



# EQUALITY AND COMPASSION

## Supporting older Australians

Caring. Compassionate. Effective.

The Greens will stand up for older Australians. Our vision is for older Australians to be able to continue to participate fully in their communities and have their skills, life experience and contributions recognised. We will support older Australians in the workplace, and work for a high quality aged care system.

Older Australians make an enormous contribution to our society through their skills and life experience. We should value these contributions, including in the workplace, and support older Australians who want to stay in the workforce longer. People should be supported as they age, and we will work for an aged care system that gives people the care and support they need at every stage.

### > GREENS SUPPORT FOR OLDER AUSTRALIANS

The Greens have a broad vision of positive ageing that focuses on the enormous positive contribution that older Australians make in our communities. The Greens will:

- Develop a **national strategy** for mature age workers.
- Provide **increased jobactive support** for people aged 45+ looking for work.
- **Remove legal barriers** to mature age employment.
- **Oppose Coalition cuts to aged care.** The Greens will oppose Coalition cuts to the Aged Care Funding Instrument (ACFI).
- **Develop a plan for full consumer directed care.** Working with industry, consumer groups and other stakeholders, the Greens will develop a clear roadmap to implement consumer directed aged care.
- **Develop a national aged care workforce strategy.** The Greens initiated and were chairing a Senate inquiry into the aged care sector workforce, and will work with stakeholders across the sector to develop a strategy for the changing nature of the aged care sector.
- **Provide \$132.8m in additional funding and support for dementia.** The Greens will ensure that people living with dementia are treated with dignity and care.
- **Provide \$76m in additional funding for palliative care,** to improve accessibility to palliative care.

### > A NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR MATURE AGE WORKERS

An adequate income is important in the decades before people retire. But many workers who may find themselves outside the workforce can struggle to re-enter it.

Peak bodies including the COTA Australia have called for a comprehensive National Mature Age Workforce Participation Strategy.<sup>1</sup> The Greens will provide **\$5m over three years for a national mature age worker strategy.**

Strategies to improve mature age participation will ensure that Australian workplaces continue to benefit from the experience and insight of mature age workers, and help provide more options to mature age workers re-entering the workforce, or transitioning between roles.

### > INCREASED JOBACTIVE SUPPORT

The Greens will increase the level of employment services available for eligible job seekers aged 45+. From 1 July 2017, individuals aged 45+ who are eligible for jobactive services will be able to receive more support (Stream B assistance), at a cost of **\$264.4m over four years.**

The Greens will enable job seekers aged 45+ who are currently receiving jobactive Stream A support to volunteer for more targeted support (Stream B). This will provide opportunities for more targeted case management. Job service providers will receive more funding for mature age job seekers, enabling them to provide more in-depth services that focus on individual needs.

### > REMOVING LEGAL BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

The Greens will work through the Council of Australian Governments to remove remaining legal barriers to mature age

<sup>1</sup> COTA Australia, [Federal Budget 2016 Position Statement](#), p. 6.

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employment. Identifying and removing the remaining legal barriers to employment will help ensure that older Australians are not discriminated against as they re-enter or transition between different stages in the workforce. We will confront age discrimination front on.

## > OPPOSING COALITION CUTS

The Greens will oppose Coalition cuts in key areas, to make sure our aged care system has the funding it needs.

The Greens **oppose Coalition cuts of over \$1.6 billion to the Aged Care Funding Instrument**. Consumers and aged care service providers have raised concerns about the impacts of these cuts.<sup>2</sup> The Greens oppose these cuts. They are short sighted and ad-hoc cuts that will impact on the care older Australians are receiving. The Greens want a full cost of care study to provide an in-depth understanding of the costs of providing appropriate care for individuals with different needs.

The Greens will also **oppose aged care workforce cuts**. In the 2014-15 Budget the Coalition cut \$652.7m by removing the Aged Care Payroll Tax Supplement. The Greens will oppose this cut, to improve support for the aged care sector. The Greens will also oppose other Coalition cuts to aged care workers by refunding the:

- Aged Care Education and Training Initiative, and
- Aged Care Vocational Education and Training professional development programs.

Reinstating these programs will provide increased support to carers and aged care workers.

## > WORKING TOWARDS CONSUMER DIRECTED CARE

The Greens want older Australians to have choice and control in the care they receive. The Greens will work with consumer groups, providers, unions and stakeholders across the sector to develop a **full national plan to move towards consumer directed care**.

This will help identify the challenges and opportunities in moving to full, uncapped consumer directed care, and the steps that are needed to provide it. A national plan for consumer directed care will ensure better care for older Australians, and give certainty to the sector by providing a clear blueprint for the reforms.

## > A NATIONAL AGED CARE WORKFORCE STRATEGY

As the aged care sector grows and shifts towards consumer directed care, there will be significant change for carers and providers. The Greens have initiated and were chairing a Senate

inquiry into the aged care sector workforce to identify the challenges and opportunities.

Working with stakeholders across the sector, the Greens will develop a **National Aged Care Workforce Strategy**, setting out how government can support carers and providers to ensure that older Australians receive the best care possible.

## > FUNDING FOR BETTER DEMENTIA CARE

Dementia already impacts hundreds of thousands of Australians, and the numbers will grow as our population ages. The Greens will provide **\$132.8m over four years to improve dementia support**, including:

- **\$4m** for a national dementia strategy, to ensure a coordinated approach across different levels of government.
- **\$5.2m** to support Dementia Friendly Communities, including information sessions through a Dementia Friends program, and a national Dementia-Friendly Community Resource Hub.
- **\$8m** for a risk reduction program to inform Australians about brain health, and links between lifestyle factors and dementia risks.
- **\$6m** to support early diagnosis, including through professional development materials, and advertising to destigmatize memory loss and support people seeking medical advice.
- **\$20m** for post diagnostic dementia services and supports, including expanding the National Dementia Helpline and funding to improve access to dementia services by diverse groups, including those who currently do not access existing dementia services and resources.
- **\$64m** to develop dementia care and support, including developing a dementia-respite supplement, and developing a consumer initiative to support individuals with dementia in navigating the aged care system.
- **\$20.8m** to improve dementia research.

By providing a coordinated, national approach that addresses key gaps in the system the Greens will ensure that people struggling with dementia and their carers will have the support they need.

## > PALLIATIVE CARE

Most of us hope for a 'good' death with minimal suffering, and that our wishes are respected. The Greens will provide an additional **\$76m over four years for palliative care**, including:

- **Increasing palliative care funding by \$15m annually**
- **Developing nationally consistent model legislation for advanced care planning**
- **Providing \$10m for a national awareness campaign, and**

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<sup>2</sup> [Leading Age Services Australia; Aged and Community Services Australia](#).

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- **\$5m to Palliative Care Australia**, to develop a detailed model of a potential National Cooperative for Palliative and End of Life Care.
  - **\$1m for projects to improve our understanding of palliative care challenges.**

## > A COMMITMENT TO AGED CARE

The Coalition has cut billions from the aged care sector, through changes to the ACFI and other cuts. The Greens oppose major Coalition cuts, and we will work with stakeholders across the sector to ensure older Australians receive the best care possible, support for those who want to stay in the workforce, and that there is a clear, consistent strategy from government.