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AUGUST

MEDIA RELEASE

REAL ACTION FOR AGED CARE

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The Coalition will provide \$935 million over four years to provide certainty of care for older Australians and vital support for the aged care sector to prepare for future needs.

A Coalition government will take real action to:

- Provide certainty of care through the first ever four year Aged Care Provider Agreement with the aged care sector;
- Establish an Aged Care Bed Incentive Programme to provide \$335 million over four years to convert up to 3,000 of the allocated bed licences to operational residential aged care beds in the first term;
- Provide Convalescent Care to assist up to 20,000 older people waiting in hospital to return home;
- Ensure a high standard of quality care and less red tape; and
- Support the continuing contribution of senior Australians.

Older Australians and their families are increasingly unable to access the aged care services they need. Labor's failures and broken promises continue to place pressure on the public hospital system.

The first ever Aged Care Provider Agreement will provide certainty and engagement for the aged care sector and set the framework for aged care in Australia for the next four years. Within the first year of government, the Coalition will negotiate an Agreement with the peak aged care bodies about residential aged care and community services arrangements.

The key aim will be to reduce red tape and enable nurses to get back to nursing residents and provide certainty of aged care for older Australians underpinned by a high quality framework. Other

benefits will be to deliver value for money through subsidy arrangements and ensure certainty for the aged care workforce.

The Coalition believes that this will be a 'game changer' for the aged care sector and the Agreement will provide the sector with high level interaction with Government that has been absent over the past three years.

The Aged Care Bed Incentive Programme will be implemented immediately with funding of \$90 million for incentive payments.

The Conditional Adjustment Payment (CAP) will be indexed in 2011 pending the outcome of the Productivity Commission aged care inquiry.

After three years of Labor neglect, our aged care system needs urgent change to provide viable and effective aged care services for older Australians.

The Coalition's approach will help to establish a viable aged care provider network to meet care needs now and in the future and ensure that the comfort and safety of older Australians is not compromised.

The Convalescent Care program will provide funding of \$300 million over four years to assist up to 20,000 older Australians waiting in hospital to return home to access up to 21 days in a residential aged care facility. This will relieve pressure on public hospitals.

To support senior Australians the Coalition will provide funding to:

- Expand the Dementia program to include other degenerative neurological conditions - \$50 million;
- Declare 2012 as the Year of Meals on Wheels - \$2 million;
- Continue 30 demonstration sites for Day Respite care - \$20 million;
- Provide Grants for Pet Therapy in Aged Care Facilities - 14 million;
- Provide a Companionship Programme in the community - \$12 million; and
- Promote Wellness for seniors - \$12 million.

The provision of good quality care for senior Australians is a priority for the Coalition.

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