

The Hon Wayne Swan MP
Treasurer
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Treasurer,

2008/2009 Budget Submission

Thank you for the opportunity for community input into the 2008/2009 budget.

The submission prepared by Alzheimer's Australia is attached. The Executive Summary provides an overview of our proposals which include:

1. Completion of the Dementia in Primary Health Care Project.
2. Preventative Health Care and Dementia.
3. Expansion of Community Care and Transition from Hospital to Residential Care
4. Social Inclusion and initiatives in respect of people with younger onset dementia, people with dementia from CALD and Indigenous communities and advance planning

Alzheimer's Australia recognises that there is some uncertainty in the economic environment. The proposals contained in the attached submission have therefore been tightly targeted to commitments given by the Labor Party during the 2007 Federal Election. These reflect, to some extent, the seven priorities identified by Alzheimer's Australia National Consumer Committee in the Dementia Manifesto 2007-2010 to improve the quality of life for people living with dementia (copy attached).

Alzheimer's Australia has warmly welcomed the commitment of the new Government to extend beyond 2009 the Making Dementia a National Health Priority Initiative together with additional funding. Nonetheless, it was disappointing that aged care issues received so little attention during the Election.

Alzheimer's Australia shares serious concerns expressed by the National Aged Care Alliance about the ongoing sustainability of the system, particularly in terms of the short supply of high care dementia care packages, capital funding for residential services, the indexation of residential aged care and community care recurrent funding and differentials between wages in the aged care and acute sectors. At some time during the next three years these issues will need attention or there will be a

serious deterioration in the quality of care provided to older people generally and people with dementia in particular.

From a consumer perspective, it is particularly important that momentum is not lost as a consequence of the change of Government in the reform of community services and the work done in the context of the Way Forward. Concerns centre on the supply of high care packages, the gap in service hours between low care and high care packages and the service mix within Australian Government care packages.

During the Election campaign, \$200,000 was promised to complete the Hunter Dementia Memory Resource Centre in Hamilton. I understand this matter may be handled in advance of the 2008/2009 budget processes.

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission from Alzheimer's Australia. Any questions should be addressed to Glenn Rees on (02) 6254 4233 or by email to glenn@alzheimers.org.au.

Yours Sincerely,

Glenn Rees
National Executive Director

Associate Professor Marc Budge
President

14th January 2008