIA. THE STUDY SURVEYED THE HEALTH AND INSURANCE RECORDS OF MORE THAN 429,000 SELF-EMPLOYED WORKERS IN FRANCE AND FOUND THAT THE RISK OF BEING DIAGNOSED WITH DEMENTIA WAS LOWER FOR EACH ADDITIONAL YEAR OF WORK.

IT CONFIRMS THE IMPORTANCE OF INTELLECTUAL STIMULATION AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT IN REDUCING THE RISK OF DEMENTIA. YES, YOU'VE GUESSED IT – I INTEND TO KEEP ON WORKING!

AND I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE! THE 2011 CENSUS SHOWED THAT 55 PER CENT OF PEOPLE 65-69 AND 42 PER CENT OF THOSE AGED 70-74, WERE IN EITHER PAID OR VOLUNTARY WORK OR PROVIDED UNPAID CHILD CARE OR CARE FOR A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY OR LONG TERM ILLNESS.

OF COURSE, THE IMPACT OF THIS ON THE PREVALENCE OF DEMENTIA IS STILL NOT CLEAR AND MORE WORK NEEDS TO BE DONE, BUT IT'S PROMISING TO THINK THAT PEOPLE STAYING AT WORK LONGER MIGHT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON REDUCING THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE DEVELOPING DEMENTIA IN THE FUTURE.

BUT AGEING WELL IS NOT JUST ABOUT KEEPING OUR NOSE TO THE GRINDSTONE. THE CHOICES WE MAKE ABOUT OUR HEALTH AND LIFESTYLE THROUGHOUT OUR LIFE HAVE A PROFOUND IMPACT ON HOW WE AGE LATER IN LIFE.

ACCORDING TO THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF HEALTH AND WELFARE, AMONG OLDER AUSTRALIANS LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY IN 2009, THE TIME OF THE LAST ESTIMATES, 49 PER CENT OF PEOPLE AGED 65-74 HAD FIVE OR MORE LONG-TERM HEALTH CONDITIONS; THIS RATE INCREASED TO 70 PER CENT OF THOSE AGED 85 OR OVER.

RESEARCH SUGGESTS THAT UP TO 30 PER CENT OF CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITIONS IN AUSTRALIA COULD BE PREVENTED THROUGH LIFESTYLE CHANGES SUCH AS INCREASING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, REDUCING OBESITY, AND CONTROLLING BLOOD PRESSURE AND CHOLESTEROL.

MANY AUSTRALIANS ARE UNAWARE THAT SIMPLE LIFESTYLE FACTORS CONTRIBUTE TO RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH CHRONIC DISEASE INCLUDING DEMENTIA.

APPROXIMATELY HALF OF THE CASES OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE WORLDWIDE ARE POTENTIALLY ATTRIBUTED TO RISK FACTORS SUCH AS DIABETES, HYPERTENSION, OBESITY, SMOKING, DEPRESSION, COGNITIVE INACTIVITY AND PHYSICAL INACTIVITY.

SIMPLE LIFESTYLE CHANGES MAY SIGNIFICANTLY DECREASE A PERSON'S RISK OF DEVELOPING SOME OF THE MOST DEVASTATING CHRONIC DISEASES, INCLUDING DEMENTIA.

ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO ADOPT HEALTHIER LIFESTYLES IS NO EASY FEAT THOUGH. THERE ARE MANY CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME IN SEEKING TO INFORM THE PUBLIC ABOUT PREVENTIVE HEALTH, AND EVEN MORE SO WHEN IT COMES TO CHANGING ATTITUDES.

REGARDLESS OF THE DIFFICULTY OF THE TASK AT HAND, I SEE IT AS OUR DUTY OF CARE TO INFORM AUSTRALIANS ABOUT THE EVIDENCE THAT SUPPORTS MAXIMISING A PERSON'S BRAIN HEALTH.

WITH GOVERNMENT SUPPORT, ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA HAS BEEN ABLE TO DELIVER THE WORLD'S FIRST PUBLICLY-FUNDED DEMENTIA RISK REDUCTION PROGRAM – *YOUR BRAIN MATTERS*. THE PROGRAM IS CENTRED ON THE CONCEPT THAT IT TAKES FIVE SIMPLE STEPS TO MAXIMISE YOUR BRAIN HEALTH...

