



MEDIA RELEASE

Independent Retirees Welcome Minister's Statement on Aged Care Policy

The Australian Association of Independent Retirees (A.I.R.) welcomes the decision by the Minister for Aged Care, The Hon. Ken Wyatt MP, not to include the full value of the owner's home in the means test for residential care, and not to remove the annual and lifetime caps on means tested fees for those subject to these cost ceilings for aged care assistance.

The Minister has just released the Federal Government's response to *The Legislated Review of Aged Care 2017*, a comprehensive review of the aged care system as required by legislation, which was led by Mr David Tune AO PSM. A.I.R. had argued against including the owner's home in any means test and lifting the ceilings on means tested fees. Both of these measures would have impacted unfairly on self-funded retirees, particularly as insufficient research has been done into the impact on owners of housing which is rapidly increasing in value in some metropolitan areas and, conversely, in country towns where housing values have not increased or have fallen.

The Association notes that the Minister has indicated the Government will consider the other 36 recommendations which recognise shortfalls in the current *Living Longer Living Better* aged care program. Of particular note, the recommendations include the extension of Home Care support to a higher level (5) to allow frail people to stay longer in their home, and recognition of the needs of diverse groups of people and those living in remote and rural areas.

More immediately there is the good news that there will be an additional 6,000 Home Care Packages, and the prospect that many aged people eligible for level 4 packages but unable to receive them, will be the beneficiaries of these additional packages.

The Association is aware of the increasing cost to the Federal Government from \$19 billion this year to \$100 billion over the next five years, as the number of older Australians increases, and welcomes the necessary planning now being undertaken by the Government.

For further information, contact Sue Hart, Executive Officer on 02 6290 2599

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The Association of Independent Retirees (A.I.R.) Ltd is a member-driven national, not for profit, non-political organisation which works to advance and protect the interests and independent lifestyle of Australians in retirement. A.I.R. seeks to secure recognition and equity for Australians who, through their diligence and careful management, fully or partly self-fund their own retirement needs.