

Election 2019 – Aged Care

WHY IS THIS AN ISSUE FOR WOMEN?

Women constitute two thirds of both residential aged care and home care users (Department of Health, 2018a). In addition, women make up 57 per cent of all primary carers aged over 65 (ABS, 2016).

There are currently over 128,500 people waiting for home care packages in Australia, with average wait times of between 6 to 9 months (Department of Health, 2018b). Responding to the ongoing growth in demand for home care packages through the piecemeal increases in funded places does not provide women requiring care or providing informal care support with the certainty of support they require. The chronic underfunding of this program and the work force shortages limiting supply need to be addressed in order to ensure that people deemed to need age care services receive those services.

143,000 women aged over 65 are living with a psychological disability (ABS, 2016) representing 63.6 per cent of those aged over 65 with a psychological disability (ABS, 2016).

The rising prevalence of dementia poses a significant challenge to the aged care sector. 52 per cent of aged care residents currently suffer dementia (AIHW, 2012), and this rate is likely to climb. The AIHW projects that by 2020, 400,000 Australians will suffer from dementia, including 242, 800 women (AIHW, 2012).

ELECTION COMMITMENTS

The table below sets out how fully parties' current election commitments address NFAW recommendations:

Full implementation

Partial implementation

No or negative response

NFAW RECOMMENDATION		
Government undertake a review of age care demand and funding to provide greater certainty to the sector and users about the future of aged care service provision.		
PARTY COMMITMENTS		
ALP	LNP	GREENS
NFAW RECOMMENDATION		
Government should ensure that funding is adequate to meet the mental health care needs of residents.		
PARTY COMMITMENTS		
ALP	LNP	GREENS
	Government has announced additional funding to meet the increased level of acuity of aged	

	care residents, but it is not clear that this will be sufficient to ensure needs are met. A full price review is needed.	
NFAW RECOMMENDATION		
Government meet shortfall in home care funding – estimated at \$2 to \$2.5 billion per year.		
PARTY COMMITMENTS		
ALP	LNP	GREENS
ALP has indicated that it wishes to end the waitlist, however it has not made a costed announcement.	Government has announced an additional 10,000 places in February, but this is unlikely to meet increasing demand resulting in Australians continuing to have to wait an unacceptable amount of time for help to live independently in their own homes.	
NFAW RECOMMENDATION		
In accordance with WHO recommendations, Government should review all health policies and programs for their impact health inequality.		
PARTY COMMITMENTS		
ALP	LNP	GREENS
NA		

OTHER ELECTION COMMITMENTS		
Commitment	Party	Comments
The Aged Care Royal Commission - \$104.3 million over four years	LNP	NFAW welcomes the Government funding in the 2018-19 MYEFO for the Aged Care Royal Commission. The Royal Commission will provide an important turning point in the provision of high quality and safe aged care residential services in Australia. We note that the ALP also supports this policy.
	Choose an item.	
	Choose an item.	
	Choose an item.	

Authorised by Kate Gunn, Sydney.