- 1: LOOK AFTER YOUR HEART**
- 2: BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE**
- 3: MENTALLY CHALLENGE YOUR BRAIN**
- 4: FOLLOW A HEALTHY DIET**
- 5: ENJOY SOCIAL ACTIVITY**

A COPY OF THE 5 SIMPLE STEPS BOOKLET IS AVAILABLE AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE ROOM. PLEASE TAKE IT WITH YOU.

MORE RECENTLY, TO SUPPORT THE KEY MESSAGES IN THE PROGRAM, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH FITNESS AUSTRALIA, WE LAUNCHED AN EVIDENCE-BASED PAPER THAT REPORTS ON A RANGE OF INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL STUDIES THAT HAVE EXAMINED THE LINKS BETWEEN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, BRAIN HEALTH AND DEMENTIA RISK.

A RECENT STUDY ESTIMATED A 25 PER CENT REDUCTION IN PHYSICAL INACTIVITY RATES COULD POTENTIALLY PREVENT NEARLY ONE MILLION CASES OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE WORLDWIDE.

JUST THINK OF IT – ONE MILLION CASES AVOIDED SIMPLY BY TAKING UP REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY!

YOU'LL FIND THIS PAPER AND FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE *YOUR BRAIN MATTERS* PROGRAM AT WWW.YOURBRAINMATTERS.ORG.AU

OF COURSE NO ONE CAN SAY FOR CERTAIN THAT IF WE DO ALL THE RIGHT THINGS WE WILL NOT GET DEMENTIA, OR ANOTHER CHRONIC DISEASE, BUT A HEALTHIER LIFESTYLE CERTAINLY WON'T DO ANYONE ANY HARM.

URGENT ACTION IS NEEDED FOR PEOPLE WHO DO DEVELOP DEMENTIA AND FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITIES, TO MAKE SURE THEY HAVE ACCESS TO THE CARE AND SUPPORT THEY NEED.

AND ISSUES SURROUNDING THE QUALITY OF RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE NEED TO BECOME MORE PROMINENT ON THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL AGENDA. OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, CONSUMERS HAVE SHARED WITH US STORIES OF THEIR EXPERIENCES OF RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE – SOME GOOD, BUT MANY OF CONCERN.

THERE ARE DEDICATED, COMPASSIONATE PEOPLE WHO ARE WORKING HARD EVERY DAY TO PROVIDE THE BEST CARE THEY CAN. BUT WHAT WORRIES ME IS A MINORITY OF FACILITIES ARE NOT PROVIDING GOOD CARE, AND THAT RESIDENTS ARE NOT BEING RESPECTED AND, IN SOME CASES, ARE SUBJECTED TO PHYSICAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE. GOOD QUALITY RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE MUST BECOME THE NORM.

LAST WEEK I LAUNCHED A PUBLICATION DEVELOPED BY ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA, *QUALITY OF RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE: THE CONSUMER PERSPECTIVE THAT* DISCUSSES, FROM A CONSUMER PERSPECTIVE, THE CONCERNS ABOUT THE QUALITY OF CARE IN RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE FACILITIES. IT PUTS FORWARD STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THESE CONCERNS AND SEEKS A HIGHER PRIORITY FOR TACKLING THEM.

THE AIM IS TO BRING PROVIDERS, UNIONS, CONSUMERS AND GOVERNMENTS TOGETHER TO BEGIN TO LAY THE BASIS FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENTS IN QUALITY CARE.

WE PROPOSE TWO LINES OF ACTION. FIRSTLY, TO TAKE THE SHORT TERM ACTION NECESSARY TO GIVE CONSUMERS GREATER CONFIDENCE IN THE COMPLAINTS SCHEME AND ACCREDITATION PROCESSES, AS WELL AS TO ENSURE MINIMUM STANDARDS ARE IN PLACE AND BEING UPHELD FOR ALL RESIDENTS.

SECONDLY, TO DEVELOP A MORE CONSUMER-ORIENTED SYSTEM BY THE GREATER INVOLVEMENT OF CONSUMERS IN THE MONITORING, ASSESSMENT AND COMPLAINTS PROCESSES, AS WELL AS GREATER TRANSPARENCY IN THE CARE OUTCOMES BEING DELIVERED.

