

EMBARGOED UNTIL JUNE 30TH

Press Release - June 2010

Aged care a major concern for Australians – ahead of employment, education and the environment

More Australians are concerned about aged care than they are about employment, education and the environment, according to a new poll. The online survey was undertaken by the Campaign for Care of Older Australians (CCOA) to launch The Grand Plan – a new vision for the care of older Australians.

The poll revealed that aged care was not just a worry for older people, with men and women of all ages acknowledging that it rated ahead of employment, education and the environment as an area of greatest concern; 91 per cent of respondents agreed aged care should be an entitlement; 96 per cent supported increased government funding; and 95 per cent agreed that those who can't afford to pay should receive additional assistance.

CCOA Chair Greg Mundy said respondents also highlighted easy access to in home services and better links between hospitals and aged care services. He said more than 60 per cent of respondents said it was difficult or almost impossible to access aged care services.

“The poll reinforces that Australia’s aged care issues must be addressed. Our vision for greater access and improved choice as part of a properly funded and regulated system paves the way for government action. The Grand Plan includes proposals for an independent cost of care study, increased funding, flexible payment options for accommodation, the creation of a single community care program, and opportunities to address workforce issues.

“Forty per cent of poll respondents said they feared losing their independence as they aged. The Grand Plan call for all political parties to commit to the promotion of independence and wellness

would go some way to alleviating these fears. The Grand Plan also calls for demand-driven services, long-term access to care, more choice of services and flexible funding and payment options.

“It is important that our industry and consumers work with government to ensure that we get the system right for the next generation of older Australians”.

Mr Mundy said CCOA was delighted to have enlisted the support of social commentator and comedian John Safran and his sometime media partner Father Bob Maguire to be the public face of The Grand Plan.

“They are a great team and a good example of the unique bonds we share with grand older people. We want to get the community thinking and talking about the grand people special to them and the importance of having quality care available when and where they want to access it.

“Our dedicated website also allows people to share their stories, send a postcard to a grand person in their life and tell politicians that aged care must be a priority.

“Our Grand Plan is for everyone, including the government and opposition parties, to play a role in reforming aged care and celebrating the lives of older people – the people who made Australia great.”

For more details visit www.thegrandplan.com.au

- Ends -

For further information, interviews or images please contact Alex Blundell at Open Haus:

Tel: 02 8353 5792 / 0415 839 507 or Email: alex.blundell@openhaus.net.au

About the Campaign for Care for Older Australians

The Campaign for Care of Older Australians (CCOA) is a new and unique group comprising 11 national organisations providing community and residential care and housing for older people. We have joined together to campaign for improved services for older Australians. Our aim is to ensure that the Australian Government will implement changes to the aged care and health systems to ensure sustainable, effective services that give older people and their families’ greater choice of, and access to, care.

Notes to editors

The online poll, conducted by Pure Profile on behalf of CCOA in June 2010, involved more than 1,000 respondents from across Australia.