FUNDING ISSUES ARE IMPORTANT BUT EQUALLY SO IS LEADERSHIP AND A CULTURE THAT RESPECTS THE RIGHTS AND DIGNITY OF OLDER PEOPLE. COMMON DECENCY COSTS NOTHING.

MANY OF THE STRATEGIES PROPOSED HAVE BEEN THE SUBJECT OF CONSIDERATION BEFORE BUT THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO THE SYSTEM HAS NOT PRESENTED ITSELF AS IT DOES NOW WITH THE CURRENT AGED CARE REFORMS.

YOU'LL FIND A COPY OF THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF OUR QUALITY OF RESIDENTIAL CARE REPORT AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE ROOM. PLEASE READ IT AND TAKE IT WITH YOU TO SHARE WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES.

SO OFTEN WHEN WE TALK ABOUT AGEING OR DEMENTIA WE END UP FOCUSING ONLY ON HEALTH AND CARE SERVICES. SOCIAL ISSUES AROUND AGEING AND DEMENTIA ARE JUST AS IMPORTANT. IF YOU TALK TO OLDER PEOPLE, THE ISSUES AROUND DISCRIMINATION AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION ARE OFTEN THE ONES WHICH ARE CAUSING THEM THE MOST HARDSHIP.

DISCRIMINATION COMES IN MANY FORMS; IT CAN BE ACTIVE DISCRIMINATION SUCH AS A PERSON NOT BEING CONSIDERED FOR A JOB BECAUSE OF THEIR AGE OR SIMPLY BEING TREATED WITH DISRESPECT.

THE SILENT FORM OF DISCRIMINATION IS EQUALLY PAINFUL ...WHEN YOU'RE IGNORED OR EXCLUDED SIMPLY BECAUSE YOU ARE OLDER.

THE WORDS OF THE FORMER ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, ROWAN WILLIAMS, REFLECT – SADLY REFLECT ACTUALLY – THE MINDSET OF SOME PEOPLE IN OUR SOCIETY.

HE SAID:

“OLD PEOPLE ARE TOO OFTEN TREATED WITH CONTEMPT AND EXASPERATION . . . TOO OFTEN WE WANT OLDER CITIZENS TO ACCEPT A MARGINAL AND HUMILIATING STATUS, TOLERATED BUT NOT VALUED, WHILE WE LOOK IMPATIENTLY . . . FOR THEM TO BE OFF OUR HANDS.”

THERE IS MUCH THAT NEEDS TO BE DONE TO ENSURE THAT OUR COMMUNITIES ARE BOTH AGE AND DEMENTIA FRIENDLY.

I BELIEVE WE NEED A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO TACKLE STIGMA AND SOCIAL ISOLATION ASSOCIATED WITH DEMENTIA. THE CONCEPT OF DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONS HAS TAKEN OFF OVERSEAS AND THERE IS MUCH WE CAN LEARN FROM THE UK, NETHERLANDS AND JAPAN.

THE CONCEPT IS A SIMPLE ONE. IT IS ABOUT DEVELOPING WAYS TO PROMOTE SOCIAL INCLUSION AS WELL AS AWARENESS ABOUT DEMENTIA. IT IS AN APPROACH WHERE THE COMMUNITY WORKS TO ENSURE THAT PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA ARE INCLUDED AND THAT THEIR NEEDS ARE ADDRESSED ACROSS BOTH THE PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT.

THANKS TO FUNDING FROM THE TRUST COMPANY WE NOW HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO IMPLEMENT THE CONCEPT HERE IN AUSTRALIA.

WE'VE ALSO BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN PARTNERING WITH RESEARCHERS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG, AS PART OF A GLOBAL SEEDS PARTNERSHIP AWARD TO BRING TOGETHER RESEARCHERS FROM A VARIETY OF DISCIPLINES TO SUPPORT THE EVALUATION OF THIS INITIATIVE.

WE ARE COMMITTED TO ACHIEVING SOCIAL CHANGE BY WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES, TO LISTEN TO THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA, TO HEAR THEIR VIEWS ABOUT HOW COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONS CAN MAKE THEIR JOURNEY EASIER, TO CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO REMAIN ENGAGED WITHIN SOCIETY AND TO CONTRIBUTE IN A MEANINGFUL WAY.

WE HAVE PRODUCED TWO REPORTS ON DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONS.

THEY SET OUT OUR VISION FOR AUSTRALIA AND INCLUDE STAFF TRAINING, BUILDING AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN, TO OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT SUCH AS CHOIRS, WALKING GROUPS AND VOLUNTEERING.

SOME OF THIS WORK IS ALREADY UNDERWAY. FOR EXAMPLE, ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA HAS ALREADY DEVELOPED A SET OF DVDS DESIGNED TO HELP TRANSPORT WORKERS, AS WELL AS PEOPLE WHO WORK IN BANKING AND RETAIL TO UNDERSTANDING DEMENTIA AND ADVICE ON HOW TO COMMUNICATE WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE DEMENTIA. WE ARE REALLY PLEASED THAT NSW HAS MADE A COMMITMENT TO USE THIS RESOURCE TO TRAIN ALL OF THEIR TRANSPORT WORKERS.

TO SUCCESSFULLY DEVELOP DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES WE NEED TO BUILD ON LOCAL INITIATIVES AND WORK CLOSELY WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE DEMENTIA, INCLUDING OUR NEW DEMENTIA ADVISORY GROUP THAT IS SOLELY MADE UP OF PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA.

I'M PROUD OF WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED THIS YEAR AND LOOK FORWARD TO THE CHALLENGES THAT LIE AHEAD.

MY VISION IS FOR A SOCIETY THAT SUPPORTS OLDER PEOPLE TO ACHIEVE THE HIGHEST QUALITY OF LIFE – BOTH WITHIN HEALTH BUT ALSO IN REGARDS TO PSYCHOSOCIAL AND CULTURAL NEEDS AS WELL. AND THERE IS A LONG ROAD AHEAD UNTIL WE ACHIEVE THIS.

THE *STILL KICKING* REPORT RECOGNISES THAT INCREASING LONGEVITY IS THE DEMOGRAPHIC CLIMATE CHANGE OF OUR TIME. HIS BRINGS WITH IT IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ECONOMY, HEALTH AND WELFARE.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE IS SOMETHING WE SHOULD BE EXCITED ABOUT RATHER THAN FEARFUL.

GROWING OLDER IS A GIFT... NOT EVERYONE GETS TO BE OLD. WE SHOULD BE CELEBRATING THE FACT THAT PEOPLE ARE LIVING LONGER THAN EVER BEFORE.

**I'M DISAPPOINTED THAT THE NEW FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS
DISBANDED THE ADVISORY PANEL ON POSITIVE AGEING. HOWEVER, AS
PRIME MINISTER TONY ABBOTT HAS INDICATED, HIS GOVERNMENT
SHOULDN'T BE JUDGED ON ITS PANELS AND ADVISORY MECHANISMS, BUT
RATHER ON ITS POLICY AND ACHIEVEMENTS.**

**OF COURSE, THESE ISSUES AREN'T JUST ONES FOR GOVERNMENT;
EVERYONE IN THE COMMUNITY MUST TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR
CREATING AN AGE AND DEMENTIA FRIENDLY AUSTRALIA.**

**WE WANT EMPLOYERS WHO DO NOT DISCRIMINATE AGAINST PEOPLE
BECAUSE OF THEIR AGE BUT INSTEAD RECOGNISE THE IMPORTANT
CONTRIBUTIONS OF OLDER AUSTRALIANS.**

**WE WANT AUSTRALIANS TO ADOPT HEALTHIER LIFESTYLES SO THAT WE
CAN REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OF CHRONIC DISEASE AND HELP PEOPLE TO
LIVE LONGER AND HEALTHIER LIVES.**

**WE WANT A SOCIETY THAT'S INCLUSIVE AND SUPPORTS PEOPLE OF ALL
AGES AND DISABILITIES SO THEY CAN BE INVOLVED IN THE COMMUNITIES
IN WHICH THEY RESIDE AND LIVE LIFE TO THE FULLEST.**

THANK YOU.